



# BRIDGING

Newsletter of the First Parish Church, Bridgewater, MA, Unitarian Universalist

September 2018

## From the Minister...

### **What Does It Mean to Be a People of *Vision*?**

*Where there is no vision, the people perish.* – Proverbs 29:18

*Vision looks inward and becomes duty. Vision looks outward and becomes aspiration.*

*Vision looks upward and becomes faith.* – Rabbi Stephen Wise

In his “I Have a Dream” speech fifty-five years ago, Martin Luther King, Jr., shared his dream, his vision of a future America in which “... my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.” We are obviously not yet living in a country where that vision has yet been fulfilled. There remains a lot of work to do to ensure that Black Lives Matter as much as white lives and to ensure that every person is accorded equal dignity and respect. What King’s speech did was to change the terms of the discussion of race and to make clear that a different world than that of Jim Crow and rampant discrimination was possible and necessary. A well-cast vision gives shape to a distant horizon toward which we can guide our steps and make sure we’re heading in the right direction.

In the same way, it’s important for congregations to periodically review their visions of their purpose and work. As we enter what is about the mid-point of my ministry to our beloved community, it’s timely to take stock of who we are and where we are going. To that end, your Parish Committee and Shared Ministry Committee will be organizing a series of house meetings this fall so that all of us can share our thoughts about our congregation – what we are doing well, what are our areas for growth and change, and how we envision our selves as a community five years (and more!) from now. Your Parish Committee will be announcing details about this program soon.

Just as institutions and nations need to pause periodically to take in the view from a broader perspective, so do we as individuals. That’s one of the functions of our “Connections” group. We meet once a month on the third Tuesday to explore our monthly theme more deeply through spiritual exercises that deepen our understanding of our own lives and our own spirits and, as importantly, to listen to one another’s understanding of their own lives and states of being. I would like to invite everyone to consider joining us in this program of deepening our understanding of our personal faith, our commitments to one another, and the vision we hold for each of our lives. Please get in touch with me and I’ll be happy to tell you more and connect you with other members of our ongoing group at [psprecher@uuma.org](mailto:psprecher@uuma.org) or 781-774-0086.

In Faith,

Rev. Paul

**Minister**

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**Parish Committee**

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Jenny Donahue  
Sonia D'Alarcao  
Karen Reed-Messing

**Community Minister**

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revrayted@comcast.com  
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**Social Justice Committee**

**Convener:** Betty Gilson  
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774-226-0942

**Membership Committee**

**Chair:** Jan Thompson  
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**Green Sanctuary Committee**

**Chairs:** Pat Hart & Deb Baumgarten  
harts155@comcast.net  
catsmeow908@verizon.net

**First Principle Project**

**Convener:** Betty Gilson  
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**Office Administrator**

Jamie Doulette  
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508-846-7778



**As we begin a new church year, the Green Sanctuary Committee invites members and friends to review and renew our commitment to the Earth.**

**First Parish Green Commitment**

**As a Green Sanctuary-accredited congregation, First Parish has made a commitment to respect and care for our planet Earth.**

**At First Parish coffee hours and events, we use**

- cloth napkins*
- fairly traded organic coffee and tea*
- real dishware*
- real silverware*

**In our kitchen, we use**

- non-toxic, responsibly sourced cleaning products*
- chlorine-free, plant-based dish detergents*
- eco-friendly hand soap*

**In our restrooms, we use**

- essential oil-based air freshener*
- reusable cloth towels*
- eco-friendly hand soap*
- paper products made from 100% recycled paper*

**In our sanctuary, we use**

- programmable thermostat*
- projection of service components (music, readings, graphics) to reduce paper and printing*

**Throughout the church, we use**

- green (solar) electricity*
- energy efficient light bulbs*
- eco-friendly cleaning products*
- practices that reduce waste of resources (natural light, use of both sides of paper, water conservation)*

*First Parish recycles paper, cardboard, and Styrofoam and hosts a community-wide metal recycling drive annually.*

**We encourage individual members to support these practices in church and to strive to incorporate them into daily life.**



## Worship Committee News September 2018

*After summer fun, travels, and adventures,  
we are welcomed back into beloved community!*

This month's worship theme is **Vision**.

***Absorbed in this world  
You've made it your burden.  
Rise above this world.  
There is another vision.***

- Rumi



### WORSHIP SERVICES

**September 9 – Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher: "Clearing Our Eyes"** - Our In-gathering service is an opportunity to look back over the quieter days of the summer and reflect on what new insights we might have gained over the "Lazy, Crazy, Hazy Days of Summer." **Remember to bring water for our Water Communion Ritual!**

**September 16 – Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher: "Setting Our Vision"** - As we begin the fifth year of my ministry at First Parish, it's a good time to start casting a vision for our congregation for the next five years -- and more! Your Parish and Shared Ministry Committees will be organizing house gatherings shortly to review where we are as a congregation and to share our thoughts about where we want to go.

**September 23 – Worship with the Peace Committee: "Peace Sunday Service"** - The morning worship service will be the 14th Annual First Parish Celebration of Peace in Conjunction with the United Nations International Day of Peace. Our theme will be *Peace and Reconciliation*. In recognition of Nelson Mandela's 100th birthday Vernon Domingo will share ideas about Mandiba (Mandela's title), reconciliation and peace.

The program will begin with Meditative Gathering Music by our regular guest guitarist Peter Jansen. He will be playing in the sanctuary from 10:00 - 10:30 am. Please join us for this quiet and peaceful time.

**September 30 - Worship with Dick Fewkes: "This Way to Heaven or a Discussion About It"** - What do UUs think about Near-Death Visionary Experiences of life after death or the possibility thereof? If you had one how would you interpret it?

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### About Worship Associates, Lay Worship Leaders & Ushers.

Worship Committee invites all to participate in worship services as worship associates, lay worship leaders, and ushers! We hope all members who are physically-able can fulfill at least one of these tasks twice a year. If you have a particular date you'd like to volunteer, please tell us in advance and you'll likely get your choice. Otherwise, if you are a church member and can do this, but haven't volunteered, expect to be asked to fill a couple of dates.

**Next Worship Committee meeting:** The next regular meeting of the Worship Committee is scheduled for Thursday, September 20th at 7pm in the church office. Members and friends are cordially invited to attend. We encourage you to share your feedback and ideas with us about worship, or simply be present to observe.

**Committee members:** Rev. Rachel Tedesco and McKayla Hoffman, Co-Chairs; Denise Haskins, Stefan Michaud, Rev. Paul Sprecher, Tom St. Thomas, and Tony Winters



# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

*Broad Wings  
and  
Deep Roots*

## RE CALENDAR

**September 9:** Intergenerational Worship - Water Communion

**September 16:** First RE Classes

**September 23:** Peace Sunday - RE Classes for Preschool and Elementary; Youth may attend the full service

**September 30:** RE Classes for Preschool and Elementary; Youth may attend the full service

## CAN YOU VOLUNTEER TO TEACH?

We are still looking for one more teacher to round out our volunteer teachers this year. We are either looking for a team preschool-first grade class volunteer *or* an elementary group volunteer. Please contact me if you're interested or have any questions!

## 2018-2019 CURRICULUM

### Preschool-First Grade

We Are Many, We Are One encourages young children to:

- learn how to play and work cooperatively
- express their feelings about themselves and other
- see congregations as places for making and caring about friends
- appreciate how we are all alike yet different
- view nature as a source of gifts that needs our care
- celebrate the different religions and cultures of the world

### Elementary Grades

Soul Matters Sharing Circle offers a distinctive small group curriculum. Its central goal is to foster circles of trust and deep listening. Our monthly themes focus on a spiritual value that our UU faith has historically honored and calls all of us to embody in our lives. The older elementary group is a mixed class that embraces children of various ages and abilities, and we strive to make the learning experiential. In other words, each session is designed to engage children in three fundamental spiritual experiences:

- Silence = meditation, listening, mindfulness.
- Service = leadership, helping others
- Sunshine = connection with nature and our bodies through outdoor activities or movement

### Junior / Senior High School Youth

The Youth Group will gather together after the summer to revisit last year's experiences and to decide together on a curriculum for the group on September 16th. Curricula will be presented to the group, and ideas will be shared. Youth: Please join us to provide your input!



## **WE NEED YOUR OPINIONS!**

The Shared Ministry Committee would love to know what you think. Are there things about church that you love? Are there moments you look forward to each week? Is there something about worship that you would like to change or something new that you would like to try?

We meet monthly with Rev. Paul to discuss trends in worship and other ministries of our congregation. Please reach out to one of our members if you have opinions to share.

Shared Ministry Committee  
Beth Manchester-Howell  
Scott Gillespie  
Korin Zigler

## **Interested in being a lay leader but afraid to volunteer?**

Have you ever watched your friends lay leading a service and thought "I'd like to do that but I'm too scared?" Well here's your chance. We would like to see a few new faces and to make it less scary, the worship committee will offer a workshop to explain the whole process and put you at your ease. You can do it! The date and time of the workshop will be determined by your schedule. Please contact Denise at [denisehaskins@comcast.net](mailto:denisehaskins@comcast.net) and let me know if you are interested. Hope to hear from you!

## **Time for you to join the choir! No experience necessary!**

We are looking for a few new members and we want you! You don't have to know how to read music. (Truth: most of our choir members don't!) If you can carry a tune, you can join. We are having two evening rehearsals to kick off the year, the first at 7 PM on Thursday, August 30 and the second at 5:30 PM on Thursday, September 6. After that all rehearsals will be from 9 to 10 on Sunday mornings. Interested? E-mail me at [denisehaskins@comcast.net](mailto:denisehaskins@comcast.net). Hope you will consider joining us!  
Denise Haskins

## **BLACK LIVES MATTER FILM SERIES**

Tuesday, September 25 at 7pm at First Parish Church in the Upper Parish Hall, the First Parish Social Justice Committee and the Bridgewater Citizens for Civility and Respect will host the first in the second series of Black Lives Matter films. We will be presenting Race, based on the incredible true story of Jesse Owens, the legendary athletic superstar. His quest to become the greatest track and field athlete in history thrusts him onto the world stage of the 1938 Olympics. Here he faces off against Adolph Hitler's version of Aryan supremacy. All are welcome to join us for this free presentation and the discussion to follow.

## **SHARE THE PLATE**

The September Share the Plate charity will be Matthew 25:40 Mission. This Community Outreach Center is housed at First parish Church in Taunton. It includes a warming center, coffee bar and food pantry. It was first suggested by our Youth Group and has received support from First Parish before. If you would like to make a specific donation, please write a check to First Parish and write Matthew 25:40 on the memo line.

## **MAINSRING HOUSE LUNCHESES**

Monday, September 3 at 8:30 am in the LPH 100 lunches will be prepared for MainSpring House Homeless Shelter in Brockton. Donations and Volunteers are always welcome. Speak with Betty Gilson to offer help.

## **FULL SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Thursday, September 6 at 7pm the Full Social Justice Committee will meet to share plans for the coming year. New members are welcome. Speak with Rev. Rachel Tedesco or Betty Gilson for more information.

## PEACE SUNDAY SERVICE

Sunday, September 23 the morning worship service will be the 14th Annual First Parish Celebration of Peace in Conjunction with the United Nations International Day of Peace. Our theme will be Peace and Reconciliation. In recognition of Nelson Mandela's 100th birthday Vernon Domingo will share ideas about Mandiba (Mandela's title), reconciliation and peace.

The program will begin with Meditative Gathering Music by our regular guest guitarist Peter Jansen. He will be playing in the sanctuary from 10:00 - 10:30 am. Please join us for this quiet and peaceful time.

## CARING COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, September 24 at 7pm the Caring Committee will meet at the church. If you have joys or concerns for the committee to address, please contact a member.

Debbie Baumgarten, Betty Gilson, Louella Mann, Jan Thompson, Korin Zigler

## MESSAGE FROM THE CARING COMMITTEE

The last line of our Church Covenant is "...and to help one another." The Caring Committee often takes a lead in carrying out this part of the covenant. However, there are always other friends who help with various needs as they arise. It would be wonderful to have a list of others who would be able to assist with these on an as needed basis. Some of the opportunities are: making casseroles or desserts, giving rides to doctors and other appointments, short term babysitting, visiting, grocery shopping or running other errands.

If you are willing to help us live up to our covenant in any of these ways, please contact a member of the Caring Committee to let us know how you could help.

Debbie Baumgarten, Betty Gilson, Louella Mann, Jan Thompson, Korin Zigler

## T"UU"RNING LEAVES BOOK CLUB

Friday, September 28 at 7pm at the church the T"UU"rning Leaves Book Club will meet to discuss Homer's Odyssey, one of the great epic poems of all time. Read it in the translation of your choice. Joe is probably doing Alexander Pope's couplets and Betty is doing Robert Fitzgerald. Pick your own and share you ideas.



## Off the Common Coffeehouse

*Located in the Upper Parish Hall at First Parish Church  
50 School Street, Bridgewater*



### Saturdays at 7:30pm

Potluck dinner at 6:30pm

**October 6** - Cosy Sheridan with Charlie Koch

**November 3** - Cliff Eberhardt with Louise Mosrie opening

**December 1** - Greg Greenway

**January 5** - Cold Chocolate

**February 2** - The Boxcar Lilies with Ric Allendorf opening

**March 2** - Emily Mure and The Whispering Tree (split bill)

**April 6** - Caroline Cotter and Emilia Dahlin (split bill)

**May 4** - Grace Morrison

*Admission: \$15*

*Enjoy our homemade  
Refreshments*

*Sign up for open mike!*

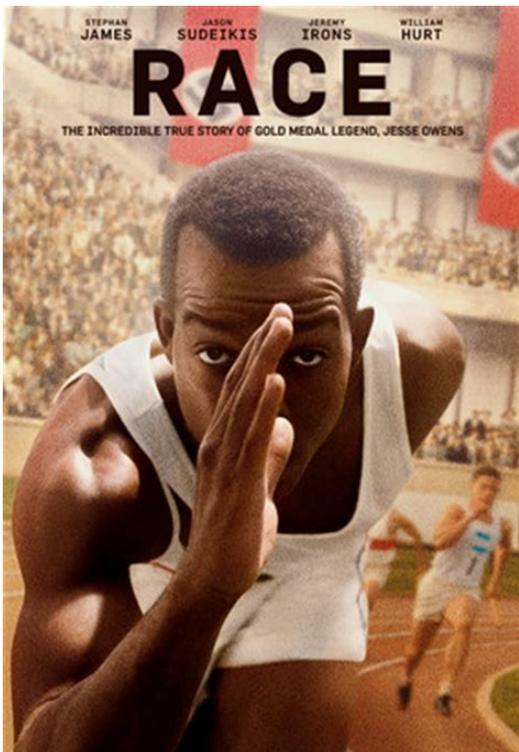
**“Transgender rights: a family’s journey”** an informative discussion at the Bridgewater Public Library presented by Bridgewater residents, Beryl and Vernon Domingo on Monday, September 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm.



Gender identity, transgender rights, and the discrimination that transgender people face in their daily lives will be discussed. This presentation will also include steps that transgender allies can take to advance social and legal rights for transgender people. Beryl and Vernon as parents of a transgender son will share their own personal story and their family’s journey from acceptance to advocacy.

The lecture begins at 6:30pm at the Bridgewater Public Library, is free and open to the public.

Contact: Rose Mamakos, Bridgewater Public Library [rmamakos@bridgewaterma.org](mailto:rmamakos@bridgewaterma.org)



Come to a FREE viewing of the movie

## **RACE**

on Tuesday, September 25, 2018 at 7pm

Based on the incredible true story of Jesse Owens, the legendary athletic superstar. His quest to become the greatest track and field athlete in history thrusts him onto the world stage of the 1938 Olympics. Here he faces off against Adolph Hitler’s version of Aryan supremacy.

All are welcome to join us for this free presentation and the discussion to follow.

**Tuesday, September 25, 2018 at 7pm**

**in the Upper Parish Hall of the**

**First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church**

**50 School Street, Bridgewater**

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Co-sponsored by

the Social Justice Committee of First Parish

and the Bridgewater Citizens for Civility & Respect

Sixth in our Black Lives Matter film series.

### **HELPING THE HUNGRY**

Our **SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE** COLLECTS NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS FOR THE LOCAL FOOD PANTRY. We INVITE YOU TO HELP THE HUNGRY IN OUR LOCAL AREA BY BRINGING CANNED AND PACKAGED FOODS ON THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH. A BOX IS PLACED AT THE FRONT OF THE SANCTUARY, NEAR THE PIANO, TO RECEIVE THE ITEMS, WHICH THE SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEMBERS GATHER AND BRING TO OUR LOCAL FOOD PANTRY.



### **FEEDING THE HOMELESS**



Our church volunteers provide lunches for **MAINSRING HOUSE** SHELTER FOR THE HOMELESS IN BROCKTON. WE GATHER ON THE **FIRST MONDAY\*** OF EACH MONTH AT 9 A.M. IN THE **LOWER PARISH HALL** TO PREPARE AND WRAP 100 BAG LUNCHES, WHICH ARE THEN BROUGHT TO THE SHELTER BY ONE OR TWO OF OUR VOLUNTEERS.

YOU CAN HELP IN MANY WAYS, INCLUDING JOINING US AT THE ABOVE GATHERINGS, DONATING BAKED GOODS, OTHER FOOD ITEMS, AND PAPER GOODS AS NEEDED, TAKING HOME SOME OF THE FIXINGS AND PREPARING PARTS OF THE LUNCHES (SUCH AS TUNA OR EGG SALAD) AT HOME FOR THE VOLUNTEERS TO ASSEMBLE AT THE CHURCH, OR SIMPLY DONATING MONEY TOWARD THE COST OF THE LUNCHES, WHICH IS ABOUT \$100 PER MONTH FOR 50 LUNCHES.

PLEASE CONTACT BETTY GILSON (774-226-0942) FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, OR JUST DROP BY THAT MORNING TO HELP.

*\* THE LUNCHES ARE PREPARED ON MONDAYS TO BE EATEN ON THE FIRST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH. IF THE FIRST TUESDAY FALLS ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE MONTH, THE LUNCHES ARE MADE ON THE FINAL MONDAY OF THE PREVIOUS MONTH.*

# SEPTEMBER 2018 CALENDAR

## Sunday, September 2

**NO SERVICE**

## Monday, September 3

8:30am MainSpring House lunches prep at FP

7:30pm Facilities Committee meeting

## Thursday, September 6

5:30pm Choir rehearsal

7pm Full Social Justice Committee Meeting at First Parish

5pm Male Bonding Band performs at Music Alley

## Saturday, September 8

6pm "Working" Auditions

## Sunday, September 9

9am Choir Practice

10:30am Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher: "Clearing Our Eyes"

2pm "Working" Auditions

## Monday, September 10

1pm Green Sanctuary Committee will meet at Janet Dye's

7pm Committee Council meeting in the UPH

## Tuesday, September 11

7pm RE Committee will meet at the Hive

## Sunday, September 16

9am Choir rehearsal

10:30am Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher: "Setting Our Vision"

## Monday, September 17th

6:30 pm "Transgender Rights: a family's journey", Bridgewater Public Library

## Wednesday, September 19

7pm Science and Religion Discussion Group at FP

## Thursday, September 20

2pm Membership Committee meeting

7pm Worship Committee meeting in the FP office

7:30pm Finance Committee will meet at the Hatfield's

## Sunday, September 23

9am Choir rehearsal

10:30am Worship with the Peace Committee: "Peace Sunday Service"

## Monday, September 24

7pm Caring Committee will meet at the church

## Tuesday, September 25

7pm Black Lives Matter Film Series, RACE, will be shown at First Parish Church UPH

## Thursday, September 27

7pm Parish Committee meeting in the UPH

## Friday, September 28

7pm T"UU"rning Leaves Book Club will meet at the church

## Saturday, September 29

Bridgewater's Autumnfest

## Sunday, September 30

9am Choir rehearsal

10:30am Worship with Dick Fewkes: "This Way to Heaven or a Discussion About It"

### First Parish Church Unitarian Universalist

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