

FIRST PARISH IN CONCORD PROGRAM GUIDE 2011-2012



First Parish in Concord, 20 Lexington Road, Concord, MA 01742 978-369-9602
www.firstparish.org

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Dear First Parish Members and Friends,

Within these pages you will find a sampling of what First Parish offers as a community for its friends and members. This Program Guide is an invitation to enter our community on a deeper basis, to come to know others who may share some of the same interests, the same concerns, and the same questions.

This fall First Parish began in intentional interim ministry to transition between the long term ministry of Rev. Gary Smith and the future ministry of First Parish. Interim ministries are unique transitional moments for congregations, offering a time of reflection, creativity, and connections that will shape the future of First Parish. The mission of First Parish is first, to help people deepen spiritually in their lives, to go beyond the superficial, the hurriedness, the inevitable lists, and to settle into some of the deeper places of their beings to bring meaning to their lives; and second, once the strength of the spiritual self is in place, to move out into the world to make a difference, one person at a time. Our interim process will help the congregation evaluate their mission, and identity adjusting and strengthening the relevance and purpose this community of faith. This book is full of opportunities for you to be part of that process, helping you to find the rhythm you need to be part of First Parish in a meaningful way.

First Parish is committed to offering intergenerational opportunities for worship and programming. Appreciating the complexity of the lives we lead, this is a rare and wonderful opportunity. Many of these listings beckon you to meet a stranger, or to have an acquaintance become a friend, and to move across generations.

Our goal is to help you welcome, and we invite your first step toward us in all the myriad of ways listed here. Please feel free to ask questions and to participate as you chose, in whatever way will make your belonging to First Parish become real.

All the best,

Elaine & Jenny

Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha

Rev. Jenny Rankin

worship

Worship at First Parish is the one time of the week when we all gather under one “tent.” It is about practicing how life could be. It is about making connections between the world out there and the spirit within. It is song and prayer, silence and worship.

Services

Regular worship services are held each Sunday from September through early June at 9:00 and 11:00 am, except as noted below.

One Service Only

November 27th, 11:00 am – child care available for young children, no RE classes

May 27th, 11:00 am – child care available, no RE classes

June 10th, 10:00 am, followed by the Annual Meeting at 11:30 am – child care available

Lay Led Services

Sunday, December 25th and Sunday, January 1st, 10:00 am in Chapel.

Summer Services

Summer services are held from June 17th through September 2nd at 10:00 am, with child care available.

Weddings and Child Dedications

For weddings and child dedications, contact Christy McKellips at cmckellips@firstparish.org.

Memorial Services

For memorial services, contact one of the ministers – Elaine Peresluha at uurevdoc@gmail.com or Jenny Rankin at jrankin@firstparish.org

Building Use

For scheduling questions regarding building use, contact Doug Baker at dbaker@firstparish.org. The building is fully accessible

community happenings

The following events and activities are just some of the ways First Parish encourages and supports programs that integrate members and friends into the larger faith community.

First Parish Jump Start

First Sundays of the Month, 10:15 – 10:45 am, the Chapel
February 5, March 4, April 1, May 6, June 3

For visitors and newcomers to First Parish, this 30-minute orientation will provide basic information about Unitarian Universalism and First Parish. This is the first step on the Pathway to Membership at First Parish. Led by one of our ministers and the Membership Director.

Chicken Man

Come deepen our connection to indigenous cultures and the forests that sustain them, while supporting two relevant organizations, Mil Milagros and Camino Verde. Sponsored by the Social Action Community.

February Vacation, date and time tbd, Paper-Mache Extravaganza. Come make fruits and vegetables for the production. \$5 donation per family. All ages welcome.

March 2, 3, 9 and 10, 7:30 pm. Chicken Man, the Musical. Come to one or more of these performances set in the Brazilian rainforest that raises awareness of issues on the environment and indigenous cultures.

April 1, 2:30 – 4:00 pm, Lecture by Dr. Stuart Davies, Director of Smithsonian's Center for Tropical Forest Science. Donations accepted for C.T.F.S. Youth and adults welcome.

Women's AM/PM Book Group

All women of First Parish are warmly invited to read a current book and participate in one or both discussions. Dates given are for Sunday evening, 7:30 – 9:00 pm and Tuesday morning, 9:30 – 11:00 am. The books and dates for 2011–2012 are:

Feb 26, 28 The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot

Mar 25, 27 Room: A Novel by Emma Donoghue

Apr 22, 24 Mary Todd Lincoln: A Biography by Jean H. Baker

May 20, 22 Bossypants by Tina Fey

***All books except Black Walden will be available in paperback by the time of the discussion. Since Black Walden was published over two years ago, there is no information indicating that it will be coming out in paperback anytime soon. It is readily available in the library systems (Minuteman and Merrimack).

Home Drop Off Day

Saturday, February 11, 8:00 am – 2:00 pm

Please bring gently used household items and children's clothing and plan to spend the morning helping sort at this all-church social action event for the benefit of Cradles 2 Crayons (C2C) and Household Goods Recycling of Massachusetts (HGRM).

First Parish Plays – Terrific Tuesday Dinners

Tuesdays, March 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th, 6:15 pm – 7:30 pm

Bring your whole family to one or all of the Terrific Tuesday dinners in March. Each dinner is hosted by a committee of the church – Partner Church Council, Social Action Community, Religious Education Council and Caring Connection Committee – who will provide a delicious and nutritious meal, followed by vespers and music in the Chapel. Child care and activities will be available. \$5 per person/\$20 per family. All are welcome!

Spring Tea & Concert

Friday, March 16, 3:00 – 5:00 pm

The Women's Parish Association presents music and tea at this annual event. Enjoy music in the sanctuary at 3:00pm, followed by a tea which will include a variety of desserts and tea. All First Parish members, friends and youth are cordially invited.

New UU

Saturday, March 17, 8:30 am – 12:30 pm, followed by lunch

A program offered three times a year that presents an overview of our liberal religious Unitarian Universalist tradition and First Parish as presented by its staff and lay leaders. You will explore whether your own beliefs and values are consonant with UUism. This is the second step in the Pathway to Membership at First Parish. Child care will be available. Contact Jane Foley at jfoley@firstparish.org

Flea Market/Recycle Sale

Saturday, April 7, 9:30 am – 2:30 pm

This is a major fundraiser, at which the Women's Parish Association (WPA) and various vendors sell their wares. Typical items include gently used furniture, antiques, household goods, jewelry and clean toys. Snack and lunch are sold throughout the day. Donations are gratefully accepted at the church the Friday before the sale.

SYBARITE5 – First Parish Concert Series

Saturday, April 14, 7:30 pm

Third generation Concord native and violinist **Sarah Whitney** returns to her hometown with the New York-based string quintet, SYBARITE5. On Saturday, April 14th, the group will perform as part of the First Parish Concert series, sponsored by the Music Events Committee.

First Parish Auction

Saturday, May 5, 7:00 pm

This biannual fundraiser is also a “fun-raiser.” Come raise your hand and bid away during this evening of laughter and fun. More details to follow on this year's theme and how you can help.

Walk for Hunger

Sunday, May 6

The Walk for Hunger provides grants for 400 emergency food programs, including soup kitchen, food pantries, food banks, and food salvage organizations. These programs served nearly 43.4 million emergency meals last year to people who had no other place to go. Since 1969, the Walk has spurred 992,800 Walkers to tread 19,898,800 miles to raise over \$74 million to help hungry people. Contact Faith Bade at fbade@firstparish.org

Ferry Beach Retreat

Memorial Day Weekend, May 26 – 28

Gather at Ferry Beach Camp and Conference Center in Saco, Maine, for a relaxed weekend on the beach. Campers stay in bedroom/ dormitories or at the campgrounds, and meals are shared in the large communal dining room. Registration fee includes 3 nights and 8 meals.

General Assembly

June 20 – 24, Phoenix, Arizona

General Assembly 2012, "Justice GA," will be a gathering with multiple ways of engaging in justice work for people of all ages. Joining with the people of Arizona, we will worship, witness, learn and work together. We will leave General Assembly grounded in our faith, energized for justice and with resources to bring this work home to our congregations. Consider GA in your travel plans.

Affinity Groups

Social Groups open to all based on common interests and hobbies, Affinity Groups help us to connect and feel a part of the First Parish Community. Groups include French Conversation, Jewish Awareness, Honor All Beings (UUs for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), Italian Conversation, Photography Club, Needle Workers, and Spanish Discussion. Contact Membership Committee.

Covenant Groups

Covenant Groups provide an opportunity to gather in groups of 7 to 10 where you can deepen connections to the First Parish community by exploring those aspects of living that provide deeper meaning and purpose, as well as probe the spiritual diversity within our church community. Contact Jane Foley.

Men's Group

The Men's Group meets Saturday mornings from 7:30 am – 9:00 am and is a place to foster a sense of belonging, acceptance and connection among the men of First Parish. The group meets weekly in the Wright Tavern, and membership is open to all men of First Parish. Contact the Church Office.

The Women's Circle

The Women's Circle of First Parish in Concord is an earth-centered sacred Goddess-honoring group of women who gather together to celebrate the Wheel of the Year in ritual and a shared understanding of the feminine divine in its many manifestations. The Circle follows the Lunar calendar meeting on New and Full moons and observes the solar cross-quarters including the Solstices and the Equinoxes. Contact Bozena Smith.

Women's Parish Association

Founded in 1881, the Women's Parish Association is a large, active organization. In addition to its fundraising activities, concerts and teas, the WPA holds monthly luncheon meetings with programs that encompass a wide variety of activities: speakers, musicians, poetry readings and others. Membership is open to all. Contact Ginger Lane.

Partner Church Committee

The committee promotes, supports and enables the deepening of the relationships between our historic spiritual communities in Concord, Massachusetts and Székelykeresztúr, Transylvania.

Transylvanian Student Sponsorship Program

Since the first Zeresztur student was sponsored by Ivan and Ursulay Kristoffy in 1996, our Scholarship program has provided educational funding for more than 150 deserving students, most of them in conjunction with the Berde Mozes Unitarian High School in Szekelykeresztur. Sponsors agree to pay the student's fee for their four years of high school, and students and sponsors are encouraged to write each other at least twice a year, often resulting in close friendships. If you are interested in learning more about sponsorship possibilities, please contact coordinators Sue Beck or Ivan Kristoffy.

Choir Pilgrimages

Beginning in 2002, First Parish has sent choir delegations to Keresztur and we plan to continue to do so every four years. Our most recent Choir Pilgrimage was October/November 2010.

Youth Pilgrimages

Every other year since 2003, First Parish has sent a delegation of youth and adult chaperones for a Youth Service Pilgrimage to Szekelykerestur. As we plan our next pilgrimage, scheduled for July 2011, we joyfully think back on the many friendships that were formed along the way.

To ensure the success of all these initiatives, the Committee is always looking for members. Contact Winslow Pettingell at LondonSW11@verizon.net.

Transcendentalism Council

Fourth Thursday of each month

The mission of the Transcendentalism Council is to provide an umbrella for activities/events/ education about Transcendentalism, and to study the relationship of Transcendentalism to Unitarianism. Below are scheduled events. Contact Lillian Anderson at lillianand@comcast.net or Steph Chiha at stephchiha@gmail.com.

October 28th, 2011 through January, 31st, 2012 – Special exhibition and accompanying lecture series entitled, Collecting Transcendentalism – Presented by the Concord Free Public Library, in collaboration with the Library’s William Munroe Special Collections and the Joel Myerson Collection of 19th Century American Literature at the University of South Carolina

- Location: The Concord Free Public Library (main library)
- All lectures are free and open to the public during library hours.
- The schedule for the lecture series follows:

Saturday, Jan. 21st, 2012 at 5:00 pm – Leslie Morris (Curator of Modern Books and Manuscripts, Houghton Library, Harvard University; Trustee of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Memorial Association), “Collecting Transcendentalism: A Curator’s Perspective.”

membership

The Path to Membership exists to welcome and orient newcomers to First Parish, to provide programs of recognition and celebration for people who enter into signed membership, and support programs that help and encourage a deeper connection for the lifelong journey of membership.

For information about Membership, please contact Jane Foley, Membership Director, at 978-369-9602 or jfoley@firstparish.org

First Parish Jump Start

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New UU

Saturday, March 17
8:30 am – 12:30 pm, followed by lunch

Offered three times a year, the New UU presents an overview of our liberal religious tradition with its beginnings, growth, legacies and aspirations. You will also learn about First Parish – our organization, programs, opportunities, leaders and financial situation – as presented by its staff and lay leaders. You will explore whether your own beliefs and values are consonant with Unitarian Universalism, as well as to seasoned members who would like to revitalize their interest and commitment. Child care will be available.

New Member Celebrations

Sunday, February 5 and May 6

New Member Recognition will take place during the services on Sunday, February 5th and May 6th, when the congregation officially welcomes new members into First Parish. A potluck dinner for new members and newcomers will take place on Saturday, May 19th.

music

The Music Ministry at First Parish seeks to enrich and enhance our experience of spirituality, community and creative service through music.

For information about any of the choirs, contact Elizabeth Norton, Music Director, at 978-369-9602 or bnorton@firstparish.org

Adult Choir

Rehearses Wednesdays, 7:45 – 9:00 pm

The Adult Choir, directed by Elizabeth Norton, Music Director of First Parish, is the cornerstone of the First Parish music program and sings almost every Sunday for at least one of the two services. In addition to regular Sunday services, the choir sings on Christmas Eve and on two “Music Sunday” services during the year. The Adult Choir is open to adult men and women and high school singers who love choral singing and wish to enjoy the unique fellowship of a choir. The ability to read music is helpful, but not required.

Rise Up Singing

Third Friday of each month, 7:30 pm

Using the songbook of the same name, Rise Up Singing provides a less formal singing experience. Open to singers of all ages, everyone is welcome to share, in instrument and voice, for fun and song. Led by Elizabeth Norton and others.

By Your Side Singers

Rehearses first and third Thursdays, 7:30 – 9:00 pm

Working in partnership with our pastoral care ministry, the Threshold Choir taps into the ancient tradition of singing at the bedside of those who are struggling with illness or approaching death. Singers learn hymns, chants, lullabies, rounds and spirituals, supporting one another and, when invited, share them with parishioners in need of healing. Open to adults who love to sing and long to serve through music. Led by Elizabeth Norton and Laurie Corelle.

Gospel Choir

Rehearses Sundays, 10:00 – 11:00 am
Wright Tavern Sunporch

The Gospel Choir is for youth in grades 7 – 12 and is directed by Anderson Manuel. Through learning and performing music of the Gospel tradition, singers will be empowered to share their musical talents with the congregation and to develop their leadership potential for the benefit of our church. Singers and instrumentalists (keyboard, bass and percussion) are invited to join the group.

Chalice Choir

Rehearses Wednesdays, 5:15 – 6:00 pm

The Chalice Choir is for children in grades 4–6. Members of the Chalice Choir are empowered to assert their choral voices and take fun risks as they begin to learn about their integral role within worship leadership. Song selections reflect the wide diversity of cultural and religious traditions welcomed and celebrated in our UU faith. The Chalice Choir sings at approximately eight services during the year, including Christmas Eve. Directed by Gail Carey.

Junior Choir

Rehearses Wednesdays, 4:30 – 5:00 pm

The Junior Choir is for children in grades 1–3. Members gather in the safety of a song circle where they are encouraged to discover the inherent beauty of their voices through shared song. Song selections include a wide diversity of cultural and religious traditions welcomed and celebrated in our UU faith. The Junior Choir sings at approximately eight worship services during the year, including Christmas Eve. Directed by Gail Carey.

Music Events

The First Parish Music Events Committee develops and facilitates a program of music events at First Parish to feed us spiritually, strengthen our sense of community, expand our musical horizons and offer a gateway to the wider community. Contact Rob Hamilton.

religious education

Religious growth and learning is a lifetime endeavor at First Parish. As Unitarian Universalists, we recognize that each of us is on a spiritual journey that begins when we are very young and continues throughout our lives. We are always in between what we were and what we are becoming. Great religious education assists people in making meaning out of this 'in between' state within all stages in life.

For information about Religious Education at First Parish, contact Pam Howell, Director of Religious Education, at fpdre_pamhowell@mac.com

Caregiving

2 months – 2 years

The youngest children at First Parish are warmly welcomed by volunteers and teen assistants in our nursery/toddler classrooms. No curriculum, just lots of tender loving care. Babies enjoy a wide array of baby toys and books in the Nursery. Toddlers enjoy free play, snack, one-on-one stories and lots of time to create with play dough. Parents are invited to bring their children to the classroom ten minutes before worship services begin.

Story Play

Combined 3 and 4 year olds

Through stories, our 3s and 4s will explore timeless themes such as belonging, family, seasons, friends and others. After a group story, the children will engage in simple crafts in this Montessori-based program. Parents are invited to bring their children to the classroom ten minutes before worship services begin.

Spirit Play

Kindergarten and First Grade

Spirit Play is a powerful medium for telling oral stories to children. Stories are told using objects and artifacts and allow children to respond with open questions. These stories explore our Unitarian Universalist values, principles and history; biblical stories from the Hebrew Scriptures and New Testament; and lessons from favorite children's stories. Spirit Play focuses on the child's innate sense of curiosity and wonder. Children of this age begin

worship with their parents in the sanctuary and are escorted to their classrooms after the 'Message to Children'.

Religious Education Workshops: Roots Hold me Close; Wings Set Me Free

Grades 2–5

Children in grades 2–5 participate in a program of spiritual exploration through story, nature, worship and science. The program is divided into four terms that meet throughout the year. Each term lasts seven weeks and allows children to experience their spirituality through a series of hands-on workshops, including art, drama and social action.

This coming year, we will be exploring our Unitarian Universalist sources through nature, seasons, great people, great stories and science. We will celebrate the beauty of our world, its people and its spiritual nature. Our lessons will continue to have a physical and tactile component to them.

During the four terms we will explore the following themes:

1. Judeo-Christian teachings, including atonement, remembrance and reflection.
2. UU principles and social justice, including our connections to animals and people in need.
3. World religions, including rituals that bring comfort, such as making and drinking tea and breaking bread.
4. Honoring our earth through our connections with the ground below and the sky above.

Children start each service in the Sanctuary with their families. Following the Children's Message, the children will leave the Sanctuary for their Religious Education experience. The activities for the children will be in both large and small group formats. The smaller groups allow us to explore the day's theme in a deeper way.

6th Grade Youth Group

6th Grade All Year

Our 6th Graders gather as a group and participate in community building projects and activities. They play games, plant our community garden, work on our building and grounds, go on short field trips to the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, and discuss ethical and social dilemmas. This program serves to create a strong community in preparation for our Junior High programs next year.

Art in Action

7th Grade Fall Term

The 7th graders have the opportunity to create art projects that can be used as social statements. These projects will be hands-on, active and invite creative thinking about social problems. They will also have several opportunities to participate in social action work projects such as Gaining Ground and The Hugh Cargill Community Garden. This is a complimentary program to Neighboring Faiths in that it explores Neighboring Social Justice work. Social Justice is a primary expression of our Unitarian Universalist faith.

Neighboring Faiths

7th Grade Spring Term

This Spring semester program gives our First Parish 7th graders exposure to many different faith traditions. Through onsite discussions and off-site visitations, 7th graders develop an appreciation for other religions while also growing a deeper understanding of our own Unitarian Universalist traditions.

Dramatic Arts

8th Grade Fall Term

Being part of a theatrical production is a great way to build community with our young teens. We will be producing the play, “The Best Christmas Pageant Ever” and performing it for the congregation. The story, by author Barbara Robinson, focuses on six very unruly children who discover the true meaning of Christmas through participation in a church play.

Our Whole Lives

8th Grade Winter Term

During the winter and early spring, 8th graders participate in an extensive sexual education program. Our children face myriad choices and responsibilities with regard to their sexuality. OWL is our way of preparing our youth to make responsible, respectful and safe choices with regard to their relationships.

Coming of Age

9th Grade

For our ninth grade youth, Coming of Age (CoA) is a rite-of-passage experience that allows participants to explore who they are and what they believe through retreats, group meetings and social action activities. The CoA program culminates in May with a Sunday morning recognition service where youth share their individual credos with the First Parish community.

High School Youth Program

Grades 9 - 12

First Parish has a wide variety of youth programming that we offer to high school age youth. It is our hope that all of the youth connected to First Parish will find one way or many ways to connect with the other youth and the wider church community. The programs include:

Youth Ministry - Youth Group meets Sunday evenings from 7-9 pm to discuss issues, play games, and worship, as well as attend retreats and lock-ins.

Religious Education - Building on the 8th grade curriculum, OWL for the Youth Group discusses the different aspects of high school relationships.

Youth Social Action - Youth participate in projects and programs both in Concord and in the larger community. Some projects include service trips (New Orleans), Oxfam Dinner and Common Cathedral.

Contact Avi Salloway at asalloway@firstparish.org

Wright Tavern Center for Spiritual Renewal

Wright Tavern Center offers a diverse range of classes, seminars, discussion groups and presentations designed to renew our spirits and enhance our lives. Teachings in six pathways - sacred texts, spirituality and the arts, spirituality and everyday living, spiritual disciplines, spirituality and social responsibility, and Unitarian Universalist principles - are offered. Visit the Center's website at www.wrighttavern.org for more information or contact Cassy Bosworth at cbosworth@firstparish.org or Christy McKellips at cmckellips@firstparish.org.

social action

Each Sunday morning, First Parish covenants in our benediction to “go out into the world in peace” and make a difference. Our Social Action Community (SAC) mission is to honor, educate, act and lead on social and environmental justice issues. We connect parishioners with a diverse range of social action causes and projects. Join us.

The SAC organization consists of over 20 Social Action Programs, a Social Action Grants Committee, and the Social Action Community Board. SAC Programs are both “Dependent” and “Independent” as listed below. For program details and a calendar of events, go to the Social Action section of the First Parish website or contact Faith Bade, Social Action Program Director at Fbade@firstparish.org.

The following are Dependent SAC Programs (organized & active from within First Parish)

Chicken Man

Chicken Man is coming!! In March 2012, the Social Action Community will present an environmental musical set in the Brazilian rainforest. Written and composed by First Parish member, Jane Blumberg, the musical raises awareness of issues on the environment and indigenous cultures. There is an evolving list of events planned in conjunction with the theatrical production. These events, entitled, “The Road to Chicken Man,” have three goals: to deepen the connection we feel with forests around the world and their indigenous cultures, to have fun together as a community in transition, and to raise money for two important organizations: Mil Milagros and Camino Verde. For all these reasons, we hope you will come and join the case, support the events, and attend the production. Contact Jane Blumberg at jane_blumberg@mac.com.

Diversity Committee

This Committee is committed to making First Parish a welcoming place for all, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, ability or disability, or any other quality that might contribute to a sense of exclusion. Their mission is to educate the congregation

about these constituencies, and to advocate for social justice for all people. The Committee presents workshops, speakers, and films on topics relating to diversity. This committee organizes a group of parishioners to march in the Boston Pride Parade each June. **Contact** Sara Ballard at sara@sb.org

Donations for Those in Need

Did you know that many organizations collect clothing, but most, including Morgan Memorial, sell the clothing at thrift stores instead of giving it directly to an individual? Some even sell the clothing for rags and donate a fraction of the proceeds. Bill Seaver works to find local organizations that will give the donated clothing to local people in need. Drop off your usable, in-season clothing items on Bill's porch at 294 The Valley Road, Concord. Contact Bill Seaver at billseaver@earthlink.net

El Salvador Program

Our First Parish congregation was introduced to the Centro Arte para la Paz (The Art Center for Peace) in Suchitoto, El Salvador during 2008–09 as a group of youth and chaperones prepared for their April 2009 service trip. The Center, run by the dynamic Sister Peggy O'Neal, provides education to this war torn country's inhabitants on ways to move ahead in a life of peace. The First Parish group supports the Center through various youth-led events and service trips (2009, 2011 so far!). SAC Grants has provided financial support for the Center. Contact Jim Reynolds at jim.reynolds@caringcompanion.net

Environmental Leadership/ Green Sanctuary

In 2010, the Environmental Leadership Team (ELT) formed to continue the work of the Green Sanctuary. But our work has just begun. The Seventh Principle of our UU faith affirms our "respect for the interdependent web of existence, of which we are a part." The ELT is committed to providing leadership for this congregation in translating this principle into individual and community action. Currently, we are encouraging carbon footprint reduction and community building through our Ride Share program. You can find more information in the Social Action web pages or contact Bob Andrews at bob.andrews3@verizon.net or Peter Lowitt at peter.lowitt@verizon.net.

Guatemala Recovery Project

A new SAC Program in Fall 2010. The goals of this program include empowering Guatemalan women both personally and economically through Maya Skills and Mil Milagros, supporting the healing and recovery of the Guatemalans from a culture of war, recognizing past US government involvement in the war, and supporting systemic change through education and health care improvements. Mil Milagros is one organization benefiting from our Chicken Man program in 2011–2012. Contact Steve Cadwell at CadwellSA@aol.com.

Holiday SAC Programs

During November/December.

In addition to providing special holiday support for Open Table, CPO, UUUM, HGRM, Donations for Those in Need, & UUSC, First Parish also presents two holiday options:

Mitten Tree: First Parish members create or purchase hats, scarves and mittens to donate to for House of Hope in Lowell and Common Cathedral in Boston.

Secret Santa: First Parish members adopt an individual and their wish list in November for delivery in December. Recipients are from Walden Street School for Girls, Eliot Center, Urban Ministry's Renewal House, First Connections and Minuteman Seniors. Contact Faith Bade at Fbade@firstparish.org

Immigration Study Group

We began with three vision event/workshops in January 2011. This SAC Program provides an opportunity for the First Parish community to become better informed on issues of immigration (currently a UU Study Action issue) and connect with the larger UU world (we participated in the UU Common Read in 2010–2011). Plan for 2011–12 include education through film previews and Q&A's and partnerships with local immigration oriented organizations. Contact Faith Bade at FBade@firstparish.org.

Reverence for Life

This UUA pilot program began at First Parish in June 2011. Contact Kathryn Shane at kdhsane1@verizon.net or Marcia Schloss at marcialou28@gmail.com

Social Action Grants Committee

The Social Action Grants Committee works to actively express our UU social justice commitment and our First Parish benediction. The Grants Committee manages the distribution of 7.5% of pledge income collected annually by First Parish. The Committee consists of First Parish member volunteers who review Grant Requests proposed by First Parish members and determine the dollar amount awarded. Awards are granted twice a year, (October 15 and March 15). Information on the SAC Grants program can be found on the First Parish website or by contacting Wendy Holt, chair, at WendyHolt48@yahoo.com.

Young Activists

Although currently inactive, this program was conceived as a three part program encouraging social entrepreneurship in our First Parish youth.

Young Activist Grants: This program is currently being revised. The general goal of YA Grants is to educate on the grant-making process and on evaluating an effective non-profit.

Young Activist Entrepreneurs: 6th–12th graders are invited to apply for an opportunity to fundraise for their chosen organization (which is not an existing SAC program). Two teams will be chosen annually and scheduled to organize one fundraiser, one for fall and one for spring.

Young Activist Educators: 6th–12th graders are invited to create an educational presentation on a cause of their choice to be presented at First Parish. This program gives our youth an opportunity to promote a cause at First Parish with a lower time commitment than the other programs. Contact Faith Bade at Fbade@firstparish.org

Youth Service Trips

First Parish service trips are envisioned as a transformative experience for both youth and chaperones. Current offerings vary by year but include: New Orleans to rebuild after Hurricane Katrina; El Salvador (see above); and Transylvania to work with our sister church. Other overnight “mini service trip” offerings may include City Reach (see Ecclesia Ministries above) and the Heifer International farm in Rutland, MA. All active, pledging First Parish members, both youth and chaperones, are encouraged to apply. Scholarship funds are available for financial need. Contact Faith Bade at FBade@firstparish.org

The following are Independent SAC Programs (non-profits active through First Parish)

Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness

The Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness formed in 2005 in response to the significant increase in Massachusetts families without permanent housing. The Network educates citizens and promotes advocacy around programs and legislation that support stable housing. Network participants are contacted 3–4 times a year and given information and encouragement to contact appropriate legislators. Based in Concord and Acton, the Network has over 200 participants from surrounding towns and faith communities. The Network also organizes a yearly, high-profile public forum in the Concord area. SAC Grants has supported this program. Contact Jane Blumberg at 978-369-8520.

Amnesty International Group 15 (AI Group 15)

Third Tuesdays, 7:00 pm, First Parish in Concord

AI Group 15 is the local voice of Amnesty International USA and part of a worldwide campaign movement working to promote the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international standards. Members write letters on behalf of adopted prisoners of conscience and also as a part of worldwide-coordinated "Urgent Action" cases, which address the plight of people around the world in immediate danger because of their ideas and their non-violent work on behalf of those ideas. AI Group 15 also creates Human Rights community events and acts as a local voice for Amnesty. SAC Grants has historically supported this program. Visit the website at www.aigroup15.org. **Contact** Philippe Villers at pvillers@igc.org

Concord Prison Outreach (CPO)

CPO is a volunteer non-profit corporation, working cooperatively with the Department of Correction, to help reduce recidivism through the development and delivery of educational and personal growth programs, principally at the Massachusetts Correctional Institution, Concord, and at Northeastern Correctional Center ("the Farm"), Concord. CPO strives to prepare inmates for returning to society as responsible and productive citizens. Volunteer training and a background check are required for CPO coursework. First Parish also supports other CPO programs such as Gift Bags for Prisoners and caroling during the holidays. SAC

Grants has historically supported this program. Visit the website at www.concordprisonoutreach.org Contact Don Miller at donaldbmiller@comcast.net.

Cradles to Crayons (C2C)

C2C is a non-profit based in Quincy that equips homeless and in-need children with the basic essentials they need to feel safe, warm, ready to learn, and valued, while providing meaningful volunteer opportunities to thousands of individuals and hundreds of organizations annually. An all-church, social action event, "Home Drop Off Day," benefiting C2C and HGRM will occur in February 2012. Visit the website at www.cradlestocrayons.org. Contact Abby White at abbywhite@comcast.net

Crop Walk

Crop Walk is all about neighbors walking together on a beautiful day in October to take a stand against hunger in our world. Together walkers raise awareness and funds for international relief and development, as well as local hunger-fighting. Each walker gets sponsors and raises money for Church World Service, an international relief agency, and for food pantries. This year the date of the walk is October 16, 2011 beginning at First Parish at 1:30 pm. Visit the website at www.concordcrop.org or www.churchworldservice.org Contact Sara Ballard at sara@sb.org.

Ecclesia Ministries/common cathedral & City Reach

Offered at various times. Ecclesia Ministries is a church community which provides companionship and community to homeless individuals in Boston through a variety of ongoing programs. First Parish's active relationship with one program, common cathedral (CC), a weekly Sunday service and lunch for a mostly homeless congregation on the Boston Common, has diminished in recent years as CC's volunteer recruitment has expanded. First Parish now typically only reserves volunteer time for 7th graders through the RE program and our Youth Group (high school age). The City Reach program, a 24 hour "mini mission trip" to Boston, is offered to our Coming of Age youth (9th grade) and is open to other interested First Parish members. SAC Grants has historically supported this program. Visit the website at www.ecclesia-ministries.org. Contact Jim Reynolds at jim.reynolds@caringcompanion.net.

Gulf Coast Works

Currently inactive. This program is reviewing their purpose and re-envisioning their activities. Gulf Coast Works (formerly Bridge To Biloxi) invites you to be a part of Gulf Coast rebuilding and recovery! GCW is an all-volunteer grassroots organization which began at First Parish as an interfaith effort. GCW is a non-profit established to help people recover in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina through volunteer help, and since late 2005, they have helped hundreds of volunteers go there to clean up and help rebuild. Join GCW's volunteer teams as they help in many ways, from actual hands-on building to other much-needed work, in communities from Biloxi to New Orleans. SAC Grants and in-worship collections have supported this program and GCW has partnered with First Parish SAC for adult and youth service trips since 2005. Contact: Visit the website at www.gulfcoastworks.org or email Katharine Roberts at zirkrod89@comcast.net

Household Goods Recycling of Massachusetts (HGRM)

HGRM is a non-profit based in Acton that provides household goods, free-of-charge, to individuals in need. Staffed by volunteers, they accept donations of gently used household items that will help people make a home. An all-church social action event, "Home Drop Off Day," benefiting C2C and HGRM will occur in February 2012. Visit the website at www.hgrm.org Contact Diana Page at dianapage@hotmail.com.

Massachusetts Campaign for a U.S. Department of Peace

Support the national efforts for The Peace Alliance to promote legislation for a cabinet level US Department of Peace. Key components of this program are Advocacy: for legislation to provide evidence-based programs for violence prevention and policy to enhance our capacity to reduce and prevent violence, and to build sustainable peace both domestically and internationally; Applied Peace Building: for the practice and promotion of community peace building efforts; and Public Education: for building coalitions and generating media support for our initiatives. Visit the website at www.thepeacealliance.org Contact Pat Simon at psimon@gis.net.

Open Table

Thursdays from 2:00 to 7:00 pm in Concord

Mondays from 2:00 to 7:00 PM in Maynard

Open Table is a weekly dinner and food pantry for the hungry or those in need of support. Our guests include people of all ages from diverse backgrounds who share a common need for supplemental groceries, a nutritious meal and the company of others. Volunteer opportunities exist during meal service hours or food donations can be dropped off at the pantry at 105 Everett Street, Concord on Thursdays from 1–3 pm or with an appointment. SAC Grants has historically supported this program. Visit the website at www.opentableinc.org Contact Claudia Nimar at cnimar@aol.com

The Jericho Road Project

The mission of this program is to match the expertise of First Parish members and others with the needs of Lowell non-profit organizations. By providing professional services and technical assistance, Jericho Road volunteers improve the quality of life of Lowell's underserved communities. JRP also offers a Board Training & Placement Program. Volunteer opportunities always exist. SAC Grants has historically supported this program. Visit the website at www.jerichoroadproject.org Contact Nancy Coan at NCoan@jerichoroadproject.org

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

The UUSC is independent from the UUA and supports international economic and environmental justice, rights in humanitarian crises, and civil liberties. First Parish has a goal of 100% membership from our congregation, and to that end we actively support the annual membership drive through Guest at Your Table (Nov/Dec). Currently First Parish's primary involvement is the Guest at Your Table boxes during our holiday season. SAC and SAC Grants have also historically supported targeted fundraising in response to current world crises. Visit www.uusc.org. Contact Sue Beck at sbeck345@comcast.net

Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry

SAC partners with this 150-year-old institution in the heart of Boston to build connections in the Roxbury and Dorchester communities. **Roxbury Youth Programs** (RYP) is an after-school program focused on helping youth develop the academic, interpersonal and leadership skills that will empower them to be leaders in their families, schools and communities. **Stand High/Stand United** (SHSU) is a weekend enrichment program for youth that promotes self-expression through the arts and provides opportunities for youth leadership and personal growth. **Renewal House** is a spiritually based emergency shelter that provides support and extensive services for adults and their children escaping from abusive living situations. **United Souls** is a support group and network for men in transition. **Funderburg Scholars Program** provides personal and financial support for inner city students to apply to, attend and graduate from college. SAC Grants has historically supported these programs. Contact Mark Richards for United Souls at mark.s.richards@verizon.net or, for Funderburg programs, Loretta Ho Sherblom at Loretta@lhsbenefits.com or for all other programs contact Claudia Nimar at cnimar@aol.com

pastoral care

The Ministers and the Pastoral Care Advisory Council assess the needs of the congregation in order to extend and strengthen the pastoral program, spiritually and emotionally.

Pastoral Care Lay Ministry

This ministry group is selected by the minister and provides support in situations such as hospitalization, surgery, bereavement, long-term illness, support for elders, caregivers and families in crisis. They help the ministers stay informed and, with the ministers, respond to needs as they arise and change. The group has significant training and meets with Rev. Jenny Rankin for supervision, reflection and support.

Caring Connection

The Caring Connection offers concrete assistance to parishioners. They bring meals, offer rides, write personal notes, deliver flowers at holiday times, and welcome new babies with gifts and assistance. Volunteers are always welcome, so if you'd like to participate in any part of this hands-on ministry, please contact Tracey Hurd at thurd@aol.com

Lending Library

Located in the lower hallway, the books address many life issues from a spiritual and psychological perspective.

Other Ways We Care

In consultation with the ministers, parishioners sometimes plan special observances or responses to events that significantly affect the congregation and larger world.

How can you be involved?

You are encouraged to let us know, through the ministers, the church office, or one of the groups above, when you or someone you know is in need of support, please contact Rev. Jenny Rankin at jrankin@firstparish.org

committees

Archives Committee

Enid Boasberg & Winslow Pettingell

Community Gatherings

David Elwood

Denominational Affairs Committee

Dian Pekin

Diversity Committee

Sara Ballard

Ferry Beach Committee

Darien Smith
Bruce Ringwall

Flower Committee

Peggy Brace

Forum Committee

Robert Hilsinger
Charles Lowell

Herb Garden Committee

Lawrie Okurowski
Val Holt

Human Resources (Personnel) Committee*

Heather Wilson

Membership Committee

Anne Fortier
Nita Chase

Men's Group

Contact church office

Ministerial Intern Committee*

Alec Walker

Music Events Committee

Rob Hamilton

***Committee members are appointed or elected.**

Nominating Committee*

Laura Graham

Partner Church Committee

Winslow Pettingell

Pastoral Care Advisory Council

Judy Dembsey

Religious Education Council

Amy Capofreddi

Social Action Community

Tom Wilson
Maile Hulihan

Transcendentalism Council

Lillian Anderson
Stephanie Chiha

Standing Committee*

Jeff Corrao
Clanon

Trustees of Parish Donations*

Lou Fackert

Welcoming and Ushers Committee

Kris Yerby
Jonathan Hurd

Women's Parish Association

Ginger Lang

Women's Retreats

Barb Chase

Women's Circle

Bozena Smith

Wright Tavern Board

FP Office

Youth Advisory Committee

Jamie Atkins & Chloe Vilain