

# THE FOCALPOINT

FIRST PARISH IN LEXINGTON

SPRING 2019

First Parish is bucking the trend among churches these days. While most congregations are slowly losing members and struggling to find relevance in our fractured society, First Parish is growing. We now have 85 children registered for Faith Development - a number which gets us back up to where we were several years ago! We are inviting over 40 people to our New Members Classes in March! These are incredible signs of growth, and we should be quite encouraged. But wait - there is more!

Our choirs continue to add singers, and our Voices on the Green attracts more and more newcomers to every performance. We are becoming known in Lexington for being a place where people can bring their full selves, in honesty and humility, and work together to build the kind of community our world needs - a community of faith in our shared humanity and hope for our shared future. Our Climate Action Team has a full slate of activities to connect us in working for our planet. Our Family Ministry is helping families build stronger relationships.

We are beginning to make connections with other organizations as well. Working with our partner, the Lexington Refugee Assistance Program, we will be hosting a new monthly venture called the Hand in Hand Cafe. It will help local refugee women build skills in the food industry - and offer wonderful meals for us to share! Be sure to read about it in this Focal Point.

This month we begin our Annual Pledge Campaign, which is a crucial element of support for our work. Please read about it and consider raising your level of commitment if you can. For by strengthening our own community, we are offering a safe haven for people to encounter the saving faith which Unitarian Universalism offers. Ours is a faith which has long uplifted those whom the rest of our society has caused to be marginalized. But our work is far from over, my friends. There is more for us to do to address the way we have participated in systems of racism and economic oppression. We will be offering classes and book studies to help us all be a sacred force for love and justice.

As our UUA President, Rev. Susan Frederick Grey, tells us: this is no time for a casual faith. The world needs us, and we need each other.

See you in church-

*Rev. Anne*

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# Update from the Board

The Parish Board is very excited about the joy and energy we have seen and felt around First Parish this winter! During the holiday season, the staff worked collaboratively to present a beautiful service for Winter Solstice. We were so pleased to see so many First Parish members there, and especially to see the pews full of people who are not regular members as well! One of our goals this year is to increase visibility and participation in Family Ministry, and this service is just one way we saw that happen this holiday season! We are so thankful to the staff in their hard work to make this happen, as well as the youth and other volunteers who helped to create such a unique sensory experience for all to enjoy together! The Holiday Workshop also had renewed energy this year, and we thank all the volunteers who helped to fill our halls with holiday cheer.

The Climate Action Team has been very busy this year creating a variety of activities that are allowing our members to engage in social justice work in new ways. Many of these activities are intergenerational, such as a worship service to support one another in working toward sustainable practices in order to live up to our Seventh Principle: “Respect for the Interdependent Web of All Existence of Which We Are a Part.” We are thankful to the C.A.T. for their work, and to all who are living out our Mission by participating in this work.

On February 3rd, Reverend Mason led a room full of people in distilling many ideas into information for writing our Mission Statement. We thank you for your work in helping the congregation fulfill its goal of defining our Mission Statement. That information was taken to a group of First Parish “word-smiths” who are helping the Board finalize a statement that will help show the world who we are, and how we choose to walk through this world.

Since our last Focalpoint article, we have decided to broaden our consultant search to move forward in our planning for a Capital Campaign. We have an excellent Advisory Board that has been working to develop ideas for the purpose of our campaign, which is the important first step in formulating our campaign. We expect to have more to report at the end of the church year. Stay tuned!

This spring we will be actively recruiting members of the Parish Board. If you would like to be a part of a committed, supportive group that makes all these wonderful activities happen and makes sure First Parish is the spiritual community you love, please join us! You can reach us any time at [board@fplex.org](mailto:board@fplex.org)

Goal 1: Define the Mission Statement

Goal 2: Re-imagine how First Parish will engage in justice work

Goal 3: Increase visibility and participation in Family Ministry

Goal 4: Articulate goals (including the what and the costs) for the Capital Campaign II through the case statement phase

# March Donation Drive for Lexington Interfaith Food Pantry

Every year during March, First Parish has a month-long collection for the Lexington Interfaith Food Pantry. Housed in the basement of the Church of Our Redeemer, it has been active in Lexington since 1990, when the Lexington Council of Churches, including First Parish, founded the program.

In recent years, the number of families serviced has grown to more than 75 per week, and typical shoppers served are the elderly; individuals who are unemployed or underemployed; low income families with children; and people with medical or mental health issues. Lexington as well as some residents of Winchester and Lincoln (nearby towns without a food pantry) are the beneficiaries of this service.

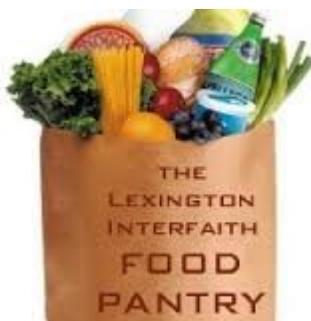
Fresh produce is donated to the Pantry seasonally from the Interfaith Community Garden, unclaimed CSA produce from two local farms, and overflow from the Boston area Gleaners. When fresh items are not available, they need to be purchased by the food pantry with monies donated by the community.

## **There are two ways you can help during the month of March.**

First, please donate personal care products, which are not covered by the Federal food stamp programs. These include shampoos, lotions, dental care products, and other toiletries. Products containing alcohol or hotel sized items will not be accepted. There will be baskets at both entrances to the church marked Food Pantry donations. We will also continue to accept non-perishable food items as we have been doing on an ongoing basis in the basket located outside of the church office.

The second way you can help is by making a monetary donation during the special plate collection on Sunday, March 3rd. All non-pledge contributions will be donated to the Pantry.

Thank you as always for your generosity of spirit and gifts to others in need. If you have any questions or want more information about the Lexington Food Pantry, please contact coordinators Lynne Yansen at [lynne.yansen@gmail.com](mailto:lynne.yansen@gmail.com) or Tom Wanderer at [thomas.wanderer49@gmail.com](mailto:thomas.wanderer49@gmail.com)



# Return on Investment: First Parish in Lexington

Have you noticed? Our congregation is making an impact in our community! This year our annual pledge drive is shining a light on all the work our volunteers and staff have put toward ***Building Partnerships*** that mutually benefit the communities they serve. When you receive your Pledge Card, please consider carefully the investment you would like to make to **continue to expand our capacity** to SEEK along the threads of the interconnected web, strengthen the foundation of LOVE that supports the valuable work we all do in the world, and SERVE the organizations that challenge oppression, encourage diversity, demand justice and defend our fair democracy. Visit our website at [fplex.org](http://fplex.org) and click on the stewardship links to explore the ways our congregation has been building and supporting existing partnerships that reflect values we would like to see manifest in the world. We have expanded our support of LexRAP, which supports and integrates refugees. Lexington Youth and Family Services, which has an office in our building, continues to expand the scope of their outreach to youth at risk. We have begun a new relationships with LexPride, serving the LGBTQ community and ABCL, the Association of Black Citizens of Lexington, providing a space for youth to meet and socialize. Our own Voices On the Green, with an ever increasing audience, is encouraging engagement in value based topics as well as providing financial support for organizations that support our values.



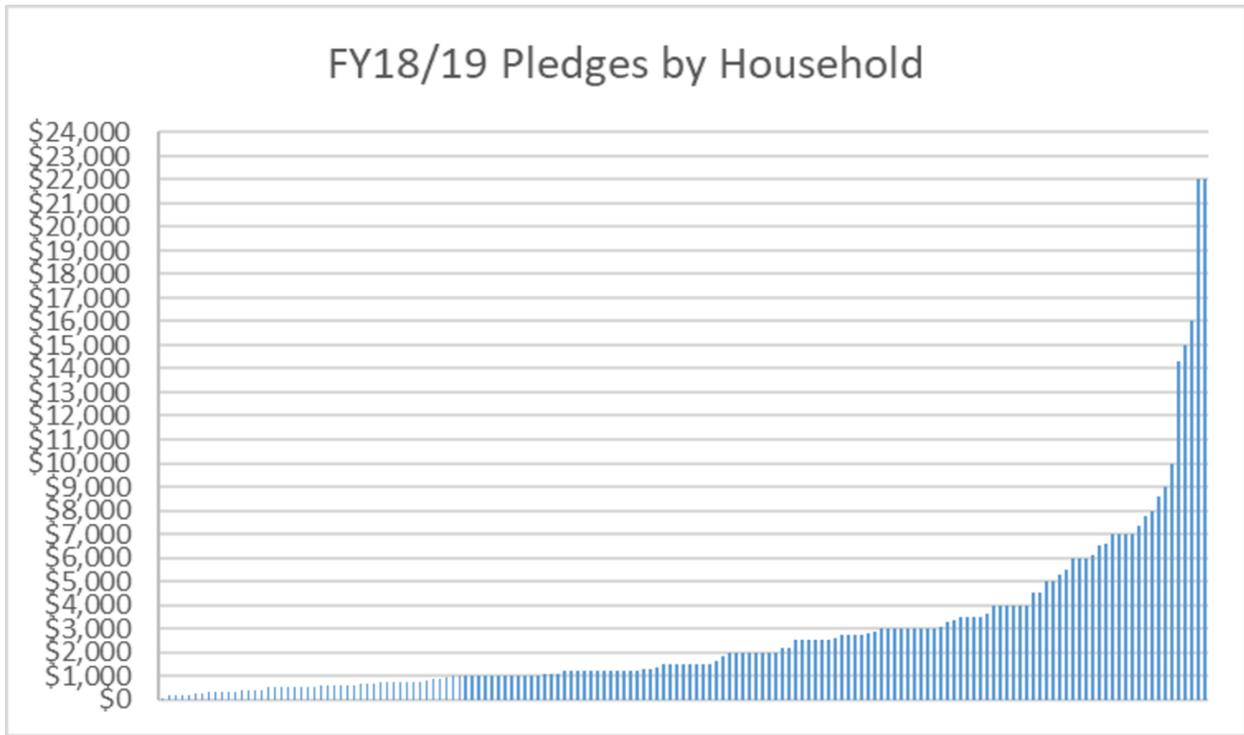
## **How do these partnerships affect First Parish?**

First, our membership is growing. Our Religious Education program now has over 80 children! Second, our staff is meeting the challenge of wider visibility and are meeting with town wide organizations, our schools, and the interfaith community to offer their talent and time to support events and initiatives our members have identified. Third, our leadership is having concrete discussions about our strategic plans for the next chapter of our congregation.

## **How can YOU best support our progress?**

We are living in a time where many people are realizing that personal engagement is necessary make the changes we would like to see in the world. With broader financial support from our members, we will make more partnerships possible and exponentially increase the progress we are making toward our goals. Last year we invested in technology,

with display monitors in Robinson, the Entry hall, and the Sanctuary, enriching both our worship experience and also enabling programs that meet in our building to create an more engaging experience. We improved our security with additional locks and by installing a video connected doorbell as a response to faith based violence experienced around the country. None of these important initiatives were anticipated within our current operating budget. We expect that the upcoming year will have new challenges and new opportunities. Can we hire a building monitor during our large events to ensure safety and assist in the maintenance? Can we have a communication professional assist with publication and media presence? Will our Youth Coordinator need to interface with our growing youth based partnerships?



Our pledges provide the foundation of our budget (70%), but 50% of our annual pledges come from just 24 households (13%). We encourage active and committed donors to pledge at least \$3000, reflecting UUA Guidelines that suggest 3% of an adjusted\* income of \$100K.

Is your current pledge 3% of your adjusted\* income? (\* subtracting medical, tuition, care pf parent, etc.)

If everyone who pledged below \$1,000 could pledge \$1,000 and everyone between \$1,500 and \$3,000 could pledge \$3,000, we would be in a great position to continue **build on our Partnerships and serve our message of Love as the foundation of social justice.**

*-Submitted by Elisabeth Jas - The Stewardship Team*

# Hand in Hand Café

## LexRAP Dinners

'Hand in Hand Café' is the latest opportunity for members of the First Parish community to do what they know so well – give back and build community. In coordination with our partner, Lexington Refugee Assistance Program (LexRAP), First Parish will be hosting a series of dinners, cooked by refugee women who are supported by LexRAP ([www.lexrap.org](http://www.lexrap.org)). These dinners will provide an opportunity for the greater Lexington community to enjoy food from Syria and Iraq as well as tableside discussion on a variety of topics that will bring us all closer together.

We hope you will join us. Tickets will be available through Eventbrite and are \$30 (plus a small service fee). All First Parish should have received an invitation from Eventbrite. If you have not, please contact the church office at [admin@fplex.org](mailto:admin@fplex.org).

Here's a bit of background on how 'Hand in Hand Café' came to be. Last October, LexRAP organized a fund-raising dinner at Temple Isaiah featuring a menu of Middle Eastern Specialties determined and cooked by many of the refugee families that LexRAP supports. It was a great success! It was a great success not only as a fundraiser, but also as an opportunity to "create community."

At the same time, Rev. Anne Mason reached out to share her idea for a refugee restaurant and offered First Parish as host. At their "Jams for Justice" concert in November, the church raised almost \$3,000 as seed money. While not exactly a restaurant, what has evolved is this idea of monthly community dinners. What a great opportunity this is. The refugee moms will be able to build some business skills and contribute some income to their families. The rest of us will get a delicious meal and a chance to build community and understanding.

Each meal will be Halal, with both a meat (chicken or beef) and vegetarian option. Halal means "permissible" in Arabic. Food served will be permissible according to Islamic law. In addition, there will be no alcohol served and as you know, First Parish is nut-free.

For more information or to volunteer to help with set up, serving, or clean up please contact Mouna Anderson ([lexmouna@gmail.com](mailto:lexmouna@gmail.com)) or Naomi Rosenthal ([naomi.rosenthal@verizon.net](mailto:naomi.rosenthal@verizon.net))

**Hope to see you at our first dinner, open exclusively to First Parish congregants, on March 9<sup>th</sup>.**

The other dinners scheduled for this year, which will be open to the public, will be on April 13<sup>th</sup> and June 15<sup>th</sup>.

# Report from Buildings & Grounds

Have you noticed the change in the lights at First Parish? Many thanks go to Lew Counts, who has upgraded most of the lights in the building, making them more energy-efficient and effective. Lew has been assiduously replacing old incandescent or CFL bulbs, adjusting the position of the floodlights inside and out, and harmonizing the lighting to be either “warm” or all “bright” in each room. And he dusted the chandeliers while he was at it!

You may have seen the new Ring doorbell at the rear entry to the church, installed thanks to Bill Pittore. The doorbell allows Jane to see the person at the door, and to unlock the door remotely from her office or cellphone. This is the first of many security changes you will see around the church to help keep our staff and members a bit safer from those who may wish us harm. You may find the door locked more frequently, but know that if you are arriving during office hours, ringing the bell will get you in.

New decals have been secured to all the doors indicating that we are monitored by the Lexington Alarm Company. Lexington Alarm presently monitors our fire system, and our next security project will soon be to install a system to monitor for, and alert, the police in an emergency requiring them. The staff will be able to call Lexington Alarm with “panic buttons”, and an alarm bell will signal that alerts the occupants to such an emergency. A drill for this response—different from a fire drill—will be conducted before the audible alarm will be used.

And in an effort to improve safe egress from the church, new “crash bars” will be installed on the front doors, avoiding the need to unlock the doors or unpin their fixed position when needing to exit in an emergency. And there will be no more need for using those outside hooks to keep them open! The beautiful, large, antique doors will function just like the rear entry’s modern ones.

This weekend a prototype interior storm window will be installed—thanks to Dave Pollack--on one of the tall sanctuary windows to decrease the heat loss through these lovely, but single-pane windows. Last year we even had some icicles on the inside of the windows! If successful, we will proceed with installing them on the remaining sanctuary windows. They are removable, and will be taken down in spring, allowing the small awning windows to be opened.

Stay tuned for news on other projects in the works. And take the time to thank the members of your Building and Grounds team who work up front and behind the scenes to keep your church safe and beautiful: Amy Breiting, Carolyn Fleiss, Jim Gross, Marty Kvaal, Sara Mannix, Bill Pittore, Dave Pollack, and of course, Bob Coughlin and Jane Foley.

We need new members! Let any member of the team or the chair, Toni Tasker, know of your interest, and we will have a job--large or small--just for you!

# A New First Parish Picture Directory

Six years ago, our church published a color First Parish Photo Directory. That directory is now considerably out of date. We have many new members, and many of us now have pictures of that glow from the wisdom acquired since then.

In January, the Members & Friends committee began a project to update our existing online Parish Directory by adding pictures to it. This picture-enhanced directory will provide a *living* photo directory that is kept up to date as our church congregation membership changes. It will make it easier for all of us in the congregation to be able to identify other parishioners we have met—or want to meet—or are in some church activity we have joined. And that supports our increased church focus on inter-generational activities.

For your author, writing as one of First Parish's septuagenarians, this picture directory helps me to recognize parishioners whom I don't see very often at church, newcomers that have recently joined us, *and* people whose names I just can't remember even if I talked with them last Sunday!

On January 13<sup>th</sup> during social hour, we set up a studio and began taking family and individual pictures of parishioners. We have repeated that during two other social hours in January and February. Here is a sample of such a family picture we've taken so far.



Debbie Beers & James Jones

In recognition of the difficulty of getting families together these days, we created an email address [[pictures@fplex.org](mailto:pictures@fplex.org)] where parishioners can *send* their favorite family pictures. Here is an example:



Guiseppe Taibi, Gaia, Ella, & Nita Sturiale

And for families of one, we have either taken a picture or accepted one sent to the email address.



Rita Bourne

We will continue to accept pictures “24/7” through our [pictures@fplex.org](mailto:pictures@fplex.org) email address. Any picture(s) you send should be wider than tall as in the ones you see in this article, roughly in a ratio of 3wide x 2tall.

We also plan to have picture shoots about once a month during future social hours in the spring. If you have any questions, please email them to Pete Tasker through the [pictures@fplex.org](mailto:pictures@fplex.org) address. Cheers!

# Lisa Maria Steinberg

## Director of Religious Education & Family Ministry

### **Youth and Coming of Age Services- Mark your Calendars!**

**Youth Service** - First Parish continues its tradition of our High School Youth leading a worship service. Their worship this year on **March 24th** is “We’re Not in Kansas Anymore”, reflections on March’s theme of Journey. Also at this service we will recognize and honor our graduating seniors.

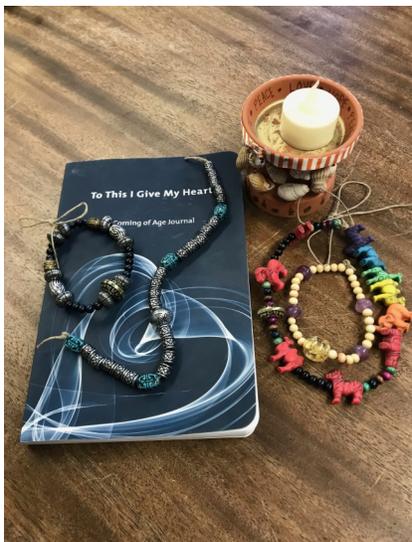
**Coming of Age** - Four 10th Graders have been engaged in the Coming of Age process at First Parish this year, and on **May 5th** they will share their Credo statements with the First Parish community. This important rite of passage marks for our young people a time in their life where we encourage them to consider what their beliefs are at this particular point in their life, knowing that where their lives lead them likely will cause them to adjust their understanding of their personal spirituality and thinking about life’s big questions.

Both of these services are All Ages Services so our younger children can hear from our teens and know what lies ahead for them as they grow older in community at First Parish.

### **Volunteers for Sunday Morning**

We have some spots open this spring that need sign ups to help out on Sunday mornings in our RE Program. Volunteers support our staff teachers and keep our program safe by following our policy of two adults in every class. We ask all members of the congregation who have been attending First Parish for 6 months or more to help out. Questions? Contact Lisa Maria A. Steinberg, Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry.

To Sign up for 1, 2, or more Sundays go to [www.bit.ly/VolunteerSunday](http://www.bit.ly/VolunteerSunday)



Personal Prayer Beads made by our Coming of Age group.

# Rip Jackson Director of Music

## Vivaldi's Gloria

and

Vocal and Orchestral Music by  
Corelli, Handel, and Vivaldi

Sunday, April 7, 2019, at 3:30 PM

First Parish in Lexington

Suggested Donation \$20



First Parish in Lexington will present a concert of Vivaldi's Gloria and other vocal and orchestral music on Sunday, April 7, 2019, at 3:30 PM. The concert will feature the First Parish sanctuary choir, soloists, guest singers, and a baroque orchestra playing on period instruments directed by harpsichordist Rip Jackson.

Hearing baroque music with period instruments is a very special experience. The members of the orchestra will perform on original instruments of the eighteenth century or on reproductions of them. The stringed instruments use predominantly gut strings and are fitted with sound posts and bridges which are thinner than those on their modern counterparts. These aspects, along with the lighter Baroque bows, produce a more articulate sound. Baroque woodwinds are made of a variety of woods. They are equipped with a minimal number of keys whereby chromatics are achieved with different combinations of fingerings. The low pitch (A-415 Hz.) enhances the dark sound of these instruments, which blend in a manner quite different than that heard in a modern symphony orchestra. The harpsichord and positive organ are built in the style of 18th century instruments and tuned in an 18th century unequal temperament.

The orchestra and vocalists will also perform a Concerto Grosso by Corelli, arias by Handel, and a double violin concerto by Vivaldi.

A free-will offering will be taken to benefit the music program at First Parish.

# First Parish Staff Feedback Form

Reverend Anne would like to solicit congregational feedback this month to help her and the staff in understanding how their work is viewed by the congregation. This feedback is very important to them. The Ministerial Support Committee [MSC] has prepared a Staff Feedback Form with questions about the work of each staff member as well as the Senior Minister. Providing your comments should take no more than 15 minutes so we hope for feedback as many parishioners as possible.

We are a covenantal community where we value our relationships, and are all called upon to speak the truth in love. You are welcome to provide positive feedback as well as any constructive suggestions. You must include your name because anonymous feedback is not helpful as it cannot be truly addressed, and so it will not be read. While this feedback will be also be used in staff evaluations, only the Senior Minister and the four members of the MSC (Dan Fenn, Bobbie Hodson, Pete Tasker, Lee Jeffers Brami) will see your comments. Forms will be accepted until March 28th.

Forms will be available in the parish hall on the piano, and when completed may be dropped into the slot in the wooden church located there that will be locked for confidentiality. If you are unable to make it to church, you may request a form and mail it back to the MSC in care of the church office before March 28th.

Please keep in mind our behavioral covenant includes the call for us to provide immediate, direct and loving feedback along the way—not just during the activity of filling out this feedback form.



# Ways to Help — Social Action Ministry

## Amnesty International Letter Writing, Sunday, March 10

**WRITE  
FOR  
RIGHTS**

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL** 

Once again, as we do annually, First Parish will be the site of a letter writing event targeting leaders of countries where evidence has shown there to be human rights violations. Many will recall Al Jacobson's devotion to this important cause for 35 years

Please mark your calendars to arrive at church early or to stay during coffee hour on Sunday, March 10th to sign letters. William Harris, the coordinator for the Lexington Group of Amnesty International, will be on hand to answer any questions you might have. Copies of each letter will appear in a Weekly Update the week prior to give members a chance to become familiar with the content of the letters. Bring your own return address labels if you wish, and we ask for a donation at the time of the writing to defray the cost of stamps.

Contact Teresa Jacobson at [teresarj@icloud.com](mailto:teresarj@icloud.com) if you are able to assist with this event.

## Interfaith Garden Diggings and Doings

If it's March, it's spring at Lexington's Interfaith Garden. We grow organic produce for Lexington's Food Pantry while gardening alongside folks from a dozen other faith communities in town. We're off and digging for this our tenth year!!

**YOU** are cordially invited to join us. The Garden is conveniently located just next door to our parking lot behind the Fortmanns' house. No gardening experience is needed.

Children (accompanied by an adult) and youth (community service credits available) are welcome. Work days are late Tuesday afternoons and Saturday mornings. You sign up to volunteer as you are willing and able.

We make new friends. We learn a lot. We have fun. For more information, pick up a brochure at the piano. If you'd like to give us a try or to get on the regular volunteer list, con-



# Adult Program

Will it ever stop, the endless litany of public and private offenses against all we believe? We say “love is the doctrine of this church”, yet we wake up in the morning and listen to the news and wonder: does what we believe really matter?

*Sustaining Visions of Justice* is a three-week series of small group discussions designed to create a safe and supportive environment for the honest exploration of how to spiritually survive, thrive, and help the world move toward peace and justice in times like these. On successive weeks these themes will guide our reflections and discussions: *The Inward Journey*, *Being a Force of History*, and *Being a Force of Nature*.

**Tuesdays, March 19 & 26 and April 7, 7:00-9:00pm**

Facilitator: Stephen Shick, member of First Parish. Professionally he has been a local peace activist, national radio broadcaster, parish minister, founding director of national Unitarian Universalist programs to end the nuclear arms race, childhood poverty, and protect human rights. Skinner Books has published two books of Stephen’s poetry, prayers, and meditations.

TO SIGN UP, GO TO <https://bit.ly/2TFZI7w> or contact the office at 781-862-8200.



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



CAT's *A Planet for the Children Initiative* that began in January is foundational. What we build upon it is up to us. Through worship, legislative action and acts of individual and congregational stewardship we are responding to the climate crisis and asking ourselves what more can we do. If you placed an "action pledge star" on the picture of our planet during worship on January 27 remind yourself of that commitment. If you participated in one of the two *Justice for Earth* book discussions or the conversation with "Sustainable Lexington's" Mark Sandeen, what was your actionable take-a-way?

*A Planet for the Children Initiative* will continue throughout the spring beginning with a worship for all ages on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, a Green Forum on sustainable food and green gardens, and on **Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup>** a Green Forum with author Gilbert Metcalf on his new book *Paying for Pollution: Why a Carbon Tax is Good for America*.

### This CAT Loves Veggies

Our Climate Action Team (CAT) will be sponsoring a vegetarian/vegan potluck on **Sunday, April 14<sup>th</sup>** right after services. Eating less meat is one way we can help our planet while also helping ourselves by eating healthier. Over the next month we'll make vegetarian/vegan recipes available to you so you can try them out ahead of the potluck.

Elizabeth Martin, a First Parish newcomer, will join our music director, Rip Jackson, to talk with us during the lunch about their experiences being vegan.

We hope to see you on April 14th!

*If you build castles in the air, your dreams need not be lost.*

*Now put foundations under them.*

*~Henry David Thoreau*

# Voices on the Green

Have you ever made a big mistake?

Which then turned out, quite unexpectedly, to be great?

If so, you may be imperfect or lucky enough to be a featured storyteller at the next Voices on the Green. Our theme for the **Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup>** show is “My Best Mistake.” That theme was suggested by our own Don Cohen, who may have some experience in this area. So, apparently, have others among us: we already have almost a full program of funny, baffling, encouraging, and consequential stories about the unexpected, and probably undeserved, benefits of making bad choices.

But we need a couple more. If you have a good personal story about a great mistake in your own life—or you know someone who does—please contact a member of the Voices steering team (David Rose, Deb Lapidés, Anne Khudari, Regie Gibson, Lisa Maria Steinberg, Helen Cohen, Suzanne Adams).

One additional note about this theme. We think this is an especially good topic to share with youth and their parents in the Lexington community, many of whom feel a great deal of pressure for perfection and the mistake-proofing of their résumés. We hope you can help us publicize this evening to your friends in that audience and/or suggest ways that we can do that.

Put Voices on your calendar for Friday, May 10th. You’ll be making a big mistake if you miss it.

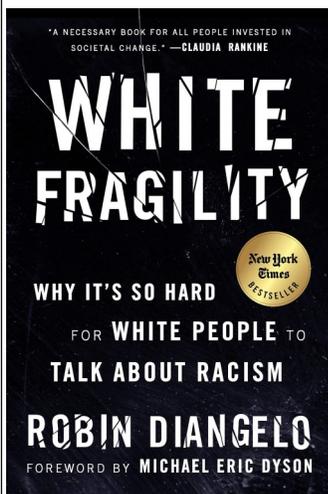


# Save the Dates

## COME TO FERRY BEACH!

The First Parish Churches of Lexington and Concord join together in celebrating our UU communities and the Memorial Day Weekend with a wonderful, family-friendly weekend at the Ferry Beach Camp and Conference Center in Saco, Maine. We cannot guarantee three solid three solid beach days in a row, but you are sure to enjoy the weekend that includes communal board games every night, a croquet tournament, sing-along bonfire, and a TALENT SHOW!

For those of you who have never been to this weekend – we warmly encourage you to register and enjoy yourself, accommodated in either the Ferry Beach housing facilities featuring both dorm rooms and THIS YEAR cottages with queen beds and kitchenettes! Or enjoy the lovely Grove campground. **Registration for the Ferry Beach weekend begins in the first week in April.**



On four **Sundays, May 19th, June 2nd, June 9th, and June 16th**, from 9 -10:15am, Debbie Armstrong and Lee Jeffers Brami will be facilitating an open-ended, interactive discussion of **White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism**, by Robin DiAngelo.

The author illuminates the phenomenon of white fragility: the defensive moves that white people, however well intentioned, make when challenged racially. It is characterized by emotions such as anger, guilt, and fear, and by behaviors including argumentation and silence, which serve to reinstate white racial equilibrium and prevent any meaningful cross-racial dialogue. Our discussions will be held under a strict Covenant of Confidentiality, and will be held in the Green Room. Buy the book now! It's available in paperback through Amazon.