

# The *Meeting House* News



## REVERIES

I am writing these words in the busy days just before Christmas, aware that you will be reading them in the first days of 2012. With holiday lists ticking through my head, I am appreciating words that William Wordsworth wrote over 200 years ago: “Getting and spending we lay waste our powers; Little we see in Nature that is ours; We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!”

But if these words seem a bit too bleak for the New Year, remember what Wordsworth said in another poem, “Tintern Abbey.” He described the experience of being in “lonely rooms,” amidst “the din of towns and cities.” But for him, when he remembered the beauty of the cliffs and lakes and moors he knew so well, it was as if these memories had the power to transport him, internally, to a new place. How these remembrances can steal upon the soul and almost evoke a kind of reverie, an “aspect more sublime,” a “blessed mood” in which “the heavy and the weary weight of all this unintelligible world/Is lighten’d.”

Suddenly, the loneliness of his room drops away, the noise and bustle of the city streets drop away, and he is left with “that serene and blessed mood.” Now, he writes, “We see into the life of things.”

Wordsworth believed in the possibility that our vision can be altered, that we can see — ourselves, others, life itself — differently. Do you believe that? Has it happened to you? What would it mean to “see into the life of things”? What would it look like, feel like, be like for us? Are we modern-day Unitarian Universalists also on a quest to see with an “inward” or “spiritual” eye? How might we try to begin to do that?

Perhaps you will join me at a Wright Tavern class as we explore some of these questions. We will consider our “spiritual lineage” and see whether there might be a thread that is traceable, back through the Transcendentalists, to poets like Wordsworth, who reached always toward the ineffable, the luminous, the true and the beautiful.

In these first days of this New Year, may there be a few moments for you when the din and bustle and noise of life drops away and you are able to see with an inward or spiritual eye, feeling yourself — if only for a flash — lifted away from duties and worries—“with an eye made quiet by the power of harmony, and the deep power of joy.”

—*Jenny Rankin*

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There are two inserts at the end of this newsletter:

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## Don’t Miss... 2012 ROUNDTABLE!

Saturday, January 7  
8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**First Parish in Concord**

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ◆ Gathered in 1636

## Come to the Roundtable Saturday, January 7 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Elaine Peresluha and the Leadership Development Team invite you to a workshop where you will be doing important interim work:

- Understanding leadership expression, roles, connections, culture: “**Whose church is it?**”
- Discernment on mission identity, core values and strategy: “**Are we focused on our unique mission?**”
- Reflection on how different parts of First Parish operate: “**Are we acting our size?**”

In addition, Elaine *wants to hear your ideas, needs or priorities* for our interim period. You can send these directly to her at [uurevdoc@gmail.com](mailto:uurevdoc@gmail.com).

As always, the Leadership Development Team will be your hosts, providing a casual breakfast and a very special home-cooked lunch. Our past two Roundtables have been fully subscribed and enthusiastically enjoyed — please help us make this one even better by adding your attendance!

Because our soups, salads, bread and baked goods will be prepared by hand, we ask that you register ASAP or no later than Wednesday, January 4, so that we can feed you well! E-mail [Kate Svrcek](mailto:katesvrcek@hotmail.com) at [katesvrcek@hotmail.com](mailto:katesvrcek@hotmail.com).

### Sunday Services at First Parish

9:00 and 11:00 a.m. in our Sanctuary  
20 Lexington Road, Concord

### Religious Education Classes

Preschool and younger  
start at 8:50 and 10:50 a.m.

K-6th Graders begin in the Sanctuary  
at the 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. services

**Child care is available at all services**

- **Sunday, January 1**
- **January 1 — Happy New Year! — Mark Richards**, preaching
- This Sunday First Parish will have one service at 10:00 in the Parish Hall. Come to let go of the old and ring in your new year of possibilities.
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- **Sunday, January 8**
- **Dead Reckoning — Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha**, preaching
- Dead reckoning allows the navigator of a vessel to determine the ship’s present position by projecting the past courses steered and speeds over ground from a known past position. First Parish is navigating a new year. Where are we in the interim process? How can where we have been inform the course we set into the future?
- **9:00 & 11:00 – First Parish Choir**
- *Choose Something Like a Star* – Thompson
- *New Year Carol* – Britten
- 
- **Sunday, January 15**
- **Economics As If Money Matters — Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha**, preaching
- Wendell Berry asks, “What sort of economy would be responsible to the holiness of life?” Martin Luther King Jr. was just beginning to address economic inequality in the United States when he was assassinated. UU’s do not necessarily think alike or like other people of faith when it comes to money or what is holy. How do we think about our money, the Occupy Movement, Martin Luther King Jr.’s life as if money really matters?
- **9:00 – Gail Carey, piano**
- **11:00 – First Parish Choir, Children’s Choirs and Gospel Choir**
- *Lift Up Your Voice* – Tate
- *Total Praise* – Smallwood
- 
- **Sunday, January 22**
- **Appreciating What Is — Rev. Elaine Beth Persluha**, preaching
- ... and help it be its very best. This is our New Year SAC Sunday. We appreciate all that First Parish contributes to the world and reflect on how it defines, or not, the identity of First Parish. How is it we make a difference, with meaning and purpose?
- **9:00 – Chris Randall, guitar and vocals**
- **11:00 – First Parish Choir**
- *My Soul Is a River* – Allaway
- *Esto les Digo* – Lange
- 
- **Sunday, January 29**
- **“To See into the Life of Things” — Rev. Jenny M. Rankin**, preaching
- First in a two-part sermon series on William Wordsworth, a poet who in his poetry and his life tried to see with what he called an “inward” or “spiritual” eye. He experienced a presence in Nature that transported him to another, spiritual realm. He believed children had this connection with the nature and the divine most powerfully and that it begins to dim as we get older. How do we trace our “spiritual lineage” as modern-day Unitarian Universalists back to Wordsworth?
- **9:00 – Nancy Ackerman, Clarinet**
- **11:00 – First Parish Choir**
- *Yonder Come Day* – Hardin
- *Heaven in a Wild Flower* – Douglas
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## PARISH NOTES

### You Can Sponsor the Flowers Any Sunday

If you would like to provide Sunday flowers for a memorial or celebration, please contact **Peg Hedstrom** at 978-369-1562.

### Finding Your Interim Minister

**Elaine**, AKA **Rev. Dr. Elaine Beth Peresluha**, can be found in her office at 20 Lexington Road, Concord, Mass.; 978-369-9602, extension 411.

Tuesday 9:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday 9:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Thursday 9:00 to 5:00 p.m.

In addition to these regular office hours, Elaine makes appointments to see people at other times. Please e-mail our ministerial assistant **Christy McKellips** at [cmckelips@firstparish.org](mailto:cmckelips@firstparish.org) to schedule an appointment. Monday is Elaine's day off and Friday is her sermon writing day.

### First Parish Play Reading Group

Come Friday, January 6, at 7 p.m. to the Emerson Room to read *The Glass Menagerie*, by Tennessee Williams. This powerful memory play of four characters brings to life the dreams and longings of a family enmeshed with guilt, shyness and poverty. How do they each come to terms with their circumstances? All are welcome to join us as we read aloud together and bring these characters to life. No acting experience is necessary. Copies of the play are available online and at the library and will also be available at the time of the meeting. Refreshments and lively discussion are available. Play reading is a lovely way to end a week and begin a weekend.

### Travel Task Force (TTF) Update

On November 15, the First Parish staff met with invited members of the congregation involved with the many aspects of travel at First Parish for a conversation about

travel. The staff wanted to understand the needs of travelers, as they are responsible for supporting travel plans and assuring an inclusive and safe travel policy for all First Parish members.

In response to the needs and enthusiasm expressed by the participants at that meeting, **Elaine Peresluha** convened the Travel Task Force to delve deeper into these issues and to make recommendations to her and the staff to ensure that travel opportunities are made available to congregation members in ways that are inclusive, open and fair.

The TTF has worked with Elaine and the staff to create an initial framework for our travel opportunities, and to develop an initial set of criteria for helping decision making about travel opportunities. One initial outcome of this work is the consolidation of all youth travel under the Youth Program within the RE Program.

The TTF reviewed the current major travel opportunities under way, focusing on the Spring 2012 Transcendentalists trip to Britain and the September 2012 visit of a delegation of 12 adults and youths from our partner congregation in Székelykeresztúr. After careful review, both these trips will go forward, but with some additional thinking about how the whole congregation can better benefit from these experiences.

Starting in January, the TTF will be reaching out to the congregation and working with **Elaine**, the staff and the Standing Committee to develop a multiyear congregational travel calendar, considering ways travel can be better integrated into the various facets of the congregation, for example — financial, worship, Social Action, etc. — and considering a variety of funding models.

From the Travel Task Force members: **Lillian Anderson** (convener), **Dana Booth**, **Suzie Weaver**, **Lili Wallis**, **Rodger Mattlage**

### Transcendentalism Council Notes

January is going to be a very busy month at First Parish for Transcendentalist events. On Tuesday, January 10, at 7:30 p.m., we will welcome Jason Giannetti who will lead us in an interesting conversation on the topic "Is It Possible to Be a Transcendentalist Today?" (see insert). Giannetti received a Master of Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School, and a Master of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies from Brandeis University. He holds a JD degree from Boston College Law School, and currently teaches at Dean College in Franklin, Mass. He specializes in Comparative Philosophy-East/West, and has recently been concentrating on New England's Transcendentalists. **Jenny Rankin** and our cosponsor from the Walden Woods Project, Jeffrey Cramer, will participate in the discussion; and we will begin the program with a short reading from the play "The Night

**Parish Notes**

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*The Meeting House News*, the newsletter of First Parish in Concord, is published monthly — in print and online — September to June, to provide parishioners and friends with information about our congregation and our larger community.

Please send address changes to:  
First Parish in Concord  
20 Lexington Road  
Concord, MA 01742

#### Noon Deadline

Friday, January 20

Friday, February 24

Friday, March 23

Newsletter items should be **brief, ideally limited to 100 words**, and may be delivered, faxed or e-mailed to the church office.



Thoreau Spent in Jail.” A reception will follow the discussion so it should be a fun evening.

To provide a pleasant way to endure winter, **Jenny Rankin** is offering a two- or three-session seminar on William Wordsworth entitled “To See Into the Life of Things,” which will connect the poet to the Transcendentalists. See the Wright Tavern listing for more information.

On Thursday, January 19, **Polly Peterson** will be the featured author at the Concord Free Public Library’s Thursday Authors Series. She will be talking about, and reading from, her book, *Stirring the Nation’s Heart, Eighteen Stories of Prophetic Unitarians and Universalists of the Nineteenth Century*. The event takes place at 7:30 p.m. in the Periodicals Room on the second floor of the library.

The Emerson Forum returns on Tuesday, January 31 at 7 p.m. in the Emerson Room. The subject will be “Culture.” Emerson was above all, “more cheerful” than most of his contemporaries. Learn why. The answer was “Culture” according to Emerson scholar, Neal Dolan’s “Emerson’s Liberalism.” Come for a lively discussion around the table after a brief introduction by Wendell Refior, a devoted student of Emerson’s life and works. To prepare for the discussion, read, if you will, from the Web at: <http://www.emersoncentral.com/culture.htm>.

**WPA Luncheon and Program — January 17**

Join old and new friends for friendly conversation and a very interesting program and luncheon on Tuesday, January 17. **Peter Lowitt**, Executive Director of the Devens Enterprise Commission, and a member of First Parish, will give a presentatoin entitled “the Green Scene for the New Year. In it he will explore options available for local earth friendliness, and will survey various energy options and policies that would be wise to support on a regional and national basis. All men and women are invited to this event. Social time: 11:30 a.m. Lunch at noon. Price: ten dollars. Contact the church office or **Dian Pekin** at [pekindc@comcast.net](mailto:pekindc@comcast.net) by January 13 for reservations, transportation requests or dietary requirements. Reservations are required.

**Concord Area Humanists**

Concord Area Humanists, part of the Wright Tavern Center program, meet at First Parish on the first Wednesday of each month for a social, featured speaker, and discussion. We also enjoy a monthly discussion in the Concord Public Library. Humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that, without supernaturalism, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good of humanity.

We are planning a Darwin Birthday Celebration, with a social and movie on cosmology and evolution, at First Parish on Sunday afternoon, February 12. Please e-mail **Patrick Everett** at [pne@aol.com](mailto:pne@aol.com) to request our full program.

**Save the Date — World Day of Prayer: Friday, March 2**

Friday, March 2, is World Day of Prayer 2012. Women, men and children in more than 170 countries and regions will celebrate World Day of Prayer this year. The women of Malaysia have written the service around the theme “Let Justice Prevail.” We will stand in solidarity with the women of Malaysia as we engage in prayers and songs for their health and wholeness, and for a world of peace and justice. This year, First Parish will host Concord’s World Day of Prayer service at 11:00 a.m., followed by a festive luncheon program that will celebrate the various ethnic groups and cultures of Malaysia. If anyone has art objects, decorative items, photographs, books, ethnic clothing, etc., depicting various Malaysian cultures that the planning committee could borrow for the day, please contact **Dian Pekin** at [pekindc@comcast.net](mailto:pekindc@comcast.net) as soon as possible.

**Thanks from the WPA!**

The Women’s Parish Association extends heartfelt thanks to Eyran Katsenelenbogen for his creative and innovative jazz renditions of seasonal and favorite songs at our Holiday Concert and Tea in December. Sincere thanks are also extended to all those who contributed their delicious sweets and labors of love, which resulted in a splendid table and a festive time of friendly conversation and cheer. We hope that the New Year brings health, happiness, prosperity, and peace to everyone!

## STANDING COMMITTEE UPDATE

Over the past several months the Standing Committee and Executive Team have been working closely with Interim Minister **Elaine Peresluha** to both understand and support the Interim process Elaine is leading us through as a congregation. More specifically, members of the Standing Committee have attended a number of the meetings held with the congregation and hosted by the Interim Support Team (now referred to as the PIT — Parish Interim Team). These meetings were intended to enable members of the congregation to meet and get to know Elaine, gain a better understanding of the Interim process, and get feedback from parishioners as to what they most appreciate about First Parish as well as what “bothers” them about our church. These meetings very much support the Standing Committee’s strategic goal of engaging with, and listening to, the congregation.

The Standing Committee has also been working on improving the quality of our own processes. For example, we have been trying to clarify how we can most effectively operate as an effective policy/governing body and differentiate policy/governance issues from operational issues that are the domain of our ministers and staff. This seems like it would be straightforward, but our experience already this year tells us it isn’t.

Another one of our strategic goals as a committee is to better understand “what we are called to be and do together” — what we see as the purpose of First Parish. Although we believe the congregation should determine the ultimate vision and purpose of First Parish, we felt it was important to reflect on and share with one another our views on our purpose.

Again, to improve our own processes, we have started to adopt what **Elaine Peresluha** calls a “consent agenda,” whereby a number of ongoing administrative items are sent out via e-mail prior to Standing Committee meetings. The intent here is to allow us to focus our face-to-face time on key strategic issues.

In addition, we have begun work on the overdue issue of updating our bylaws and a key strategic issue of planning for the 2012 fundraising campaign.

Our 2012 schedule for Standing Committee/Executive Team meetings, which are being held at 33 Bradford Street in West Concord, is as follows:

- Monday, January 9, 6:30-9:00 p.m.
- Monday, February 13, 6:30-9:00 p.m.
- Monday, March 12, 6:30-9:00 p.m.
- Monday, April 9, 6:30-9:00 p.m.
- Monday, May 14, 6:30-9:00 p.m. (may be moved to May 7)
- Monday, June 11, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Jeff Clanon**, Chair, First Parish Standing Committee

## MONEY MATTERS

- Happy New Year!
- 
- As I write this in mid-December, it is another warm day. However you may feel about the unseasonal temperatures we’ve been experiencing, one thing is certain — they help with the fuel oil budget! We have spent about one half of what we did last year at this time. Sooner or later “real” winter will arrive, of course, (and our peak fuel use is in the second half of the fiscal year), but perhaps we will be able to save a bit on that line item this year.
- 
- We’ve received 57 percent of our pledged income as of this writing, right on track for the year. Year-end appeal gifts are unfortunately running significantly behind what they were last year at this time. This is a difficult income stream to predict.
- 
- Our expenses overall are slightly under, at 91 percent of budget. If you were to look at specific accounts, you would see that some are running under budget and some are running over budget. The significant overages are timing issues that will level out over the next months.
- 
- Once the new year begins, we will start looking ahead to the annual campaign. Treasurer **Sue St. Croix** and I will begin work on next year’s budget, and as always there will be a lot of communication to the congregation on budget and fundraising during the second half of the church year.
- 
- Please do not hesitate to contact me at [mpgallo@first-parish.org](mailto:mpgallo@first-parish.org) with any questions you may have.
- 
- My best wishes to you all for a healthy and satisfying 2012!. ♦

— *Melissa Perdue Gallo*

# Taking a Look Back — First Parish at 375 Years



The 375th Anniversary Celebration of First Parish certainly was wonderful! Our leadership committee of 15 energetic and active people set out to bring our community together in celebration and learning about our history, and to begin considering its impact on our thought and action today.

With the help of more than 100 volunteers, we presented two lectures by noted professors, tours of historic locations in Concord, a reenactment of Thoreau's speeches, a service that lifted the names of members throughout the centuries, a historic fashion show, a conference, Sleepy Hollow Cemetery tours by the sixth grade, and a grand dinner and historic program. Each event attracted over 100 participants; more than 225 attended the Grand Dinner!

As cochairs of this event, **Bruce Blumberg** and I want to thank the very talented and generous volunteers whose incredible range of expertise made each event welcoming and an opportunity to learn. We heartily thank the First Parish staff, who worked so hard to support this event by thinking with us, creating educational offerings, and setting up, taking down and cleaning up after us!

We look to the future, hoping that the small amount of money generated from this event will be used to carry on our exploration of our history and its meaning for our direction today.

— **Anne Fortier**



*Rev. Peter Bulkeley, founder of Concord in 1635 and First Parish minister when the church was "gathered" in 1636, surprised our current ministers (and the congregation) when he swept through the Sanctuary last October to announce First Parish's 375th Anniversary celebration.*

- As the New Year unfolds, we reflect on First Parish's 375th Anniversary in October 2011. First Parish hosted nearly two weeks of celebratory events, with the involvement of many First Parish volunteers and support of nine community sponsors. With many good memories to savor, here are just a few in photographs. Many thanks to all who contributed their photography — **Pierre Chiha, Bill Claybrook, Fred van Deusen, Cynthia Ellis, Richard Fortier, and the First Parish Photo Club.**



*"No One Wore Prada," on October 21, a history fashion show of First Parish's cultural heritage through the ages, featured many personalities, including these American Revolution colonials — left to right, Samuel Adams, who, along with John Hancock, led the 1775 Provincial Congress at the Meeting House, a well-dressed Concord lady, and Phebe Bliss and husband Rev. William Emerson, the couple that built the Old Manse. Emerson, grandfather of Ralph Waldo Emerson, was an ardent patriot who preached resistance from the pulpit.*

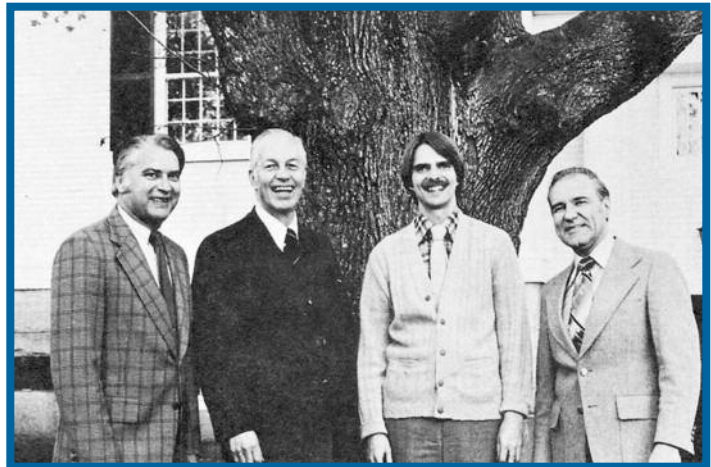


- Here are a few Concord Selectmen, some First Parish members of the Standing Committee and SUNY NY. Professor Ronald Bosco, who delivered the October 375th keynote address at the Concord Free Public Library.





*On October 15, Henry David Thoreau (Reenactor Prof. Kevin Kadaker) made a special visit to First Parish in honor of the 375th Anniversary. He delivered excerpts from his famous anti-slavery speeches and met with the audience at a reception. The Drinking Gourd and the Thoreau Society sponsored Thoreau's visit to First Parish. One guest traveled from the Midwest to attend the event.*



*Saturday, October 22, First Parish 6th graders led tours through Sleepy Hollow Cemetery to visit the grave sites where six notable Unitarian Universalists are buried — including Louisa May Alcott, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Daniel Chester French, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry David Thoreau, and Elizabeth Palmer Peabody.*



*These photos were part of "The Way We Were," the First Parish Retrospective — 1940-2000 presentation shown at the Grand Dinner — filled with memories, narratives and photos of First Parish history. (Top) Here is a leadership photo from Dana Greeley's ministry at First Parish. Who do you recognize? (Bottom) Do you recognize these First Parish ladies? What year was this taken? We can't leave you guessing on this one — left to right, we can identify Jean Harwood, Priscilla Ferguson and Sylvia Klinck; Barbara Palmer is seated.*

### What about Me? Self-Care for Caregivers

“What about me?” It’s not a question caretakers often ask aloud, but it is one of the most important questions caretakers can ask themselves. Caretakers are often ordinary people thrust into extraordinary circumstances. Caring for a loved one or friend who is sick, dying or even in recovery can be physically, mentally and spiritually draining. It is not unusual for a caretaker to experience feelings of grief, confusion, hope, despair, anger, and a sometimes overwhelming sense of personal responsibility while caring for another. To ask, “What about me?” while caring for a loved one or friend who is ill may seem counterintuitive, even downright selfish. In fact, the opposite is true. “What about me?” is an expression of concern for self-care. Self-care is always important, but even more so when we are caring for another. Self-care is not a selfish act, but an act of love. It increases our capacity to be more fully present to those for whom we care. Self-care takes many forms. For some it might be a few hours or days away from the person being cared for. It might be time alone in meditation or prayer, or time with friends. It might be a visit with a minister or pastoral care lay minister. It might even be a massage or dinner out. The key is to think of self-care as an integral part of caring giving rather than something extra to do. Indeed, we would do well to consider self-care for caregivers part of a comprehensive treatment plan for our loved ones and friends.

Blessings,

—*Craig Nowak*

Ministerial Intern

### The Pastoral Care Team at FirstParish Walking with One Another through the Changes Life Brings

The Lay Minister for January is **Diane Clapp** at 781-257-5025 or [d.clapp@comcast.net](mailto:d.clapp@comcast.net).

Ministers: **Rev. Jenny Rankin** ([revjenny@comcast.net](mailto:revjenny@comcast.net)) and **Rev. Elaine Peresluha** ([uuevdoc@gmail.com](mailto:uuevdoc@gmail.com)) or by calling 978-369-9602.

Lay Ministers: Contact **Diane Clapp** ([d.clapp@comcast.net](mailto:d.clapp@comcast.net)).

Caring Connection: Contact **Tracey Hurd** ([thurd@aol.com](mailto:thurd@aol.com)) for meals or rides.

Pastoral Care Advisory Council: Contact **Judy Dembsey** ([dembsey@verizon.net](mailto:dembsey@verizon.net)).

### Pastoral Care Library

Our educational, multigenerational library for adult parishioners is located up the steps to the new church

• addition at the first hallway to the right. At the beginning  
• of the left wall is a color-coded framed sign with all eight  
• categories: Living, Relationships, Children’s Development,  
• Mental Health, Illness and Wellness, Addiction & Related  
• Issues, Loss and Grief, Dying and Death. There are many  
• interesting books to be borrowed, with sign-out cards.  
• Instructions are on the middle shelf. Also, you can visit the  
• library on the First Parish website under Pastoral Care  
• Library.

• We are very grateful for donations of recently published  
• books related to the above subjects, which might be of  
• great help to another parishioner. Also, we are in great  
• need of CD’s and DVD’s, since our library consisted of  
• outdated audiotapes and VHS videos. Please leave your  
• donations at the office for **Ursula Kristoffy**  
• (978-369-7484). Many Thanks. — **Ursula Kristoffy**,  
• Pastoral Care Advisory Council member

### Caring Connection

• We are grateful to the many people who help with food  
• delivery, “thinking of you” note cards, baby welcoming,  
• transportation, weekly pastoral note cards and all else that  
• makes up the Caring Connection network. Thanks to **Judy**  
• **Dembsey** for her help with “thinking of you” note cards  
• and to the many people who write notes to those remem-  
• bered during Sunday services. Again and again we hear  
• from individuals that these notes mean so much to them.  
• **Kathleen Elcox** continues to provide thoughtful and stun-  
• ning photographs for many of the cards; our sincere  
• thanks to her.

• We also offer beautiful cards created by children in the  
• religious education program. Thanks to **Pam Howell** for  
• involving our children in pastoral care. The creation of  
• beautiful kid-created collages and decorated bags for food  
• delivery will make our Caring Connection food deliveries  
• so special for the recipients. We are grateful to the many  
• children who made them, and to the RE teachers, **Pam**  
• **Howell** and artist and Pastoral Care Lay Minister **Bev**  
• **Bringle** who helped champion their efforts. **Rev. Jenny**  
• **Rankin** guides our efforts, suggests outreach for care, and  
• keeps a vision of a loving community present for us all.  
• We are truly blessed to have her leadership of pastoral  
• care. — **Tracey Hurd**, Team Leader, the Caring  
• Connection

### Shawl Ministry — Coming Soon!

• Shawl Ministry is about creating and giving hand-knitted  
• or crocheted shawls to others in a congregation to mark a  
• sad or joyous occasion, or simply to offer ongoing sup-  
• port. Those who receive them feel literally wrapped in the  
• arms of the congregation; those who gather to create the  
• shawls are able to be part of a spiritual, caring outreach to  
• others. Shawl Ministry has been embraced by UU congre-  
• gations, large and small. We have instructions for how to

• **Pastoral Care News**

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## PARTNER CHURCH COMMITTEE

The dates are now tentatively set for our First Parish hosting of a contingent from the Keresztúr Congregation. If all goes according to plan twelve of our Transylvanian friends will be arriving on September 20 and staying through to October 1. We continue to look for volunteers for help with planning, fund-raising and hosting. For further information please contact **Ken Estabrook** at [kestabrook@verizon.net](mailto:kestabrook@verizon.net).

We would like to thank **Jane Foley** for the recent opportunity to sponsor the Sunday coffee hours a few weeks ago and hope everyone enjoyed the marvelous baked goods and Hungarian treats. If you were able to partake, or missed it, please be sure to mark Saturday, 11 February in your calendar as our special Székelykeresztúr Evening. More details to come!

We would like to remind those who are sponsoring a Keresztúr student that **Dana Booth** is available to offer advise on how to “make the most” of your sponsorship. He can be reached at [dana.a.booth@gmail.com](mailto:dana.a.booth@gmail.com).

It was beginning to feel a lot like Christmas and the Partner Congregation Committee was thrilled to have Rev. **Elaine Peresluha** join us for our December supper meeting at the home of **Sara** and **Stoney Ballard**. As always you’re invited too. Our next supper meeting will be held on Thursday, January 12 at the home of **Lillian Anderson**. For further information drop us a line.

For pictures of past Keresztúri pilgrimages and for further information, drop us a line; and for our all our latest PCC news and information, see <http://www.firstparish.org/cms/committees/partner-church>. ♦

*Minden jót!* “Best wishes!”  
— **Winslow Pettingell**, PCC chair,  
[LondonSW11@comcast.net](mailto:LondonSW11@comcast.net)

### Pastoral Care News continued from page 8

start Shawl Ministry, including suggested processes and advice about patterns, symbolic colors, stitches and materials. The pastoral care team is interested in having this ministry at First Parish. The Caring Connection is ready to help organize and support this ministry. Are you potentially interested in being involved? Would you like to be on an e-mail list about it? Contact **Tracey Hurd** at 978-369-2366 ([thurd@aol.com](mailto:thurd@aol.com)) and let her know. Everyone is welcome — knitters, crocheters, quilters and non-needleworkers alike! —**Tracey Hurd**, Team Leader, the Caring Connection

## MEMBERSHIP CORNER

Have you noticed how nice our coffee hours have been, with tables full of goodies and friends gathered round? This is due to the efforts of several First Parish groups who have hosted a coffee hour. I’d like to extend a special thank you to the Women’s Book Group, Transcendentalism Council, Women’s Parish Association, Partner Church Committee and Pastoral Care Advisory Council.



Providing a nice coffee hour is one way to offer hospitality to friends and visitors. Making the extra effort to greet people you don’t know, introducing yourself to them, letting them know how and why you participate in the life of the church, and showing them to the Parish Connections table are some other ways to

make a visitor feel welcome on Sunday mornings. In their book, *Radical Hospitality: Benedict’s Way of Love*, Father Daniel Homan and Lonni Gollins Pratt write, “When we speak of hospitality we are always addressing issues of inclusion and exclusion. Each of us makes choices about who will and who will not be included in our lives ... Hospitality has an inescapable moral dimension to it ... All of our talk about hospitable openness doesn’t mean anything as long as some people continue to be tossed aside ... But calling hospitality a moral issue does not tell us the whole truth about hospitality either. A moral issue can become bogged down in legalisms, and hospitality is no legalistic ethical issue. It is instead a spiritual practice, a way of becoming more human, a way of understanding yourself. Hospitality is both the answer to modern alienation and injustice and a path to a deeper spirituality.”

Please consider this path each Sunday morning when someone you don’t know walks into the Parish Hall. And if your family, group, committee or council would like to host a coffee hour, please email me at [jfoley@firstparish.org](mailto:jfoley@firstparish.org). ♦

— *Jane Foley*  
Membership Director

# MUSINGS

Lately I have been pondering the musical archeology of songs. (You are thinking, “Musical archeology? The holidays really got to her.”)

Stay with me: Webster’s defines archeology as “the study of past human life as revealed by relics left by ancient peoples.” I suggest music can unearth relics, even treasures, from our lives. Often unexpectedly.

And yes, the holidays did bring it on. Hearing **Elaine Peresluha** read Garrison Keillor’s rant about UU’s changing the words to “Silent Night” certainly stirred up some dust. On Christmas Eve in Concord, we have sung the traditional words ever since the Christmas the choir dutifully read the words from the hymnal (excising “Jesus,” “Christ” and “Savior”), while the other 450 people in the Sanctuary sang the words they knew by heart. Lesson learned!



Songs have deeply embedded histories. Histories we know “by heart.” A favorite song can vividly evoke a time, place, person or sensation, unearthing obscure layers of our experience and uncovering particular emotional and spiritual artifacts for each singer. Acknowledging those “finds” can lead to deeper understanding of our spiritual journeys.

Recently, a congregant who shares my Presbyterian upbringing reminded me of a beloved hymn from childhood, “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling,” which we sang to Hyfrodol, the Welsh hymn tune of “Blue Boat Home” and “Hail the Glorious Golden City.” Though neither of us had sung that text for years, it is part of Hyfrodol’s “archeology” for us both. We delighted in discovering this mutual treasure.

When I first met my husband, a “birthright Unitarian,” we attended services together at his home church, Old Ship Church in Hingham. As we sang the familiar hymn “Holy, Holy, Holy,” I enjoyed the irony of singing that hymn, which in my childhood hymnal ended “God in three persons, blessed TRINITY” in a Unitarian church. And of course, I sang those words right into Peter’s ear.

That hymn brought my spiritual history into that sanctuary. It also entwined our separate histories in a time and place and helped us to appreciate them. I believe that this is possible for most music that we include in our worship together. I plan music, mindful that any song has the capacity to uncover myriad memories and experiences for congregants.

So, whenever we sing a hymn, consider the probability that for someone in the congregation it may be uncovering lost treasures of memory and emotion. And if that someone is you, may those discoveries be blessings. ♦

Blessings,

— *Beth Norton*

Music Director

## Children’s Choirs Now Accepting New Members

Did you come out to hear the joyous sounds of our children’s choirs on Christmas Eve? Were you amazed at the beauty created by these young ensembles? Do you wonder if this is the choir for your child?



Come check us out in our open rehearsals throughout the month of January. We meet every Wednesday afternoon. Your child can “try out” the choir while you watch with other choir parents. Check out our church website for rehearsal details and registration forms. No singing experience is

necessary — just a love for music! Don’t hesitate to call me, the children’s choir director, with any questions at 781-626-3043. Choir can be an especially nice way for new members to make new friends. We’d love to have you join our fabulous “choir family.” ♦

In song,

— *Gail Carey*

## Handbells Return to First Parish

Are you a former First Parish handbell ringer who’d love to get back “in the swing”? Did you want to ring with the group when it was active, but weren’t able to attend weekday rehearsals? Have you always wanted to try ringing handbells but weren’t sure you could commit to a full season, or felt nervous about joining a fully established ensemble?

If any of these descriptions applies to you, then we hope you’ll take advantage of a special opportunity. Our former handbell director, Martha Goodman, will be returning for a limited engagement, working with a group of ringers for the six weeks leading to the presentation of their efforts at both Sunday services on March 4.

Rehearsals will begin with a one-hour orientation session for those without prior handbell experience on Sunday, January 22, at 2 p.m. Then, all ringers will rehearse for five consecutive Sunday afternoons (January 29, and February 5, 12, 19 and 26), 1 to 3 p.m.

If you can count to four and identify a whole, half and quarter note, and if you can commit to attending most — if not all — rehearsals, then this is the opportunity for you! For more information, and to reserve a place at the handbell tables, call Martha Goodman at 508-928-2078 or write to her at [mgtrek@earthlink.net](mailto:mgtrek@earthlink.net).

Music Notes

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Mark your calendars — everything you’ve always wanted to say but couldn’t — open conversations and deep listening at First Parish. Come and talk with fellow parishiners about whatever is on your mind about the past present and future.

The Parish Interim Team and the Ministerial Search Committee want to hear from you! We will be hosting a February Blitz of conversations. The PIT/MSC want to hear from everyone connected to first parish. We will be conducting group discussions all month long in February. To sign up for a meeting, please contact the office or e-mail **Cassy Bosworth** at [cbosworth@firstparish.org](mailto:cbosworth@firstparish.org).

## Coming Soon — The First Parish February Blitz Everything You've Always Wanted to Say about First Parish, but Haven't

### A month-long initiative dedicated to deep listening

Please join the Parish Interim Team and the Ministerial Search Committee throughout the month of February 2012, so we can hear “Everything You’ve Always Wanted to Say but Haven’t.” We need your voice to help us determine the congregation’s priorities for the future of First Parish.

#### There are FOUR different opportunities to participate:

1. Meetings will be held immediately after each Terrific Tuesday Community Supper (every Tuesday in February, 7:00–8:30 p.m. Child care available) \*
2. Open meetings are scheduled:  
Friday, February 10, 11-12:30 p.m. \*  
Sunday, February 12, 12:30-2:00 p.m. \*  
*\* For the above options, call the office to sign up.*
3. If you are part of a committee, council, fellowship or covenant group, please invite us to come to your regular February meeting. We are striving for groups of 8 to 12 so we may combine or split groups to meet that goal. (Please contact **Susan Ryan** at [susanryan101@comcast.net](mailto:susanryan101@comcast.net) to schedule a meeting with your group.)
4. You can gather a group of 8 to 12 parishioners in your home during February and we will come to you. (Please contact **Susan Ryan** at [susanryan101@comcast.net](mailto:susanryan101@comcast.net) to schedule a meeting in your home.)

Please be sure to attend or plan at least one gathering. Every voice is important to us!

## Parish Interim Team — First Parish in Concord

Rebecca Curzon	<a href="mailto:rebeccacurzon@comcast.net">rebeccacurzon@comcast.net</a>
Katharine Esty	<a href="mailto:katharineceesty@verizon.net">katharineceesty@verizon.net</a>
Sven Olson	<a href="mailto:sven.a.olson@chase.com">sven.a.olson@chase.com</a>
Mark Richards	<a href="mailto:markr@upriverministries.org">markr@upriverministries.org</a>
Susan Ryan	<a href="mailto:susanryan101@comcast.net">susanryan101@comcast.net</a>
Jim Smith	<a href="mailto:JAS@foleyhoag.com">JAS@foleyhoag.com</a>

## Music

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### First Parish in Concord Singers Are Invited to Return to the UU Urban Ministry:

**Sunday, January 15, 6:00 p.m.**

#### Hope Out Loud Concert, First Church in Roxbury

On Sunday, January 15, the UU Urban Ministry will be hosting a Martin Luther King event that includes a 6:00 p.m. gospel concert. The Boston Community Choir (BCC: <http://bostoncommunitychoir.org>), a gospel choir under the artistic direction of Dennis Slaughter, will be featured. Given the strong ties that First Parish in Concord has nurtured with UUUM, our children’s choir has been invited to share the bill with the BCC. In the spirit of shared ministry, members of all First Parish choirs will join forces in an intergenerational gospel rendition of Brian Tate’s “Lift Up Your Voice.” The concert is open to the public, and we hope that folks will come out to support the good work of the Urban Ministry. Please join us for a musical celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King. The concert will end with a gospel sing open to all!



Last week, I watched all three of the performances of our Eighth Grade play. Each year, we struggle with whether or not to take this project on again. The kids, they feel pressure. They must show up. They must be accountable to each other and support each other. They must learn their lines. They must pay attention. They are nervous. They do not do this for grades, or for college or for a specific skill. They end up doing this for each other.

Their self-absorption, as young teens, drops away and they become part of something greater than just one's self.



Our Directors, **Caroline** and **Jimmy McCloy**, give up so much to make this happen and live with the stress of producing a play with young teens. Can we

count on these teens to pull through? Do they have it in them with all of the current culture's distractions?

Tension mounts as the show date approaches.

There is a conflict — the dress rehearsal directly coincides with the town's tree lighting. Their Concord friends knock at the windows of the Parish Hall. Come out and join the fun! But our kids decide to stay. They give up their fun to create something important for their community. They perform this show for their families and brothers and sisters. They perform it for the RE children, who wonder if one day they can be Ralph Herdman or Imogene. They rise above their personal fears and they deliver something unique — our Eighth Graders feel the joy of giving the holiday spirit to their beloved community.

I look out at the audience. Eleventh graders are there, watching their younger peers perform. Past directors are present. Grandparents have arrived. There is hope. There is tradition. I see tears. And faith grows. Maybe, yes ... in this sacred place, the holidays are more than just shopping. ♦

— *Pam Howell*

Director of Religious Education

**Thank You to All of the Holiday Craft Elves!**

The Elf Workshop was a huge success! A special thanks goes out to **Marilyn Lowitt** and **Jan Goddard-Taylor**. Without their leadership, this amazing event could not have happened. They organized, communicated, and crafted their way

**January 2012 RE Calendar**

- Sun., Jan. 1 New Year's Day, No RE
- Sun., Jan. 8 Regular RE for Babies–4 years  
Regular RE for K-5th Grades (Emerson Room)  
6th Grade Youth Group – Wright Tavern  
7th Grade Special Art Activity (Brooks Room)  
8th Grade OWL at 4 p.m. (Emerson Room)  
9th Grade COA at 6:30 p.m. (Emerson Room)
- Sun., Jan. 15 Regular RE for Babies–4 years  
Intergenerational Service at 9 and 11 a.m.
- Sun., Jan. 22 Regular RE for Babies–4 years  
Regular RE for K-5th Grades (Emerson Room)  
6th Grade Youth Group – Wright Tavern  
7th Grade Neighboring Faiths (Brooks Room)  
8th Grade OWL at 4 p.m. (Emerson Room)
- Fri., Jan. 27-28 9th Grade COA Social Action Retreat, City Year
- Sun., Jan. 29 Regular RE for Babies–4 years  
Regular RE for K-5th Grades (Emerson Room)  
6th Grade Youth Group – Wright Tavern  
7th Grade Neighboring Faiths 11 a.m.  
8th Grade OWL at 4 p.m. (Emerson Room)

through October and November and it showed. After construction and transitions, we are back in full swing and this community was ready to celebrate the holiday spirit.

RE Council member **Patty Popov** stepped up to the role of herding our crafty elves. Each table was stocked with craft leaders and craft helpers. It is a big task, but with Patty's elf connections, it all happened elfishly.

We also organized the workshop differently this year, and each Craft Elf managed her own table. I would like to thank each and every elf for his or her leadership. It is just too much for one or two Head Elves to do. By sharing the work, it made the whole event more manageable for all involved.

We had approximately 120 kids at this event, and that's not even counting the kids over 14 years old! You all know who you are ...

**Second- to Fifth-Grade Workshop Rotation**

This term, we are focusing on prophets from the Judeo-Christian Bible. We told stories from the New Testament about the life of Jesus in December; and in January, we will be telling stories from the Hebrew Scriptures about Moses and the Ten Commandments.

Prophets are truth tellers. They carry stories and wisdom to the people about righteous living. They teach us much about ourselves and

RE News

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the communities in which we live. They are not only found in the texts of religious works, but also in modern times. Each one of us has the power to be a teller of truth and to make a difference in our shared world.

January 1 – New Year’s Day, No RE.

January 8 – Week 6 of the Holiday Term: Moses and the Ten Commandments

January 15 – Week 6 of the Holiday Term: Moses and the Exodus

January 22 – Week 7 of the Holiday Term: Moses and the Ten Commandments

January 29 – Week 1 of the Winter Term: Chinese New Year and Friendship

**Seventh Grade Neighboring Faiths to Begin**

We are excited to begin a new term of our important Neighboring Faiths program. This year, this program will unfold under the leadership of **Patty Popov, Natalie Bartlett, Nic Hammond, Susan Ryan, Roberto Rodriguez** and **Connie Johnson**. Our kids will visit a Jewish Temple, a Catholic Service, a Buddhist Temple, a Mormon Temple and a Baptist Congregation, and learn about the dangers of cults.

This program is not about “shopping for a new faith,” but rather strengthening our understanding of Unitarian Universalism by understanding neighboring faith traditions. By growing our appreciation of others’ faiths, we can better compare and contrast our own. What makes us unique? Are we a religion? Do we exclude? How do we include? What is the essential essence of being a Unitarian Universalist in today’s world?

These are big questions; and by making visits to our neighbors we begin the work of making our world a place of peaceful tolerance and loving appreciation.

**Orientation for Religious Education Teachers and Leaders for 2011-2012**

**Orientation Schedule for Babies–1st Grade Teachers in the Emerson Room:**

Caregiving, Story Play and Spirit Play, Winter and Spring Terms: Wed., Jan. 18, 7:30–9:00 p.m.

**Orientation Schedule for Second– to Sixth-Grade Teachers in the Emerson Room:**

2nd-6th Grade Winter Term #3: Wed., Jan. 25, 7:30–9:30 p.m.

2nd-6th Grade Spring Term #4: Wed., Mar. 28, 7:30–9:30 p.m.

**Orientation Schedule for 7th, 8th and 9th Grade Leaders:**

7th Grade Neighboring Faiths Spring Term: Jan. 11, 7:30 p.m.

SENIOR YOUTH NEWS: THE HEARD

The Heard has enjoyed a festive holiday season together. On November 18, 20 of us camped out in the Wright Tavern and explored the spirit of Church in the early morning hours. In



December we lent our hands in the kitchen with Ana Paula and **Jane Blumberg** for the Brazilian/ Guatemalan Baking benefit. We wrapped up the year and united with old friends for the Heard-Alumni Yankee Swap Party.

As we turn the calendar year, we are given the opportunity to reflect, and I must say that it has been a pleasure to see YRUU truly grow into a vibrant Heard. We have had great participation, with over forty members; and now we enter 2012, full of fortitude, with many exciting events to look forward to.

Jan. 8: 5:00 p.m. YAC, The Wright Tavern — Join us to help plan the Winter Retreat and future trips and events.

Jan. 8: 6:30 p.m. The Heard — Make our own pizza party!

Jan. 27-29: Winter Retreat to Mount Sunapee — We’ll head to the beautiful mountains of southern New Hampshire for skiing, snow activities, and slumber parties! RSVP to [avifirstparish@gmail.com](mailto:avifirstparish@gmail.com).

Future Dates to note:

Feb. 4: Chili Cook-off

Mar. 2-3: City Reach

Mar. 25: Youth-Led Service

Apr. 19-22: Vermont Farm & Flood Recovery Service Trip

Love, Blessings & Happy New Year! ♦

Yours truly,

— *Avi Salloway*

Youth Program Director

Here is a New Year's resolution I hope for each one of you — Let your voices be heard! Our interim work begins in earnest as the New Year begins. Each of us will have opportunities to participate — sharing our concerns and aspirations for First Parish. What are we? What can we become? I may be a bit biased, but I see social action as an integral part of our community. We have 20 SAC programs; we run a grants program; we have a thriving Social Action board and community of activists; we advocate for change; we donate items; we give our time, talent, and money. Do we do enough? Can we do better? Can we do it differently? If activism, in whatever form, is a part of your faith, I encourage you to talk about it. Your first opportunity is at the Leadership Roundtable on Saturday, January 7, here at First Parish. I look forward to joining together with the many voices of First Parish as we explore who and what we are. I hope your voice is heard! And Happy New Year. ♦

— *Faith Bade*

Social Action Program Director

Go to [sac.firstparish.org](http://sac.firstparish.org) for news and calendar information.

## Thank You for Your Holiday Sharing

The Social Action Holiday programs are winding down and we wish to thank everyone who contributed or volunteered to make them a success!

Clementine Drive for Open Table's Thanksgiving Dinner – Over 20 boxes of clementines were donated. Thank you to **Claudia Nimar** for organizing.

CPO Gift Bags for Prisoners – The bags were collected and the items delivered. Thanks to **Don Miller** for organizing us!

Secret Santa – 100 matches were made (Healthy Families/First Connections, UUUM's Renewal House, Eliot Center, Walden Street, Minuteman Seniors). Thank you to the Secret Santa team of **Katharine Roberts, Nichole Hammond, Amy Capofredi, Kate Svrcek and Debbie Barr.**

Mitten Tree – More than two bags of items were collected for House of Hope in Lowell and Open Table. Thanks to **Joan and Hayle Wesolowski** for organizing!

UUSC Guest at Your Table boxes are due by January 11. Thank you to **Berni Jenkins** for counting all the money!

## • Open Table Food Drive Going on Now!

- You can find brown paper bags inside the side entrance of the church with a list of donations needed, such as cereal, coffee/tea, canned fruit, spaghetti sauce, canned stews/baked beans, canned soups with protein, children's snacks for school, jelly, cooking oil.
- Bring to Open Table's Pantry A at 105 Everett Street, Concord (back of the Armory) on Thursdays from 12:30–3:00 p.m.

## • Save the Date "Chicken Man" Is Coming in March

- The Social Action Community presents "Chicken Man, the Musical," on March 2, 3, 9 and 10. Set in the Brazilian rainforest, the play addresses serious environmental and social issues in a format that will entertain as well as inform. A multigenerational cast of about 60 First Parishioners has begun spirited rehearsals; a small orchestra is practicing memorable tunes; many others will soon be busy making props and painting the stage set. You won't want to miss this unique, whole-parish event! For further information and photos of events leading up to the production, see <http://sac.first-parish.org/cms/chickenman>.

## • Social Action Reflection Group

- On Sunday, January 8, at 4 p.m. we will conclude our discussion of Richard Gilbert's "A Prophetic Imperative." Everyone is welcome to attend, whether you have read the book or not. SARG is an opportunity to connect our social action to the meaning we draw from our faith.

## • MLK Weekend Events — January 15 and 16

- At the Urban Ministry, First Church of Roxbury, Sunday, January 15, join together for two meaningful events — one of special interest to our Immigration Study Group and another for all you music lovers or anyone who enjoys hearing the voices of a choir — including our very own children's choir!

- **Part One: 2 p.m.** Following the Dream Toward a Just Community. Start by viewing the film "The Letter" about a controversy over newly arriving Somali refugees in a small city in Maine. The film will be followed by a panel discussion and light supper at 5 p.m.

- **Part Two: 6 p.m.** Hope Out Loud Concert. The Boston Community Choir (BCC: <http://bostoncommunitychoir.org>), a gospel choir under the artistic direction of Dennis Slaughter, will be featured. Given the strong ties that FP Concord has nurtured with UUUM, our children's choir has been invited to share the bill with the BCC. In the spirit of shared ministry, members of all First Parish in Concord choirs will join forces in an intergenerational

## • SAC News and Events

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### Learn More about Social Action at First Parish

The First Parish Social Action Community (SAC) helps parishioners connect with a diverse and exciting range of social action projects. To find out more about what is going on, join our e-mail list by sending a blank e-mail to [SAC-join@lists.firstparish.org](mailto:SAC-join@lists.firstparish.org); see our website, [sac.firstparish.org/cms/sacemallist](http://sac.firstparish.org/cms/sacemallist); visit the Social Action bulletin board; or e-mail our Social Action Program Director, **Faith Bade**, at [FBade@firstparish.org](mailto:FBade@firstparish.org).



gospel rendition of Brian Tate’s “Lift Up Your Voice.” The concert is open to the public, and we hope that folks will come out to support the good work of the Urban Ministry. Please join us for a musical celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King. The concert will end with a gospel sing open to all! Details to follow. Contact **Gail Carey**, First Parish Children’s Choir Director for more information at [loonbeams@aol.com](mailto:loonbeams@aol.com).

**MLK Day of Interfaith Service, Monday, January 16, at Brandeis University and Beyond**

We invite First Parish members to again participate in a day of community service sponsored by Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries ([www.coopmet.org](http://www.coopmet.org)). This all-day event celebrates Dr. King’s vision of a more welcoming, just and peaceful world through interfaith community service. Last year the day included meetings at Brandeis in the morning, working in various locations during the day, and then returning to Brandeis for a dinner and speaker. First Parish members really enjoyed the day. More details to follow.

**Concord-Area Amnesty Group Meeting**

On January 17, at 7 p.m., Group 15, the Concord-area chapter of Amnesty International, will hold its regular monthly meeting in the Greeley Room of First Parish. All are welcome. For more information, visit [www.aigroup15.org](http://www.aigroup15.org) or e-mail **Lorraine Loviglio** at [loviglio@rcn.com](mailto:loviglio@rcn.com).

**Social Action Sunday, January 22**

Join the Social Action Community at both worship services on Sunday, January 22, as we celebrate activism. **Elaine Peresluha** will be preaching on “Appreciating What Is . . .” and helping it be its very best. This is our New Year SAC Sunday. We appreciate all that First Parish contributes to the world, and reflect on how it defines — or not — the identity of First Parish. How is it we make a difference, with meaning and purpose?

**Grounded for Flight, a Wright Tavern Center Course, Sunday, January 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**

Join **Craig Nowak**, ministerial intern, and **Faith Bade**, Social Action Program Director, on January 22 at the first of a three-part workshop offered Sunday evenings from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Explore how we learn to recognize our own spiritual framework and how this framework creates the support or “grounding,” to help us expand and inspire our activism and truly take “flight.” Workshop #1: “Roots & Wings” — Your spiritual “roots” provide you with grounding and enable you to use your “wings” to act upon your values. *Please see the Wright Tavern Center insert for the complete course description.* Cost: \$60 plus \$12 materials fee for the book *Serving with Grace*. To register, contact the church office or **Cassy Bosworth** at [cbosworth@first-parish.org](mailto:cbosworth@first-parish.org).

**“The Inherent Worth and Dignity of Every Being? Expanding Our Interdependent Web”**

**Saturday, February 4 — Dinner and Speaker**

Why care about other species when there is so much human need? Because so many of those human problems, from patri-

archy to destruction of the environment, spring from our estrangement from nature. Recovering our identity, not as lords of creation but as co-equal members of the larger Earth Community, is vital to our personal happiness and collective survival.

Save the Date — Rev. Gary Kowalski will speak at First Parish, Saturday, February 4 at 6 p.m.

Come in from the cold for a lasagna/salad/dessert dinner. \$10/person. Children under 12, free. Bring your own wine/beer. RSVP: [kdshane1@verizon.net](mailto:kdshane1@verizon.net).

Rev. Gary Kowalski, our speaker, is the author of *The Souls of Animals*, *Goodbye Friend: Healing Wisdom for Anyone Who Has Ever Lost a Pet*, *The Bible According to Noah*, *Science and the Search for God*, *Earth Day: An Alphabet Book*, and others that celebrate the emotional and spiritual realities of love, conscience, imagination and joy that cross the species line. Gary is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Divinity School. His books have been translated into German, French, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese and Czech, and sold in the six figures around the world, and he's received numerous citations for preaching, including the Skinner and Annual Program Fund Sermon awards from the UUA.

**Homelessness Forum, Sunday, March 4 2-4 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church, Concord**

**How Homelessness Hurts Children’s Health: Eighth Annual Interfaith Homelessness Forum**

Family homelessness remains a severe problem in Massachusetts. Over 33,000 families applied for emergency shelter in the year ending July 2011. Expectant women experiencing homelessness are 30 percent more likely to deliver preterm and 50 percent are more likely to have low-weight babies. Children living without permanent housing are 70 percent more likely to have developmental delays and 50 percent more likely to be in poor health than children who enjoy stable housing. Learn what we can do to protect children’s health by sustaining the state’s successful Homelessness Prevention Program *now at risk* due to limits in state budget funding. Speakers will be Dr. Megan Sandel, Director of Pediatric Healthcare for the Homeless at Boston Medical Center and a nationally recognized expert on housing and child health, and Dr. Robert Pulster, Associate Director, Department of Stabilization, Mass. Department of Housing and Community Development. The forum is free and open to all. The Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness is a SAC Grants recipient.

2012 First Parish Women's Retreats!

Roots (Hold Me Close) and Wings (Set Me Free)

This year's Women's Retreats will take place on January 20-22 and January 27-29, at Senexet Retreat House in Woodstock, Connecticut. The theme this year is "Roots (Hold Me Close) and Wings (Set Me Free)," and we will be looking at what grounds us through transitions in our lives and what helps us soar to achieve our goals and dreams. There will be a variety of sessions exploring this theme from different aspects in large and small groups, through conversation, sharing, writing and/or creative activities. The weekend also includes socializing, music, crafts, a quiet time, lots of fun, and delicious meals prepared by someone else!

All First Parish women are warmly invited to participate! The registration form with more information is an insert at the end of this newsletter. Forms are also available in the church office and online at [www.firstparish.org/forms](http://www.firstparish.org/forms). Questions? Please contact **Darien Smith** at [darien@smithquest.com](mailto:darien@smithquest.com) or 978-369-1471.

\*\*\* Note that at press time, both weekends were nearly full from December registrations. Please inquire about current status. \*\*\*

New Year, Old Book!

Women's AM/PM Book Group

The first book of the New Year for the Women's Book Group is the popular classic *Barchester Towers*, by Anthony Trollope. The evening discussion will be on Sunday, January 22, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.; and the morning discussion, on Tuesday, January 24, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m., with both meetings in the Brooks Room at First Parish. All women of First Parish are warmly invited to read the current book and join one or both of these discussions. If you would like to be added to the Women's Book Group e-mail list, please contact **Darien Smith** at [darien@smithquest.com](mailto:darien@smithquest.com) or 978-369-1471. ◆

Books and Dates for 2012

- Jan. 22, 24 *Barchester Towers*, by Anthony Trollope
- 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

Dear Friends,

Well 2012 has arrived and I'm wondering how many of you have made New Year's resolutions. For many years I would make the kind of New Year's resolutions that made the fitness and diet industry salivate ... weight



loss, exercise, gym memberships. Now these are not bad resolutions in and of themselves. But what I've come to realize is that most of the New Year's resolutions I ever made were made in a punitive spirit. I'm willing to bet I'm not alone here. It is not surprising, then, that for many of us our commitment to New Year's resolutions evaporates quickly.

So how might we change our thinking about New Year's resolutions? What if we saw our resolutions as more of spiritual practice than a thinly veiled punishment? I began to do just that as 2011 drew to a close. I abandoned the underlying question of previous resolutions, "What don't I like about myself that I can change?" and instead asked, "What gift can I offer the world?" After giving myself time to fully absorb the question, an answer emerged. My resolution for 2012 is to end each day by naming, recording, and giving thanks for some miracle I encountered that day. The gift I hope to offer through this resolution or practice is awareness.

What will be your New Year's resolution? What will your gift to the world be in 2012? ◆

Blessings and peace,

—Craig Nowak

# JANUARY 2012 CALENDAR

*Listings in italics represent classes offered through the Wright Tavern Center for Spiritual Renewal.*

## Every Week...

Men's Group	Saturday	7:30 a.m.
<i>Music Together</i>	Tuesday	9:30 a.m.
<i>T'ai Chi and Qi Gong</i>	Tuesday	6:30 p.m.
<i>Buddhist Group</i>	Wednesday	9:30 a.m.
Junior Choir	Wednesday	4:30 p.m.
Chalice Choir	Wednesday	5:15 p.m.
Transylvania Troubadours	Wednesday	6:15 p.m.
Adult Choir	Wednesday	7:45 p.m.
<i>Music Together</i>	Thursday	9:30 a.m.
<i>Buddhist Group</i>	Thursday	7:30 p.m.
<i>Music Together</i>	Friday	9:30 a.m.
Gospel Choir	Sunday	10:00 a.m.
YRUU (The Heard)	Sunday	6:30 p.m.

Sun Jan 1	10:00	One service in the Parish Hall	•		6:30	Membership Committee
Wed Jan 4	6:15	Concord Area Humanists	•		7:00	Ministerial Search Committee
Thu Jan 5	7:15	Parish Interim Team	•		7:00	Orientation, infant to 1st grade teachers
	7:30	By Your Side Singers	•	Thu Jan 19	7:00	Mindful-Based Stress Reduction
Fri Jan 6	7:00	"Chicken Man" Rehearsal	•		7:15	Parish Interim Team
	7:00	Play Reading	•		7:30	By Your Side Singers
Sat Jan 7	8:00	Roundtable	•		7:30	Alcott Reenactment
Sun Jan 8	10:15	First Parish Jump Start	•	Fri Jan 20	9:30	Mindful-Based Stress Reduction
	11:00	"Chicken Man" Mural Painting	•		7:00	Jewish Awareness Group
	12:30	Ministerial Internship Committee	•	Sun Jan 22	9:00	Neighboring Faiths
	4:00	Social Action Reflection Group	•		1:00	Bell Choir Rehearsal
	4:30	Women's Retreat Planning	•		4:00	OWL
	5:00	YAC	•		6:30	Grounded for Flight
	6:30	Coming of Age	•		7:00	"Chicken Man" Rehearsal
	7:00	SAC Board Meeting	•		7:30	Women's Book Group
Tue Jan 10	9:00	Networking Group	•	Tue Jan 24	9:00	Networking Group
	9:00	WPA Board Meeting	•		9:30	Women's Book Group
	7:30	Transcendentalism Today	•		7:00	Seeking Circles
Wed Jan 11	7:30	Orientation for Neighboring Faiths Leaders	•		7:00	William Wordsworth Seminar
			•	Wed Jan 25	1:00	Pastoral Care Lay Ministers
Thu Jan 12	7:00	Mindful-Based Stress Reduction	•		7:30	Orientation, 2nd-6th Grade Teachers
	7:15	Parish Interim Team	•	Thu Jan 26	7:00	Mindful based Stress Reduction
Fri Jan 13	9:30	Mindful-Based Stress Reduction	•		7:15	Parish Interim Team
	7:00	"Chicken Man" Rehearsal	•	Fri Jan 27	9:30	Mindful-Based Stress Reduction
Sat Jan 14	9:00	Photo Club	•		7:00	"Chicken Man" Rehearsal
Sun Jan 15	11:00	"Chicken Man" Mural Painting	•		7:30	Rise Up Singing
	3:00	Needleworkers Affinity Group	•	Sun Jan 29	9:00	Neighboring Faiths
	7:00	"Chicken Man" Rehearsal	•		1:00	Bell Choir Rehearsal
Tue Jan 17	11:30	WPA Luncheon	•		4:00	OWL
	7:00	Amnesty Group	•		7:00	"Chicken Man" Rehearsal
	7:00	William Wordsworth Seminar	•	Tue Jan 31	7:00	Emerson Forum
Wed Jan 18	10:30	Pastoral Care Advisory Council	•			



## JANUARY 2012 NEWSLETTER

The February Newsletter deadline is Friday, January 20, at noon.  
The Newsletter will be published Tuesday, January 31.

**Office Hours:** Tuesday–Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.\*

Phone: 978-369-9602

Fax: 978-369-8701

E-Mail: [FPConcord@firstparish.org](mailto:FPConcord@firstparish.org)

Website: [www.firstparish.org](http://www.firstparish.org)

• **Ministers' E-Mail:**  
• Elaine Beth Peresluha: [uurevdoc@gmail.com](mailto:uurevdoc@gmail.com)  
• Jenny M. Rankin: [jrankin@firstparish.org](mailto:jrankin@firstparish.org)  
• Craig M. Nowak: [cnowak@firstparish.org](mailto:cnowak@firstparish.org)  
•

\* **PLEASE NOTE:** The office is CLOSED on Mondays.

### First Parish in Concord • UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

#### Staff

Elaine Beth Peresluha, Interim Senior Minister

Jenny M. Rankin, Minister

Melissa Perdue Gallo, Business Manager

Gary E. Smith, Minister Emeritus

Christy McKellips, Assistant to the Ministers

Tina Storey, Assistant to the Business Manager

Faith Bade, Social Action Program Director

Jane Foley, Membership Director

Craig M. Nowak, Ministerial Intern

Becky Blodgett, Affiliate Minister for Pastoral Care

Pam Howell, Director of Religious Education

Avi Salloway, Youth Program Director

• Elizabeth Norton, Music Director  
• Eric Huenneke, Parish Organist  
• Anderson Manuel, Youth Gospel Choir Director  
• Gail Carey, Children's Choir Director  
• David Huston, Music Director Emeritus  
• Dan Holin, Jericho Road Executive Director  
• Leslie Koplw, Operations Manager, Jericho Road  
• Douglas Baker, Sacristan and Curator  
• Cassy Bosworth, Office Manager  
• Peggy Gallo, Volunteer Collector  
• Kate Keleher, Volunteer Newsletter Editor  
• Kaye Harvie, Volunteer Copy Editor  
•

Is it  
**possible**  
to be a  
**Transcendentalist**  
today?



**I**s Concord's special relationship to the Transcendentalist thinkers of the 19th Century a mere historical footnote? Or can Transcendentalist ideas and ways of thinking still inspire and guide us today?

Scholar **Jason Giannetti** will lead a discussion about Transcendentalism in the 21st Century. The format will be a "conversation," a technique favored by the Transcendentalists, most notably Margaret Fuller and Bronson Alcott, for furthering understanding through an open exchange of ideas. Also participating in the conversation will be:

**Reverend Jenny Rankin**, Minister, First Parish in Concord

**Jeffrey S. Cramer**, Curator of Collections, The Thoreau Institute at Walden Woods

**Polly Peterson**, author of *Stirring the Nation's Heart: Eighteen Stories of Prophetic Unitarians and Universalists of the Nineteenth Century*

Join the Conversation!

**Tuesday, January 10, 7:30 PM**  
at First Parish in Concord,  
20 Lexington Rd, Concord MA  
978-369-9602

Admission \$5.00

**Jason Giannetti** received a Master's degree in Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School, and a Master's degree in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies from Brandeis University. He holds a Juris Doctorate degree from Boston College Law School, and currently teaches at Dean College in Franklin, Massachusetts. He specializes in Comparative Philosophy-East/West, and has recently been concentrating on New England's Transcendentalists.

A reception will follow, complete with refreshments and book signings of:

*Chrysalis* by **Jason Giannetti**

*The Quotable Thoreau* by  
**Jeffrey S. Cramer**

*Stirring the Nation's Heart* by  
**Polly Peterson**

This event is co-sponsored by:



**The Transcendentalism  
Council of First Parish in  
Concord**



**The Walden Woods Project**



for Spiritual Renewal

# The Wright Tavern Center at First Parish in Concord

An Oasis in Our Busy Lives • January 2012

Welcome to the Wright Tavern Center. Online registration is available for all courses. Check our website at [wrighttavern.org](http://wrighttavern.org) for schedules, course descriptions, presenter bios, registration information and policies. Questions? Contact Cassy Bosworth at [cbosworth@firstparish.org](mailto:cbosworth@firstparish.org) or 978-369-9602. Please check the board in the lower church entryway for course locations.

## I. GROWING YOUR SPIRIT

### Tibetan Buddhism

The Buddhist group will continue to meet in the First Parish Chapel Wednesday mornings and Thursday evenings. These weekly sessions are open to all who are interested in transforming love, compassion and wisdom into action. You are welcome to share the spirit of community at these gatherings regardless of your familiarity with Tibetan Buddhism. Donations are gratefully accepted. Contact **Bill Seaver** at 978-369-7318 if you have any questions.

Wednesday: 9:30-11:00 a.m. Thursday: 7:30-9:00 p.m.

### T'ai Ji

Being in touch with our own energy creates endless possibilities within ourselves. By combining music with qi gong and the simple movement of t'ai ji, we can release blocked energy, create wellness and bring our lives into balance. This class is geared to people of all ages. It offers gentle low-impact exercise to reduce stress, to enhance optimal health and to simply create a sense of joy in our lives. Instructor: **Mae Pagan**

Mae Pagan has studied t'ai ji and qi gong for 22 years. She follows the teachings of Chungliang Al Huang and his nontraditional style of teaching t'ai ji movement as a joyful approach to life as well as a path to wellness. With a background in Tibetan Qi gong and Reiki, she provides a gentle mix of t'ai ji movement with the healing aspects of qi gong. She also holds degrees in philosophy, psychology and education.

Friday: Jan. 13 12:30-1:30 p.m. \$25

### SoulPlay: Exploring on Behalf of Your Soul

SoulPlay brings together two intuitive practices: InterPlay® and SoulCollage®. InterPlay engages us in activities that lead to our movement and stories, silence and song, ease and amusement. SoulCollage is an intuitive art form that invites our souls to speak through collaged images that we create. Combining SoulCollage and Interplay opens us up to express and nurture our innate wisdom in playful and intuitive ways.

In these classes, we will guide participants in ways of combining SoulCollage with Interplay to create a rich experiential mix of movement, imagery and words that can yield new insights and awareness. Participants will make SoulCollage cards and work with them in sound and movement. Linking our cards to spontaneous movement integrates body, mind and spirit in ways

- that feel grounding, rejuvenating, and freeing. When tending our soul, it adds an extra dimension to link our symbolic, imaginative imagery with our physical body, with movement, with breath. To do so is to nurture our whole body spirit. Previous experience in art or movement is not needed. All materials will be supplied. Leaders: **CC King** and **Pam Swing**
- Wednesday, Feb. 1, 15, 29 and Mar. 7 7-9 p.m.
- Fee: \$120 for the series. Ask about scholarship support.

### ABC Music Together (Ages 0-4)

- Mixed-age classes offer an opportunity for children to participate at their own level, while the adults (no matter what their level of musical ability) and older children provide models for ways of music-making they might want to try another time. Everyone in a mixed age class benefits by experiencing the music-making of those around them — some terrific teaching ideas come from very young children, who have a special originality and spontaneity in their approach to music.
- Instructors: **Tom** and **Deb Foote**.

- Deb Foote has been the Director of ABC Music Together since 2004. She took Music Together with her daughter for three years and has taught for more than eight years in the Metro West area. Debbie graduated from Northwestern University with a BM in Flute and Voice Performance and studied Dalcroze Eurhythmics at the Manhattan School of Music.

- Tom Foote has taught early childhood music for several years. He is a professional drummer and studied at Shepherd College, Berklee College of Music and Drummer's Collective. He is versed in all styles of music, including classical and world percussion, African drumming and drum set. He studies African djembe with Moussa Traore, a master drummer from Mali.
- Tom is the founder of Rhythm Kids, a program that offers multicultural music and drumming classes for children five and older. You can visit his site at <http://www.rhythmkids.com/> for more information.

Tuesday: Jan. 3 9:30-10:30 a.m. or 10:30-11:30 a.m. (9-week program)

Thursday: Jan. 5 9:30-10:30 a.m. or 10:30-11:30 a.m. (9-week program)

Friday: Jan. 6 9:30-10:30 a.m. or 10:30-11:30 a.m. (9-week program)

For more information and to register go to [www.abcmusictogether.com](http://www.abcmusictogether.com).



## Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program (MBSR)

Cultivating mindfulness, or awareness of the present moment, creates the framework for this popular course modeled after the internationally-recognized program established by Jon Kabat-Zinn at UMass Medical School. Research continues to suggest positive benefits from the practice of mindfulness-based stress reduction to the immune system, chronic illness, hypertension and chronic pain, as well as to the daily stresses of our busy lives. This interactive course consists of eight weekly two-hour group classes, where participants will be introduced to and practice guided mindfulness meditation, relaxation techniques, gentle yoga stretches, and self-inquiry exercises. Participants commonly report a reduction of stress-related symptoms, increased awareness and concentration, and improvement of positive coping skills at home and in the workplace. Instructor: **Pamela Katz Ressler**, RN, MS, HN-BC.

Choose either Thursday evenings (7:00-9:00 p.m.) Jan. 12 to Mar. 8 (no class on Feb. 23) OR Friday mornings (9:30-11:30 a.m.) Jan. 13 to Mar. 9 (no class on Feb. 24) Enrollment is limited to 15.

Tuition is \$290, plus an additional \$85 materials fee (including text, CDs, and manual) Continuing Education for nurses and other health professionals available. Discount for Blue Cross Blue Shield members. For more information about the MBSR program, visit [www.stressresources.com](http://www.stressresources.com). Contact Pam Ressler [pressler@stressresources.com](mailto:pressler@stressresources.com) or 978-369-5243) to register.

## Concord Area Humanist (CAH) Group

We are a Concord area group welcoming you to normally two evening meetings each month, with a Humanist perspective. The Wednesday meetings start with a social at 7:00 p.m., program at 7:30 p.m.. We inclusively bring together the various nonsupernatural life-stances that have the same emphasis on our being responsible for what happens around us, such as Buddhist-, Judaic-, Religious-, and Secular-Humanism, Ethical Culture, Naturalism, and all the others that have a life-stance consistent with Humanism and its Aspirations — Humanist Manifesto III. Come and enjoy investigating with us the intersection of science and culture, ethics and social trends, books and ideas. Times and place of meetings may change, so please always check our latest announcements on [www.MeetUp.com](http://www.MeetUp.com), and RSVP while you are there. Active links here, and in the program listings, will lead to further information. You may also email **Patrick Everett** at [pne@aol.com](mailto:pne@aol.com), or **Maria Greene** at [maria@justmagicdesign.com](mailto:maria@justmagicdesign.com). CAH is affiliated with the American Humanist Association and with UU-HUUMANISTS. Our program follows.

- **First Wednesday in January —Dialog** Jay Wexler is a Professor of Law at Boston University. He has a special interest in law and religion and has written a hilarious book called “Holy Hullabaloo: A Road Trip to the Battlegrounds of the Church/State Wars.” Jay’s latest book is called “The Odd Clauses,” and is about the lesser known clauses in the U.S. Constitution.

• Wednesday, Jan. 4 7:00 p.m.

• Thursday, Jan. 19 7:30 p.m. **Open Discussion Group, Concord Library**

## Rise Up Singing

This informal monthly musical gathering of adults and children provides participants with an opportunity to sing and share traditional and contemporary folk songs, spirituals, hymns, rounds and chants in fellowship. Singers of all ages and experience are welcome. Bring a copy of *Rise Up Singing* if you have one. Individuals are encouraged to bring instruments if they wish. Led by **Beth Norton and Others**.

Beth Norton has been Music Director at First Parish since 1994. Beth believes in the power of music to express what is beyond words, to deepen our spiritual experience and to build community. As a singer, conductor, violinist and folk musician, Beth enjoys making music in a wide variety of styles with people of all ages and abilities.

• Friday: Jan. 27, Feb. 24, Mar. 23, Apr. 27, May 18 7:30 p.m.  
• Free: No registration required

## The First Parish Women’s AM/PM Book Group

Dates given are for Sunday evening, 7:30-9:00 p.m., and Tuesday morning, 9:30-11:00 a.m. Sessions will be at First Parish.

• Jan. 22, 24 *Barchester Towers*, by Anthony Trollope

• 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

## II. UNITATIAN UNIVERSALISM

### “To See into the Life of Things”— a Seminar on William Wordsworth

Join Jenny Rankin for a participatory three-week class on the British romantic poet, William Wordsworth.

One might describe Wordsworth, born in 1770, as a person on a life-long quest to *see* with a new vision, to see with what he called an “inward” or “spiritual” eye. Do we ever have that same desire? Wordsworth was one of the first to powerfully depict Nature as a spiritual teacher. Do we experience Nature in that way in our lives? Wordsworth believed in “recollection” or the power of memory, to transport us — to take us from the current situation, even if lonely or difficult — to another place, a “blessed and serene mood” where the world as we know it drops away and we can see “into the life of things.”

We will read poems in class like “Tintern Abbey,” “Ode to Immortality,” “Prelude,” “The Excursion,” and others. We will attempt to delve into Wordsworth’s spirituality and consider our own.

One of the highlights of Emerson’s trip to Europe in 1833 was his meeting with the aging Wordsworth. We will consider the influence of Wordsworth on Transcendentalists like Emerson and Fuller, and trace how this “spiritual lineage” may have come down to us as modern-day Unitarian Universalists and what shape and form it might take today.

This class will be offered in two time slots. Drop-ins welcome. To sign up, please call the First Parish office at 978-369-9602. \$5/class donation suggested. 8 person minimum for class to run.

Tuesday: Jan. 17 and 24      7:00-8:30 p.m.      Drop-ins welcome.

OR

Thursday: Jan. 12, 19 and 26      12:00-1:30 p.m.      Drop-ins welcome.  
Bring a brown bag lunch.

## III. SOCIAL ACTION

### • Grounded for Flight

- Join us in a three-part workshop offered Sunday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., at First Parish. Explore how we each can learn to recognize our own spiritual framework and how this framework creates the support or “grounding” to help us expand and inspire our activism and truly take “flight.”

- **Workshop #1 — “Roots & Wings”** Your spiritual “roots” provide you with grounding and enable you to use your “wings” to act upon your values. This workshop intends to have participants look at their personal and formal religious lives within a spiritual framework to provide insight into why you do what you do.

- **Workshop #2 — “Serving with Grace: Lay Leadership as a Spiritual Practice”** Through thought-provoking discussions of the book *Serving with Grace*, this workshop builds on the spiritual framework identified in workshop number one. The workshop involves reorienting the way you relate to activism, giving deeper meaning to what you do and giving you methods to maintain balance and “grounding” amid work that can often be frustrating and disheartening.

- **Workshop #3 — “Connections”** This final workshop will focus on connecting your spiritual framework with your activism. We will explore practical ways to incorporate your framework within your activities in all types of environments — religious, professional — ultimately deepening your impact and your ability to take “flight.”

- Leaders: **Craig Nowak**, Ministerial Intern, and **Faith Bade**, Social Action Program Director.

- Sunday: Jan. 22, Feb. 12 and Mar. 18      6:30-8:30 p.m.

- Fee: \$60, plus \$12 for book

# ROOTS AND WINGS

## *Celebrating the Community of First Parish Women!*

### **First Parish Women's Retreats - 2012**

**1st weekend: Friday evening, January 20<sup>th</sup> - Sunday afternoon, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**2nd weekend: Friday evening, January 27<sup>th</sup> - Sunday afternoon, January 29<sup>th</sup>**

This year's retreats will focus on Roots (Hold Me Close) & Wings (Set Me Free). Our lives are almost always in some kind of transition. How we manage transition depends on our prior experiences ("roots") and our hopes, goals and expectations ("wings"). At this year's women's retreats, we will spend some time together considering where we've been, actually and figuratively, and how we can better manage the inevitable transitions to achieve our highest hopes and dreams. All women of First Parish are warmly invited and welcome!

The retreats are held at Senexet House ([senexethouse.org](http://senexethouse.org)), a comfortable old vacation home in northeastern Connecticut, about an hour and a half from Concord. The bedrooms sleep one to five guests, and meals are fresh, delicious and prepared by someone else! The two retreat weekends will be as similar as possible, and as unique as any group will be.

Registrations are available online at [firstparish.org/forms](http://firstparish.org/forms) or in the FP office. The cost of the weekend is \$190, which covers two nights, six meals, materials, and a gratuity for the Senexet House staff. Registered participants will receive an email by mid-January, with more details and directions. If you have questions, please contact Darien Smith, retreat registrar, at 978-369-1471 or [darien@smithquest.com](mailto:darien@smithquest.com). To enquire about funding assistance, please contact one of the ministers.

**\* \* REGISTRATION FORM - FIRST PARISH WOMEN'S RETREATS \* \***

**Which Weekend? \_\_\_\_\_ (1st) Jan. 20 – 22 or \_\_\_\_\_ (2nd) Jan. 27 – 29**

**\*\* Both weekends nearly full at press time. Please enquire about current status. \*\***

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Emergency Contact, Name and Ph: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Food restrictions? \_\_\_\_\_**

**Roommate Preference? \_\_\_\_\_**

**Contribution (optional) toward our retreat scholarship support \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Please return this form to the church office by Jan. 13<sup>th</sup>, with your check for \$190, made payable to First Parish in Concord, noted "Women's Retreat". Note that in the case of an oversubscribed weekend, priority will be given to signed First Parish members, as per the FP Membership Policy. Otherwise, registration is on a first come/first served basis. Scholarship contributions may be included in your registration check, or sent separately. The committee is very grateful for the scholarship funds that allow some to attend who otherwise could not.**

**First Parish in Concord address: 20 Lexington Rd., Concord, MA 01742**