

The Steeple



VOL 11 NO. 5 May 1, 2017

First Parish in Framingham
Unitarian Universalist
A Welcoming Congregation

Monthly Reflection Theme: *Beauty*

Minister's Column

Beauty abounds all of the time, but it is especially virulent in the Spring. The landscape is in a state of profound emergence and provides us with a wild invitation to remember that we are part of it.

The chubby robin on the blooming branch does not forget or remember. She just "is" and does her part in the grand scheme of things. We humans often live in the landscape of our minds and are resident in the past or worried about the future. Yet, we too emerge in the stream of the wondrous life force. Unlike the robin or the forsythia bud or the geese resting on the pond, we have to practice to remember that this is so.

Mary Oliver wrote:

Instructions on How to Live a Life

Pay attention.

Be astonished.

Tell about it.

May you allow beauty to bless you with astonishment this spring-tide.

May you dance with pure "livingness" in whatever way you can.

And, may we all take the time to tell one another about it.

With Love,
Reverend Kathleen Hepler

Sunday Worship Services, 10 am

May 7

We'll Talk About it Later

The Reverend Hepler

Reverend Hepler and member Diane Bassett will be facilitating three Monday evening classes starting this month on the necessary conversations that all of us would be wise to have with our kith and kin about death. This service will approach the topic spiritually and practically.

May 14

Multigenerational Celebration of Those Who Parent

The Reverend Kathleen Hepler and Rebecca Crawford, Director of Religious Exploration

Since we have never have a regular worship that marks Father's Day, and because this is Mother's Day, let us celebrate both this year! Ages five and up welcome. Stories, songs and experiences that you might not expect will blend into a joyous morning for all.

May 21

Gender Identity and the Worthy Self

The Reverend Kathleen Hepler

We are learning now of the tremendous variety of ways people identify their relationship with the concept of gender. "Gender nonconforming", "transgender", "cisgender," "fluid gender" are words that help us talk about this unveiling of what has always been true, but hidden. Here's to the many ways of being human and how the increased acceptance of these truths helps each and every one of us.

May 28

Music Service

Matt Meyer

The Worship & Arts Council welcomes UU

Musician Matt Meyer to lead us in a music-filled service.

From the Board of Assessors Religious Exploration

As the spring flowers welcome us back outdoors, your Board is busily working on squeezing projected expenses for next year to fit into projected income. We can count on the data we receive for projected expenses, but projected income, particularly from pledges, is always partial. Even though we hold our Canvass in early March, still 20 percent of pledgers have not let us know what their pledges will be for next year. This forces the Board and Finance Committee to do a lot of guessing about what our income from pledges will actually be. Should we run a deficit? If not, which programs do we cut, especially since they are already running on very lean resources? We scratch our heads, project trends, brain-storm, etc., which requires two extra meetings, just to get the budget into shape. One problem we haven't solved is how to get the needed information from the last few people. Any ideas?

We enjoyed another Congregational Meeting (after church, with food) on April 30 to bring the congregation up-to-date on plans for our budget for next year. The feedback from those present was an important part of our decision making process. The final decision on the next year's budget will be made by the congregation at our **Annual Meeting, Sunday, June 4, (after church, with food)**. At that meeting, we also elect officers and Board members for next year, learn what has been happening in our many busy groups, hear from our minister about the year past, and hear from the congregation about any additional concerns. We look forward to seeing you all there.

Robin Hegvik
Chair, Board of Assessors

Not too long ago, as I sang a song about belly buttons with my kids, my son said "belly buttons are ugly." - an absolute in his mind. There is perhaps nothing more beautiful than a belly button to me now, especially his; that vestige of our once very physical connection turned now into the unique mark that is his alone. I suppose then, that the old adage is true - beauty is in the eye of the beholder. As a Unitarian Universalist, I believe that the seven principles all have a thread of beauty that runs through them.

There is so much external beauty around us to speak about with our families, but I hope that as you have these conversations, that you speak about the internal beauty in each of us and foster the internal sense of beauty with all the children you encounter. Here are some great titles to get the conversation going.

Beautiful Oops by Barney Saltzberg is a great board book with a timeless message. That oops you made in your art work? It can always be turned into something beautiful. Same goes for all our mistakes in life.

Beautiful Hands by Bret Baumgarten is a lovely story that uncovers all the mystery and magic that little hands can do - the author was inspired by holding his child's hand and asking "what will your beautiful hands do today?"

Beautiful by Stacy McAnulty is a celebration of what it means to have internal beauty, no matter what's on the outside. The children featured in this story shine from their internal light and all that makes them unique.

Rebecca Crawford
Director of Religious Exploration

Around The Parish

If you would like to share a joy or a concern in the newsletter please contact the Caritas Coordinator. Caritas helps those in the Parish who face difficulties such as hospitalization, illness, and death of a loved one. Caritas coordinates cards, visits, meals, referrals to services and newsletter announcements.

The May Coordinator is Sherrie Whittemore who can be reached at 508-872-7798 or by email at SherrieWhittemor@aol.com.

Climate Action Team

You are all invited on Friday, May 12th at 7pm to watch the movie "Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret" at First Parish. An outstanding documentary produced by activist Leonardo DiCaprio. Follow filmmaker Kip Andersen as he uncovers the most destructive industry facing the planet today – and investigates why the world's leading environmental organizations are too afraid to talk about it. This movie will shake your beliefs and will inspire you to take action. For sure, the most important individual action you can take starting today to combat climate change.

Welcome New Members!

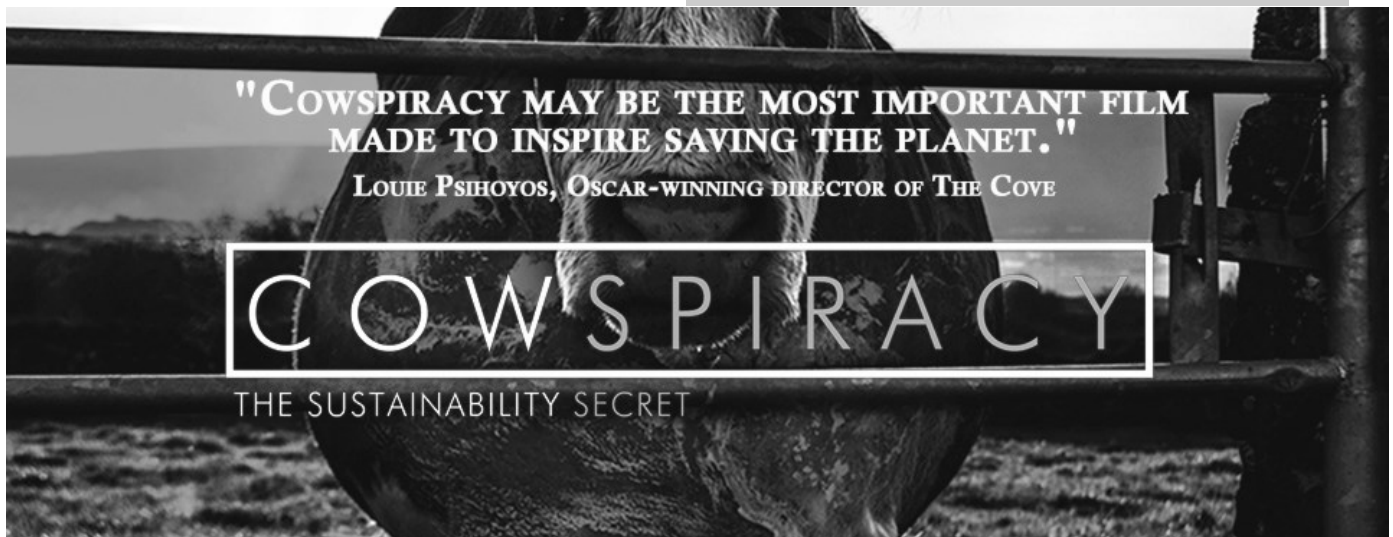
Join us in welcoming new members on Sunday, May 7. We will hold a member recognition ceremony during the service and reception afterwards during coffee hour. Our new members are:

- ◆ Kevin Looby & Elizabeth Prieto Looby
- ◆ Cheryl Downs
- ◆ Leslie Simpson
- ◆ Alexander Saffran
- ◆ Kristi Thompson
- ◆ Peter and Tracy Fontaine
- ◆ Kathryn Craddock McKee
- ◆ Roz Coss

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

The Climate Action team has set up a **Freecycle Bulletin Board** on the wall on your left as you enter Scott Hall. It has four designated areas for posts: Free Stuff, Wanted, For Sale, Services.

Please use this board to keep used materials out of the waste stream.



Social Justice

Share the Plate Planning

Once a month First Parish donates the money collected during a service to a local charity. This “share the plate” program is coordinated by the Social Justice Coordinating Council. Many of the monthly collections are dedicated to the social justice working groups within First Parish, as this is the only money available to support these efforts.

Each year, however, there are one to three months with “open” share the plate dates. The Council will determine who should receive these funds at our upcoming May 7 meeting. If you have a cause that you would like the Council to consider please plan on coming to the meeting to share a 5 minute presentation with the Council to aid in their decision making.

If you plan on making a presentation OR if you are not able to attend the meeting but have a cause you would like considered, please contact Dawn Mendelsohn at dpmendels@gmail.com.

UU Urban Ministry

Thank you for the donations totaling \$536.30 for Share the Plate in March. UUUM depends on contributions from member churches. Thank you for the Spring Collection for Renewal House, which provides emergency shelter, counseling, ESL for victims of domestic violence.

UU Urban Ministry is expanding their services for survivors of domestic violence with a Job Readiness program. They are seeking volunteers for this Program: Career Panelist, Classroom Teacher Assistants, Gardeners, Mentors, Wellness Leaders, Practice Interviewers. Your time, skills and experience can help change the lives of these survivors. For more details contact Reverend Susan Chorley (schorley@uum.org), Valerie Waldman (508-877-7769) or Myrna Howe (781-235-4226).

Adult RE Program

The Conversation Project

at First Parish in Framingham: Join Us!

Are you one of the 90 percent of people who believe that talking with our loved ones about end-of-life care is important? Have you actually had the conversation?

Are you one of the 82 percent of people who believe that putting your end-of-life wishes in writing is important? Have you actually done it?

The Conversation Project is a national campaign dedicated to helping people talk about their wishes for end-of-life care. The goal is that everyone’s wishes for end-of-life care will be expressed and respected.

Beginning with the Sunday service on May 7, and continuing with three Monday evenings on May 15, 22, and June 5 we will come together to explore why these conversations are so difficult, and support each other to prepare for and have our own conversations with the people who matter most in our lives.

The Conversation Project at First Parish, facilitated by Reverend Hepler and Diane Bassett, is for members young and old, those who are at ease with this subject and those who struggle with it. It is a starting place for conversations that can make all the difference.

For more information, visit www.theconversationproject.org.

To join, please register by May 10 by email (DLBASSETT46@gmail.com) or by phone at 774-279-1466.



Programs & Announcements

Wellspring Wednesday

The First Wednesday of the Month

Join us on May 3 as we view the PBS documentary "Spectrum: A Story of the Mind" which endeavors to recreate the world through an autistic person's POV and perception. Our program is preceded by a potluck at 6pm in the Huntley Room. Bring a dish to share, or pay \$5 at the door. Feel free to come to either the dinner or the film or both. For more information, contact Margaret Krell at mkrell56@aol.com.

Summer Services Coordinating Meeting

Memorial Room, May 7 at 11:30am

It's time to put together another summer of terrific services.

Ways to participate: Lead, assist with or suggest a service; help with the planning and coordinating; set up the sound system or the seating in Scott Hall; open and/or close up the Parish House; bring refreshments.

Come to the meeting to be part of lay-led worship during the summer!

Sacred Circle Dancing

Sunday, May 7 from 6 to 8 pm in Scott Hall. No partner, experience, or RSVP needed. All dances taught; some live music.

A free will donation of \$5-\$10 to help defray First Parish expenses will be appreciated. For more information, contact First Parish member Marilyn Engels 781-779-1370.



Women's Alliance

The Women's Alliance will meet Monday, May 8 for the Spring Luncheon at noon in the Huntley Room. If you haven't been called by May 3, contact Susie MacDonald at 508-875-3322.

Hope and Harmony: Responding to Violence with Music

Sunday, May 7 3-5pm

10 Putnam Street, Roxbury

The Riverview Chamber Players and the New England Gospel Ensemble join together for this concert with the UU Urban Ministry to remember the love of those who have been killed, and give hope for a future without violence. The young people work hard despite all kinds of conditions to be able to perform.

Car pool: Myrna Howe, 781-235-4226 or Valerie Waldman, 508-877-7769.

Stitches N' Time

This group will meet in May on the 10th and 24th in the Memorial Room. Please feel free to contact Susan Donnell at 508-872-8357 or sdonnell123@comcast.net.

Saturday Morning Retreat

Saturday, May 13, 9am-11am

Followed By Potluck And Informal Discussion
Memorial Room

Cultivating tranquility (or peace) and wisdom through sitting meditation, walking and insight into our own body, heart and mind. Registration is not required. There is no fee, your generosity of a donation of any amount is welcome. Led by Joti Royster.

Heritage Chorale To Perform Elijah

Mendelssohn's oratorio "Elijah" weaves together intriguing lyrics, gorgeous harmonies, and driving rhythms. Join Heritage Chorale Maestro John Finney, full orchestra, and professional soloists (featuring Philip Lima as Elijah), for the biblical story of the fiery prophet. This performance will leave you exhilarated. Saturday, May 13 at Keefe Tech at 7:30pm. Parking is free and plentiful. Join us for a post-concert reception.

Program and Announcements

Communities of Song Concert

Presented by the Shir Joy Chorus, Band of Voices, Wesley Choir, and Wesley Ghanaian Choir at the Wesley United Methodist Church, 114 Main St., Worcester on May 7 at 4 pm. The concert will bring together several Worcester County choral groups in a multicultural concert, under the direction of Ms. Gibbons and Brett Maguire, Minister of Music at Wesley United Methodist Church. The concert is free and open to the public.

Dinner Discussion

The next Dinner Discussion will be on Saturday, May 13 at the home of Diane and Holly. The discussion topic will be: You have one day next week without any plans. You can do absolutely anything you want to do on that day. What would you choose to do? Appetizers are at 6pm, dinner at 7 and discussion at 8. Contact Dick Paul at repen2@comcast.net or call 508-872-9729 for more information or to say what you are bringing to share: appetizer, salad, entrée, dessert or beverage.

WomenCircle

Meets Tuesday, May 16 at 7 pm in the Huntley Room. This group meets monthly for discussion and exploration of women's spirituality. All First Parish women are welcome; for more information, contact Marianne Orlando at marianne.orlando@verizon.net.

Wednesday Evening Meditation and Dharma

Ongoing Wednesdays, 7-8:00pm, Memorial Room
Meditation from 7-7:30 followed by a reading or audio recording and discussion on meditation, lovingkindness, mindfulness leading to a peaceful mind and gentle heart. Drawing from the works of Jack Kornfield, Pema Chodron, Thich Nhat Hanh and other teachers. No reservation or fee required. Your donation supports both Sacred Spaces and First Parish in Framingham.

Eckhart Tolle Evening

Meets Thursday evenings at 7:30 in the Memorial Room. Short silent sitting followed by DVD of Eckhart Tolle and group discussion. Kindly facilitated by Kathy Ward. Donations welcome, to support Sacred Spaces and First Parish in Framingham.

Yoga at First Parish

Whether you are an experienced yogi or have never taken a yoga class, you are welcome here! Yoga postures, alignment, breathing techniques and paths to relaxation will be explored. Modifications and props will be provided. Please bring a yoga mat if you have one. Julie Porter is the instructor. Class are held in the Huntley Room.

Monday evenings, 7 to 8:45 pm for five weeks: May 1 through June 5 (no class May 29). Come unwind from your day and be energized for the rest of the week! Fee for series is \$50.

Tuesday mornings, 9:15 to 10:30 am for 6 weeks, May 2 through June 6. Energize yourself! Fee for the series is \$60.

Drop-in rate for a class is \$13.

Contact Julie Porter at portgriff@comcast.net for a registration form if you are new to the class, or let her know you are continuing. Call her at 508-655-9641 with any questions.

Spirituality Book Group

We meet on June 6 to discuss *The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know is Possible* by Charles Eisenstein at 7:15pm in the Memorial room. All welcome! Contact Daryl Hess for questions at 508-494-3423 (cell) or daryl.hess@verizon.net.

Yes, There Is An Afterlife

With legacy planning, your appreciation of and contributions to First Parish can go on, joining a more than 300-year-old tradition of First Parishioners building a foundation of support for the congregation they love. The First Parish Endowment Fund, managed by your Trustees, provides an annual pledge of more than \$20,000 to supplement the canvass. Building the fund helps bring financial stability to our faith community. You don't have to be a millionaire to leave a legacy gift; bequests of all sizes to the First Parish Endowment Fund work together to provide benefit to all. For information, contact the FP Trustees Walter Barker, Jen Long or Debra Doucette.

MAY 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 5:30p FCNS, Olympia Brown Room 5:30p Free Medical Program, 110 Edgell 6p ESL, 110 Edgell 7p Rounds, SH 7p Bells, MH 7:30p Yoga, Huntley	2 9:15 Yoga, Huntley 6p ESL, 110 Edgell 7:30p Heritage Chorale, Scott Hall	3 11am ESL, 110 Edgell Rd 6p Wellspring Wednesday, Huntley 6pm ESL, 110 Edgell 7p Choir Rehearsal, Meeting House 7p Meditation and Dharma, Memorial Rm	4 8 Coffee & Muffins, Scott Hall 5:30p Free Medical Program, 110 Edgell 7p Fairs & Squares, Scott Hall 7pm Eckhart Tolle, Memorial Rm 7pm Pies Committee, Huntley Room	5 Overnight rental, Scott Hall, Huntley, kitchen	6 9am ESL, 110 Edgell Road 6p Framingham Folk Dancers Dinner, Scott Hall, kitchen
7 9:15 Children's Choir Rehearsal, Meeting House 10 Worship Service/ New Member Ceremony, Meetinghouse 11 Bake Sale, SH 11:15 SJCC, Huntley 11:30 Summer Services Planning mtg, Memorial Room 6p YRUU, Cave 6p Sacred Circle, Scott Hall	8 11:30 Women's Alliance Spring Luncheon, Huntley 5:30p Free Medical Program, 110 Edgell 6p ESL, 110 Edgell 7p Rounds, Scott Hall 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal, MH 7:30p Yoga, Huntley	9 9:15 Yoga, Huntley 6p ESL, 110 Edgell 7p Finance Council, Memorial Room 7p FCNS, Huntley	10 11am ESL, 110 Edgell 1p Stitches in Time, Memorial Room 6pm ESL, 110 Edgell 6:30p, OUT Metro-West NEXUS Scott Hall 6:30p PFLAG, Huntley Room 7p Choir Rehearsal, Meeting House 7p Meditation and Dharma, Memorial Rm	11 8 Coffee & Muffins, Huntley 5:30p Free Medical Program, 110 Edgell 6:30p JYG, Olympia 7p Fairs & Squares, Scott Hall 7p BoA, Huntley 7pm Eckhart Tolle Evening, Memorial Room	12	13 9am ESL, 110 Edgell Road 9am Retreat, Memorial Room
14 Mother's Day 9:15 Children's Choir Rehearsal, Olympia Brown 10 Multi-Gen Worship Service, Meeting House 6p YRUU, Cave	15 5:30p Free Medical Program, 6pm ESL 110 Edgell Rd 7p Rounds, Scott Hall 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal, MH 7p The Conversation Project, Memorial Rm 7:30p Yoga, Huntley	16 9:15 Yoga, Huntley 6p ESL, 110 Edgell 7p WomenCircle, Huntley Room 7:30p Heritage Chorale, Scott Hall	17 11am ESL, 110 Edgell Rd 6pm ESL, 110 Edgell 6:30p Umbrella, Scott Hall 7p Choir Rehearsal, Meeting House 7p Meditation and Dharma, Memorial Rm	18 8 Coffee & Muffins, Huntley 5:30p Free Medical Program, 110 Edgell 7p Fairs & Squares, Scott Hall 7p BoA, Huntley 7pm Eckhart Tolle Evening, Memorial Room	19	20 9am ESL, 110 Edgell Road 10 8th grade retreat, Huntley 7p Fairs & Squares, Scott Hall
21 9:15 Children's Choir Rehearsal, Olympia Brown 10 Worship Service, Coming of Age, MH 1p FSU Commencement, Parish House, parking lot 6p YRUU, Cave	22 5:30p Free Medical Program, 6pm ESL 110 Edgell Rd 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal, MH 7p Rounds, Scott Hall 7p The Conversation Project, Memorial Rm 7:30p Yoga, Huntley	23 9:15 Yoga, Huntley 6p ESL, 110 Edgell 6:30p Parents and Others Group, Huntley Room	24 11am ESL, 110 Edgell 12:45 Covenant Group, Memorial Rm 1p Stitches in Time, Memorial Room 6pm ESL, 110 Edgell 7p Choir Rehearsal, Meeting House 7p Meditation and Dharma, Memorial Rm	25 8 Coffee & Muffins, Huntley 5:30p Free Medical Program, 110 Edgell 6:30p JYG, Olympia 7pm Eckhart Tolle Evening, Memorial Room	26	27 9am ESL, 110 Edgell Road 5p Wedding, Meetinghouse, 6p Reception, Scott Hall
28 9:15 Children's Choir Rehearsal, Olympia Brown 10 Worship Service, Meeting House 11:30 CAT, Memorial Room 6p YRUU, Cave	29 Memorial Day	30 9:15 Yoga, Huntley 6p ESL, 110 Edgell 7p Fairs n' Squares, Scott Hall	31 11am ESL, 110 Edgell Rd 6pm ESL, 110 Edgell 6p Choir Potluck, Huntley Room 7p Choir Rehearsal, Meeting House 7p Meditation and Dharma, Memorial Rm			

The First Parish In Framingham
Unitarian Universalist
A Welcoming Congregation
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MINISTER EMERITUS

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BELL CHOIR

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