

BRIDGING

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

April 2017

From the Minister...

What does it mean to be "A Community of Transformation?"

Be cautious with those cultural messages about aggressively tilling and turning up your whole soil. Watch out for all the heroic talk about striving and perfecting, struggle and control. Much of the time, transformation is a much subtler art. It's about stillness, listening and waiting to be led, not fighting with yourself and others to make sure you are in the lead.

– Scott Taylor – Soul Matters

To hear tell from some folks, you are a mess. You need to change. You need to get yourself fixed. You need to be transformed! Or maybe it's your marriage; or our earth; or our social order; or our church.

And those are tempting thoughts on some days. Wouldn't it be nice to be happy all the time? Wouldn't it be great to be a winner rather than a loser? To be self-confident enough to achieve all your goals? To be able to face the world and conquer it?

And, for only \$xx,xxx, you can achieve all of your heart's desires – you can be *Transformed!*

Not.

We've probably all been suckers at one time or another to a solution/product/situation that is guaranteed to enable us to put all of our problems behind us (or at least quite a few of them) and become a different person, the person we've always dreamed of being. And we've probably all been disappointed to find that in the end we're the same old person we always were. We've all been to seminars or classes or workshops that promise to upend the old and create the new in our schools, our workplaces, or our churches.

And there is a *lot* to learn that will make a difference. There are "best practices" in many parts of our lives that it makes good sense to follow – time management practices, relationship practices, self-confidence practices. The problem is that we still are who we are.

Transformation comes gradually as our lives grow and change with age, with relationships, with a new job, with opportunities of all sorts. Change is all around us. Technology of all sorts – in bio-engineering, computer software (especially Artificial Intelligence), medical science, etc. – is changing our world at a dizzying pace. The best way to keep up is probably not to try too hard to keep up, but instead to focus on the changes in the world outside that touch us and to ignore those that don't.

In fact, we are constantly in the process of being transformed. Our bodies are constantly replacing our cells and our minds are constantly integrating new experiences. The best way to open ourselves to transformation is be open to the little insights, the small movements of the spirit, the quiet moments that can touch us and transform us – if we pay attention.

I have found that quiet reflection is a better road to transformation than working as hard as I possibly can to become the new, better self that I imagine. Being open to possibility is the key to transformation.

Sharing our Unitarian Universalist Common Read

The Third Reconstruction: How a Moral Movement Is Overcoming the Politics of Division and Fear by Rev Dr William J. Barber II. Rev. Dr. Barber is one of the leaders of the Moral Mondays movement in North Carolina. I will be leading a discussion of the book in two parts: after church on **Sunday April 23** and **Sunday May 7**. Please sign up in the Upper Parish Hall or just let me know that you're interested in joining us. I'm happy to order books for anyone who wants me to.

In Faith,
Rev. Paul

"KIDS TO CAMP" – Let's Do It Again!

As we approach our ninth "Kids to Camp" year, we are grateful and excited to see our environmental justice project to sponsor children's attendance at Sheep Pasture Nature Camp grow and become a successful annual event. Members of First Parish have donated so generously over the years, we were able to send a total of 36 children to NRT Sheep Pasture Nature Camp!

Environmental Justice is the place where concerns for the environment and social justice cross paths. It recognizes that the impacts of environmental damage often fall first, and most severely, on disadvantaged individuals and communities. Children from these communities often bear the brunt of environmental pollution. Their homes and neighborhoods may be in areas that lack green space for them to play. They may never take a family vacation at a lake, the beach or to the forest. "Kids to Camp" can change this for a small number of children for one week each summer, hopefully carrying the message of the importance of caring for and protecting nature back to their communities.

Sheep Pasture Nature Camp, which is operated by the Natural Resources Trust of Easton, has 154 acres of farm, forest, meadows and streams that provide a perfect outdoor lab for children to learn about their environment and the important role that they can play in protecting it.

On April 9th, the Green Sanctuary Committee will be presenting our "Kids to Camp" service with representatives from Sheep Pasture Nature Camp joining us in this endeavor. Last year we collected a total of \$1,260, sending several children to camp. Our goal this year is to meet or beat this amount! During the months of April and May, proceeds from share the plate will fund this ongoing, worthwhile environmental justice project of the Green Sanctuary Committee. If you choose to write a check, please indicate on the memo line if it is for Kids to Camp or your First Parish pledge. All contributions will be greatly appreciated.

Thank You, Green Sanctuary Committee



Notice Of New England UU Regional Assembly – April 21-22, 2017 Woburn, MA
*Celebrate our Unitarian Universalist faith
through inspired worship, music, engaged learning, fun and fellowship.*

Meet the 2017 UUA Presidential Candidates on Friday evening.
Sing. Reflect. Feel. Make connections. Awaken your spirit!

If you would like to attend just on Saturday and would like a ride, please let Eileen Hiney know.
(fryleen@verizon.net) She and Frank will be going on Saturday and can take two other people in their car.
Details at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/new-england-regional-assembly-2017-registration-28581951386>

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Worship Services in April

The theme for the month of April is Transformation.

Worship Services

April 2 – Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher: "The Self Transformed" – Any number of seminars, books and programs promise to "Transform Your Life!" Is there a cheaper way?

April 9 – Worship with the Green Sanctuary Committee & Natural Resources Trust of North Easton: "Kids to Camp".

April 16 – Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher: "Resurrection and Transformation" – Easter reminds us that all of nature arises again from the darkness – as did Jesus. This is also our Sunday for welcoming new members.

April 23 – Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher: "The Earth Transformed" – Prophets have imagined a New Heaven and a New Earth – but our earth is being transformed for the worse. How shall we cherish our earth in the shadow of this year's Earth Day?

April 30 – Worship with McKayla Hoffman and Tony Winters: "Weaving a New Way" -- Amidst a time of cultural and political turmoil across our world, humanity calls for a change. This "new way" can be woven by the love and goodwill of our united global community during this height of the year. Join us for a service where we will build a physical representation of this web and commit to our stewardship of it. We request advance donations of very long, broad ribbons of varying colors and textures to weave the web.

This month's meeting of the Worship Committee is scheduled for April 13 at 7:30 PM in the church office. Our meetings are open to all. Worship Committee members are Rev. Rachel Tedesco, Chair; Denise Haskins, McKayla Hoffman, Stefan Michaud, Tom St. Thomas, Tony Winters and Rev. Paul Sprecher.



SUNDAY, JUNE 9

**FIRST PARISH CHURCH
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
ANNUAL MEETING 2016-17**

Watch this space for more details....



LET'S *Grow* TOGETHER

SARA WILLIAMS DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

TRANSFORMATION

Transformation is an important idea for Unitarian Universalists. Unitarian Universalists believe that it is important to continually to transform ourselves into being the best person we can be. As we grow, we are searching and learning for what is true and right. We work to transform ourselves and the world into a peaceful, fair, and free place for all.

IMPORTANT DATES

April 2	One Room Schoolhouse: Egg Decorating
April 9	RE Classes
April 16	Intergenerational: Easter
April 23	One Room Schoolhouse: Earth Day
April 30	Intergenerational: Beltane

EVERYBODY'S BIRTHDAY

Everybody's Birthday Party was on Saturday, March 18th!

Members of First Parish joined the RE Committee for party games, cake decorating, a piñata, music, and fun bonding as we celebrated life. Check out some fun photos from the event:



Social Justice Committee News

Our next Social Justice Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 6 at 7pm in the church office. All are welcome!

The Hot Issue: The Brockton Interfaith Community (BIC) and the Sanctuary Church Movement in Brockton – To date, one Brockton church has volunteered to be a Sanctuary Church for undocumented immigrants, Central United Methodist Church on West Elm Street. No immigrants have come seeking sanctuary yet (as of March 22), but the church is getting ready to house them by installing showers and setting up sleeping quarters. Central UMC has enough space, but needs the support of other congregations...as well as individuals... to make this work. Our church's Social Justice Committee is considering asking for everyone's support through donations of money, goods and services. One possibility is to designate half the Share the Plate donations for June towards this project. Another is having people sign up to prepare meals or to do laundry as requested. Rev. Rachel will be attending BIC meetings for supporting congregations and will keep us informed. UU Mass Action and the UU Service Committee (UUSC) are also offering support to UUs who want to become involved.

Criminal Justice Reform – The *Jobs Not Jails Coalition*, including BIC and UU Mass Action, are strategizing in the early days of this legislative session (2017-2018) to get a number of progressive bills passed at the state level. Stay tune for future developments... and actions where we can be engaged.

UU Mass Action Advocacy Day 2017 is happening on Tuesday, April 11 in Boston. Four of us are going and will report back later.

A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER

When sending in your Capital pledges, kindly use a separate check - do not combine it with your regular pledge. The monies go to different accounts, so separate checks will ensure easier and faster processing. In addition to writing a separate check to First Parish for your Capital Campaign donation, please write Capital Campaign in the memo line on that check. Also, please note that we can not process pledges for the 2017-2018 church year until July, so please hold off submitting those checks until that time. Thanks so much! Kat Gillespie, FP Treasurer

SCIENCE & RELIGION GROUP

If you are interested in the subject of animal rights, you might want to attend the Science and Religion Discussion Group on Wednesday, April 19th at 7pm in the "Hive". We will be discussing the text "Animal Liberation, A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals" by Peter Singer. This fascinating subject is bound to generate much discussion!

SHARE THE PLATE DONATIONS

The charity for April and May will be the annual Kids to Camp program promoted by the Green Sanctuary Committee. They will be arranging a service in April about the program.

MAINSRING HOUSE LUNCHESES

Monday, April 3 at 8:45 am in the LPH 50 lunches will be prepared for MainSpring House Homeless Shelter in Brockton. Volunteers and donations are always welcome. Contact Betty Gilson for information and to offer help.

BRIDGEWATER FOOD PANTRY

For many years we have been asking for donations to the Bridgewater Food pantry every first Sunday of the month. However, the need seems to be increasing locally. So we are now asking for donations on a regular basis. Any Sunday that you are able, please bring non-perishable foods, paper goods and/or toilet articles. The items may be left in the large colorful box on a bench in the hall between the sanctuary and Parish Hall. A member of the Social Justice Committee will deliver them to the Food pantry at Central Square Congregational Church.

T"UU"TRNING LEAVES BOOK CLUB/SPECIAL INVITATION

The April selection is *The Bishop's Man* by Linden MacIntyre. He is a best selling and much awarded Canadian author who is a visiting professor at BSU for the spring semester. Tom St. Thomas is a fan of his, having read several of his books. So he introduced himself to Linden and asked him to meet with the First Parish book club. We are still working on a mutually acceptable meeting date, which will be posted in the weekly messages. Everyone is invited to this meeting to discuss the book (info below) and to welcome out Canadian visitor.

Father Duncan MacAskill is called The Exorcist. Not in the traditional sense, however: at his bishop's bidding, he drives out devils of a different sort – priests who molest children. He does not banish the devils to hell, nor to the police, but to discreet clinics or simply to far-off parishes to commence their sins anew. MacAskill's loathsome bishop has a heart of ice. He refuses to see abused children as victims. They are merely troublesome complainers who need to be silenced. The Exorcist is more sympathetic, but still he obeys the bishop. Despite his own celibacy and sobriety issues, MacAskill is the closest thing to a hero in Linden MacIntyre's riveting new novel.

SPRING CLEAN-UP

The Facilities Committee is hosting a Spring Cleanup of the outside church grounds on Saturday April 15th from 9:00am to 1:30pm. We will focus on picking up the leaves and rubbish that have accumulated over the winter. Please bring your own gloves, rakes, leaf blowers, shovels etc., if you have them! However, we do have some extras and can provide tools if you do not have them.

Sermon Writing for Lay Preachers

Hands-on sermon-writing workshop by the New England Region of the UUA.

Cost: \$50 per person (\$35 per person after the first 3 from the same congregation)

Date and Time: Saturday, May 20; 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Location: Unitarian Society of Hartford, 50 Bloomfield Ave., Hartford, CT

Description: For lay leaders and religious educators.

Presenter: Rev. Sue Phillips, NE Region UUA

Lay leaders and religious educators frequently find ourselves in the pulpit. And while many have become experienced preachers, few of us have had the benefit of focused training in sermon-writing and preaching. Here's your chance. If you are interested in attending, ask Rev. Rachel for a detailed flyer.

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 MAINSPRING 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.

First Parish Unitarian Universalist

1716-1717

BRIDGEWATER, MASSACHUSETTS

2016-2017



300
YEARS

GIVE US HOPE

A Community Concert

SATURDAY, APRIL 8th, 2017 at 7:00 PM

FEATURING...

First Parish Bridgewater Choir

Middleboro Chalice Choir

Male Bonding Band

Richard Hill

Organ

Capriol Consort

Recorder Ensemble

Barry & Patty Simon

Dulcimer & Flute Duet

Bridgewater Alumni Choir

Tony Winters & McKayla Hoffman

ADMISSION: \$10.00

Children 12 & Under free



Location: 50 School Street, Bridgewater, MA 02324



Massachusetts Cultural Council

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Bridgewater Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Tips for Green Spring Cleaning

Cleaning can be hazardous to your health – and to the environment. Many common household cleaners contain alcohol, ammonia, bleach, formaldehyde and lye, substances that can cause nausea, vomiting, inflammation and burning of the eyes and throat. Some of these ingredients have been linked with neurological, liver, and kidney damage, and asthma and cancer. When buying and using cleaning products, here are some things to keep in mind: Read Labels; Follow Instructions; Use a scourer or rub harder rather than overusing cleaners. Try earth-friendly Bon Ami cleanser; do not mix products; make sure containers are kept dry to prevent corrosion.

Some of the greenest cleaners are the ones you make yourself. Here are some sample recipes for simple, effective cleaners:

Drain Cleaner: Pour half-cup baking soda down the sink and add at least a cup of vinegar. Cover the drain & wait a few minutes, then rinse with a mixture of boiling water and salt.

Window Cleaner: Mix two ounces of vinegar with a quart of water in a spray bottle.

Silver Polish: Put a sheet of aluminum foil into a plastic or glass bowl. Sprinkle the foil with salt and baking soda and fill the bowl with warm water. Soak your silver in the bowl and tarnish migrates to the foil. Dry and buff.

Brass Cleaner: Cut a lemon in half, sprinkle it with salt and rub the lemon on the metal. Buff with a cloth.

Rust Remover: Use vinegar to remove rust on nuts and bolts and other mineral deposits such as calcium deposits.



Off the Common Coffeehouse

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

Saturday, April 1, 2017 at 7:30pm

Potluck dinner at 6:30pm

featuring
Bill Staines

Coming Attractions

May 6 - The Heather Pierson Acoustic Trio with Emily Mure

Admission: \$15

*Enjoy our homemade
Refreshments*

Sign up for open mike!



First Parish Unitarian Universalist

BRIDGEWATER, MASSACHUSETTS

1716-1717

2016-2017



300
YEARS

First Parish Players Present...



THE NIGHT
Thoreau
SPENT IN
JAIL

A play by

Robert E. Lee & Jerome Lawrence

Directed by

Tony Winters & McKayla Hoffman

April 21st & 22nd at 7:30 pm

Adults: \$15

Students: \$10

Children 12 & under: \$5

Location: 50 School Street, Bridgewater, MA 02324



Massachusetts Cultural Council

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Bridgewater Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

September 2015 CALENDAR

Saturday, April 1

7:30pm Off the Common Coffeehouse featuring Bill Staines

Sunday, April 2

9am Choir rehearsal

10:30am Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher, "The Self Transformed"

Monday, April 3

8:45m MainSpring House lunches prep at FP

7pm Facilities Committee meeting

Wednesday, April 5

6:30pm Meditation Group

Thursday, April 6

7pm Social Justice Committee will meet in the church office

Saturday, April 8

7pm "Give Us Hope", a community concert at First Parish

Sunday, April 9

9am Choir rehearsal

10:30am Green Sanctuary Committee's "Kids to Camp" service

Monday, April 10

1pm Green Sanctuary Committee Meeting at the home of Janet Dye

Tuesday, April 11

UU Mass Action Advocacy Day, Boston, MA

5:45pm RE Committee Meeting

Thursday, April 13

7:30pm Worship Committee will meet at FP

Saturday, April 15

9am Spring Clean-Up at First Parish

Sunday, April 16

9am Choir rehearsal

10:30am Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher, "Resurrection & Transformation"

Wednesday, April 19

6:30pm Meditation Group

7pm Science and Religion Discussion Group meets at the Hive

Friday, April 21

UU Regional General Assembly, Woburn, MA

7:30pm First Parish Players presents "The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail", FPC

Saturday, April 22

UU Regional General Assembly, Woburn, MA

7:30pm First Parish Players presents "The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail", FPC

Sunday, April 23

9am Choir rehearsal

10:30am Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher, "The Earth Transformed"

Book discussion—*The Third Reconstruction: How a Moral Movement Is Overcoming the Politics of Division and Fear*

Thursday, April 27

7pm Parish Committee Meeting at FP, UPH

Sunday, April 30

9am Choir rehearsal

10:30am Worship with Tony Winters & McKayla Hoffman, "Weaving a New Way"

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