

BRIDGING



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

June 2016

From the Minister...

"Simplicity"

" You can't always get what you want
But if you try sometime you find
You get what you need."
- Mick Jagger, Philosopher

"Simplicity" is our theme for June; here are a few thoughts from the leaders of our Soul Matters Sharing Circle:

Courage. It's not your typical place to begin. But maybe that's good. It reminds us of what we already know but too often forget: there is nothing simple about simplicity.

Indeed to talk of simplicity requiring courage reminds us that the work of this month is not just about reduction but confrontation. Yes, editing our To Do Lists and eliminating clutter from our lives is part of it, but the deeper challenge involves rejecting our culture's values and attributions of worth. To be a people of simplicity is not just about saying yes to sunsets, walks in the woods and more dinners with those we love. It's also about saying no to status and society's affirmation. And that most certainly requires bravery.

It's counter-cultural not to be deeply invested in consumerism both for our selves and for our children. We started raising our two sons in New York City but soon enough found that the costs middle-class parents were "expected" to bear were beyond even a generous income. There were the private schools, cabs, babysitters, and then all sorts of toys and games that other kids had. We found refuge from some of those pressures in the suburb of Ridgewood, NJ, largely because the public schools were much better than many of those in New York. But the pressures to enroll our kids in non-school private sports teams, etc., and to buy the products that kids just need seemed to be increasing as they were getting older.

Our economic system, which has brought unimaginable wealth to societies around the world, also has a relentless appetite for growth, and that means that people need to be persuaded to acquire newer and better and more things and experiences. Deedee and I began exploring some of these issues by leading a group on "Voluntary Simplicity" at the Unitarian Society of Ridgewood in the late 1990's. We learned about this Simplicity movement whose goals are to live better with less. At least one of the families who participated in the group left high-paying but stressful and unsatisfying occupations to wander for a year and discover a new place and a new way of making a living without the stresses of always "needing" more.

This political season has made clear the depth of anger about stagnant or declining incomes in a time of growing inequality. The American Dream is deeply grounded in ideas about "getting ahead" and making more than ones' parents made – and a world in which children are unable to earn more than their parents creates significant resentment and anger. Much of this is very much justified; except that, on average, *all* of us need to learn to do with less if we are live lightly enough on the earth to leave room for the rest of the creatures of the earth.

AND we are all *Eco-Sinner*, as the author of one book put it so eloquently. We all participate in varying degrees of consumption and we all find that what we *want* increasingly comes to look like what we *need*. So learning to live more simply, to minimize apparent needs, is both a path to lives of more fulfillment *and* a way to be part of reducing the strain on our interdependent web. A win-win, as they say – but not at *all* easy to do!

In Faith,
Rev. Paul

Minister

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Worship Services in June

The Worship Theme for the month of June is "Simplicity."

June 5 – Worship with Rev. Ann Fox: "Voluntary Simplicity" – Mother Earth needs us humans to moderate our wants, but it's hard to wake up from the dream of endless growth. We can embody new values as families and as a congregation. Lay Worship Leader is Eileen Hiney. Ushers: Diane Roza & Jennifer Higgins.

June 12 – Religious Education Sunday. Celebrate the end of the RE Program for the year with our students and teachers. Lay Worship Leader is Shara Yabroudy & Laurie Lessner; Ushers: Lily Jacobson & Patrick Donahue.

June 19 – **Bring Flowers!** Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher: "Consider the Lilies of the Field" – Flower Communion reminds us of Simple Gifts from the Interdependent Web of all Existence – and our own diversity. Lay worship Leader is Sam Baumgarten. Ushers: Stefan Michaud & Betty Gilson.

June 26 – **Joint Worship Service** with Messiah Baptist there – 80 Legion Pkwy, Brockton – "I Was in Prison...." – First Parish and Messiah Baptist will be working together in the fall on issues of Mass Incarceration and Prison Ministry. Rev. Paul & Pastor Walker preaching.

Our regular worship services end on June 19, and we will be holding a joint service at Messiah Baptist Church in Brockton at their June 26 service, as noted above. Summer lay-led services begin on July 10 with Gordon Hatfield.

Note to Worship Associates, Lay Worship Leaders & Ushers: If you cannot fulfill your role on your assigned date, please let Rev. Rachel know as soon as possible. Phone 508-378-3904 (home), 508-944-6436(cell) or email at revrayted@comcast.net.

The Worship Committee will not be meeting in June. It will hold a day retreat in August to plan services for the church year beginning in the fall of 2016.

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

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!!!

Patrick Donahue will graduate from Bridgewater-Raynham on June 5th. He will be attending Worcester State University, majoring in Biology.

Carly Doulette will also graduate from B-R on June 5th. She will attend Roger Williams University in the fall, majoring in Graphic Design.

Ross Michaud is graduating from Apponequet High School. He will be enrolled in Clarkson University's Engineering program.

Miranda Zigler graduates from East Bridgewater High School on June 5th. She plans on attending the University of Vermont in Burlington. Miranda will major in Political Science.





LET'S *Grow* TOGETHER

IMPORTANT DATES

June 5	RE Classes
June 12	Intergen - RE Sunday
June 19	Intergen - Flower Communion

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN RE

The Pre-K through 3rd Grade students engaged in the Picture Book UU curriculum during the month of May.

During their RE sessions, the group read God In Between by Sandy Sasso, and Miss Rumphius by Barbara Cooney.

The group also began to prepare their RE Sunday contribution in May!

The 4th-6th Graders reviewed the famous Unitarian Universalists that they studied together this year and worked on their contribution to RE Sunday.

Youth Group met to plan for RE Sunday and have been working on their projects at home!

I look forward to sharing each group's experiences with you on June 12th!

YOUNG FAMILIES PLAYGROUP



First Parish has been holding a young families playgroup on Tuesday mornings from 10:00-11:00.

Activities each week for infants through preschoolers!

We will end our meetings in June and begin again in September

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SUNDAY

On June 12th we will be celebrating the end of the Religious Education school year! Thank you to all of the volunteers who have worked to make this program so fantastic.

The children and youth will be sharing what they have learned throughout the course of the church year during the service. The groups have been working on projects to present to the congregation for the past few weeks.



THINKING AHEAD: NEXT YEAR

The RE Committee has been working on next year's RE program and I wanted to share! We will be keeping all groups the same so the children and youth can strengthen their group bonds. The plan is for the groups to move up together throughout their RE experiences.

K through 4th: Soul Matters Thematic Curriculum (Tentative)
5th through 7th: Soul Matters Thematic Curriculum (Tentative)
8th through 12th: Coming of Age

If you are interested in volunteering to teach (or assist with) RE Classes, please reach out to Sara or a member of the RE Committee.

First Parish Church Unitarian Universalist—Bridgewater, MA

Notice of Annual Meeting

7:00 p.m., Saturday, June 11, 2016

Upper Parish Hall

AGENDA

Call to Order by the President of the Parish Committee

Quorum Check by Registrar

Lighting of Chalice—Opening Words—Rev. Paul

Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Annual Meeting

Minister's Report

Nominating Committee's Report (and any additional floor nominations)

Election of Nominating Committee Slate:

Parish Committee Officers and Members

Trustee(s)

Registrar

Nominating Committee Member(s)

Report of Officers, Trustees, District Delegates, and Committees—oral reports, if desired, otherwise reports printed in Annual Report Booklet.

Review, Discussion, and Vote on the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year Budget

Proposed Amendment to By-Law Article V—Membership

Proposal to purchase electricity from a solar farm.

Other Business

JUNE SHARE THE PLATE

A group of local congregations is working together to construct a labyrinth at Sachem Rock Farm in E. Bridgewater over the next few months. Labyrinths provide a place for meditative/ prayerful/ centering walk in a circular shape and have been around since ancient times. The Sachem Rock Farm Labyrinth will be available to anyone who would like to walk it.

Local congregations including First Parish are involved in fund raising and will participate in the building of the labyrinth. For several years a temporary Peace Labyrinth was set up at First Parish as part of our annual Celebration for Peace. This seems an appropriate selection for the June Share the Plate donations.

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 100 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.*

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, June 2 at 7pm at the church the Social Justice Committee will meet to discuss plans for upcoming events. New members always welcome.

FOURTH OF JULY PLANNING MEETING

Sunday, June 5 after morning worship there will be a meeting to discuss plans for this year's very special Fourth of July celebration. Besides the usual plethora of First Parish events at the celebration, there will be a float in the parade to honor the 300 years of church history. So we need even more enthusiastic volunteers than ever before. See you then.

Kat Gillespie, David Wilson and others

MAINSRING HOUSE LUNCHES

Monday, June 6 at 8:45 am MainSpring House lunches will be prepared in the LPH. Donations and volunteers welcome. Speak with Betty Gilson to offer help.

T"UU"RNING LEAVES BOOK CLUB

Friday, June 24 at 7pm location TBD the Book Club will meet to discuss the June selection *Another Country* by James Baldwin. Set in Greenwich Village, Harlem, and France, among other locales, *Another Country* is a novel of passions--sexual, racial, political, artistic--that is stunning for its emotional intensity and haunting sensuality, depicting men and women, blacks and whites, stripped of their masks of gender and race by love and hatred at the most elemental and sublime. In a small set of friends, Baldwin imbues the best and worst intentions of liberal America in the early 1970s.



GREEN TIPS FOR A COOL SUMMER

Keeping our houses cool with air conditioners costs Americans about \$11 billion a year. And those air conditioners release about 100 million tons of carbon dioxide into the air annually - two tons for every home that has one.

The good news is that by following some green tips at home this summer, you can cool off, save money and make a sizable dent in your carbon footprint.

5 Tips to Reduce Body Heat – the lowest tech ways to keep cool this summer start with your own body.

1. Wear clothes in natural fabrics. Such as cotton, hemp, and linen “breathe” better than synthetic fibers and naturally wick moisture away from the body.
2. Eat cool. Dine on salads and sandwiches instead of large, protein-rich meals when the weather is hot. Over or stove-top cooking heats up your house as well.
3. Stay hydrated. Avoid alcohol and caffeine in the heat as these promote dehydration. Drink water.
4. Cool off with water. Soak your feet in a tub of cold water, put on a wet bandana or take a cool shower. Keep a spray bottle of water in the fridge for spritzing yourself.
5. Head down and out. When your home is hottest, remember that the basement is the coolest place in the house. Or plan outings to air-conditioned buildings – such as the library or a movie theatre during peak hot hours.

5 Green Tips for Inside Your Home – try some of these low tech practices around the house.

1. Use windows & window coverings to your advantage. Close windows, curtains and blinds to keep your house cool as long as possible. Dark-colored curtains, roman shades and even inexpensive roller shades can be very effective, blocking up to 80% of solar heat. If air cools down enough in the evening, open windows to promote air circulation. Shading from the inside is a good first step, but shading from the outside with awnings is even better. Awnings can reduce solar heat gain inside by as much as 77%.
2. Don't add to the heat inside. Use appliances at night or early in the morning & maybe eliminate your dryer altogether & use a clothesline instead. A big source of heat is your stove – cook outdoors or microwave meals (they use 2/3rds less energy than stoves). Turn off computers & other appliances when not in use as they can generate unnecessary heat & you'll reduce your electric bill.
3. Use fans. When it cools down, place inexpensive fans in front of open windows to pull cool air inside. Consider installing a ceiling fan. Attic fans also circulate cool air throughout the house.
4. Keep your refrigerator well stocked. Fridges full of food don't warm up as quickly when the door is opened so they require less energy to stay cool.

5 Green Tips for Your Air Conditioner

1. Keep the filter clean. A dirty filter inhibits airflow & makes your unit run longer than needed. Clean or replace every month or so in summer.
 2. Make sure your air conditioner is in good working order. A.C.'s require professional maintenance to keep them working effectively. Every couple of years, have someone do a tune-up.
 3. Set your thermostat higher. Try it at 78 degrees when you're home & 85 degrees when you're away. Install a programmable thermostat & set it to kick in an hour or half-hour before you get home - you won't even notice & be saving a lot of energy.
 4. Shade your air conditioner. Don't locate central air conditioners in direct sunlight. Place window units on the north side of your house, which remains more shaded and uses less energy to operate.
- And lastly, plan for the future: Plant Some Trees. Trees don't just provide shade. Through a process called evapotranspiration, they also cool and moisten the air.

JUNE 2016 CALENDAR

Thursday, June 2

7pm Social Justice Committee meeting

Sunday, June 5

9am Choir rehearsal

10:30am Worship with Rev. Ann Fox, "Voluntary Simplicity"

11:45am Fourth of July planning meeting

Monday, June 6

8:45am MainSpring House lunches prep at FP

7:30pm Facilities Committee meeting

Wednesday, June 8

7pm Insight Meditation Sangha

Thursday, June 9

7pm Growth Team meeting

Saturday, June 11

7pm First Parish UU Annual Meeting (6pm potluck dinner)

Sunday, June 12

9am Choir Rehearsal

10:30am RE Sunday

Monday, June 13

6pm BCD Board Meeting

7:30pm Green Sanctuary Committee Meeting

Wednesday, June 15

7pm Science & Religion Discussion Group

Thursday, June 16

7:30 pm Finance Committee Meeting

Sunday, June 19

9am Choir rehearsal

10:30am Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher, "Consider the Lilies of the Field"

Wednesday, June 22

7pm Insight Meditation Sangha

Thursday, June 23

7:30pm Parish Committee will meet at First Parish

Friday, June 24

7pm T"UU"rning Leaves Book Club—location TBD

Sunday, June 26

9am Choir rehearsal

10:30am Joint Service with Messiah Baptist Church, "I Was in Prison...", 80 Legion Pky, Brockton

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