



BRIDGING

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

January 2018

From the Minister...

What Does It Mean to Be a People of *Intention*?

*It is not enough to be busy. So are the ants.
The question is: What are you busy about?
- Henry David Thoreau*

The beginning of a new year is a time for reflection about where we have been – especially in the past year – and where we intend to go during the coming year. Hence the resolutions we make for ourselves to lead a better life, to eat less (or more), exercise regularly, lose weight, stop procrastinating and on and on. January is the month in which many of the best-laid plans for being better selves run aground. Many of us avoid the whole process because of years of disappointment with the setting of shiny goals for the coming year.

Setting intentions is different than setting goals as represented in the making of resolutions. Katie Covie, a UU religious educator who participated in developing our Soul Matters theme for January, expressed the difference this way:

Here's what I discovered. Intention is different from setting goals or resolutions in that it "pulls us into" who we truly are. Goals and resolutions "push us out" into future possibilities. To set intentions, we listen to our inner voice which tells up who we truly are.

I find it useful to remember the distinction between management and leadership from my own days in business: The job of leaders is to cast a vision of *what* needs to be done; the job of managers is to figure out *how* to accomplish what needs to be done. An intention helps to align us with our purpose, with who we really are. Goals and resolutions based in intention are much more likely to be achieved because they come out of a deeper place within us rather than pushing us to achieve some outside definition of "my best self now." This month our theme invites us to step back from the dream of "self improvement" and into the dream of becoming the self we already are and living into it.

One of my intentions this year is to explore my own relation to racism in the context of my own life and in the life of our Unitarian Universalist Association. To help accomplish this, I will be leading a series of reading groups that touch on these issues after services on Sunday; these gatherings will complement the Social Justice Committee's Film Series on race in America. Here's the first thing we'll read together:

Reading Group: *Waking Up White, and Finding Myself in the Story of Race* by Debby Irving, meeting Sunday, January 21st and February 4th after Coffee Hour. Please plan to join the conversation; we'll read about ½ of the book for the first gathering and the rest for the second.

In Faith,

Rev. Paul

Minister

Rev. Paul Sprecher
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Worship Committee News

The theme for the month of January is **Intention**.

Worship services:

January 7 – Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher, "Resolution Dissolution": How's it going with those New Year's Resolutions one week in? Resolutions often fail; setting intentions day by day works better.

January 14 – Worship with Vernon Domingo, "On being an ally for transgender rights": Mr. Domingo, a parent of a transgender son, will speak about the challenges that transgender people face in a social and political climate that threatens to revoke the advances that have been made in the country and in our state.

January 21 – Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher, "Intending Revolution": Sometimes the world is so messed up it seems like everything needs to be overthrown so we can start over. Or can we set our intentions toward more enduring change?

January 28 – Worship with Rev. Richard Fewkes, "On Truth and Lies in Our Public and Private Lives": Years ago Harvard philosopher Sissella Bok wrote a book about *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life*. What she said about this issue more than 30 years ago is more relevant today than it ever was.

Submit your announcements early! We invite all members who have announcements to submit them in advance to Tony Winters at Tonywin4228@gmail.com by Friday evening. Then they can be featured on the overhead screen before the start of the service.

Next Worship Committee meeting: The next regular meeting of the Worship Committee is scheduled for Thursday, January 18 at 7pm in the church office. Members and friends are cordially invited to attend. You may share your ideas with us about worship or simply be present to observe.

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

PLEASE JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE
THE NEW YEAR!

NEW YEAR'S DAY OPEN HOUSE

MONDAY, JANUARY 1, 2018

3-8PM

HOSTED BY FRANK YEATMAN & EILEEN HINEY

316 SOUTH STREET

BRIDGEWATER

508-279-3955

FRYLEEN@VERIZON.NET

CHILDREN WELCOME





SARA WILLIAMS DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

UPCOMING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CALENDAR:

- January 7: RE Classes
- January 14: One Room Schoolhouse
- January 21: RE Classes
- January 28: RE Classes

CHILDCARE

is available every Sunday morning from 10-12 and at every First Parish event!

RE COMMITTEE

We are looking for two new members for the RE Committee! We meet once a month to shape our dynamic religious education program. Are you interested in learning more or sitting in on a RE Committee Meeting? Please reach out to Sara for more information!

EVERYBODY'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

March 17, 2018
Time: Afternoon, TBD

Mark your calendars! The RE Committee will be hosting a special St. Patrick's Day edition of Everybody's Birthday Party this year at First Parish!

At Everybody's Birthday Party, all ages gather together to play games, decorate (and eat) birthday cakes, and get to know one another!



UUNITED

UUnited Youth Ministry is a youth group of area congregations that meets on the first and third Friday of every month. Youth ages 12-18 are invited to attend UUnited, which is hosted at the Taunton UU church. If you are interested in attending a UUnited get together, please reach out to Sara for more information!

WOMEN'S MARCH 2018 on Saturday, January 20 from 2pm to 3pm in Downtown New Bedford. Hosted by *Action Together Southeastern MA*.



We celebrate the anniversary of last year's Women's Marches across the country, including in Boston (where a number of us were) and in New Bedford. This year's New Bedford march will be starting at the Customs House Square, 21 Barkers Lane. Open to all! Children and families welcome.

For First Parish UU Church members and friends, contact Rev. Rachel. If you are interested in carpooling, we plan to leave from the church parking lot by 12:30pm

For more information, go to Facebook site: <https://www.facebook.com/actiontogethersema/> Then scroll down for Upcoming Events. Contact Rev. Rachel at 508-944-6436 or email: revracted@comcast.net.



THANK YOU!

Our Carolgram fundraiser spread holiday cheer near and far, and raised \$550 for our church!

~The Music Committee



Off the Common Coffeehouse

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



Saturday, January 6, 2018 at 7:30pm

Potluck dinner at 6:30pm

featuring

The Kennedys with Quentin Callewaert

Coming Attractions

January 6 – The Kennedys with Quentin Callewaert
February 3 – Bernice Lewis
March 3 – David Roth
April 7 – The Monica Rizzio Band
May 5 – Chris & Meredith Thompson

Admission: \$15

*Enjoy our homemade
Refreshments*

Sign up for open mike!

12 YEARS A SLAVE



Tuesday, January 23 at 7pm
at First Parish Church,
50 School Street, Bridgewater

Join the Social Justice Committee
of First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church
and the Bridgewater Citizens for Civility and Respect
for a free showing of this important film,
first in a series of Black Lives Matter films.

In the years before the Civil War, Solomon Northup (Chiwetel Ejiofor), a free black man from upstate New York, is kidnapped and sold into slavery in the South. Subjected to the cruelty of one malevolent owner (Michael Fassbender), he also finds unexpected kindness from another, as he struggles continually to survive and maintain some of his dignity. Then in the 12th year of the disheartening ordeal, a chance meeting with an abolitionist from Canada changes Solomon's life forever.

Future films planned are:

February 3 - 13th, an in depth look at the U.S. prison system

March 13 - 42, Jackie Robinson breaking MLB's color barrier

April 10 - Detroit, award-winning film about the 1976 riots

May 8 - I Am Not Your Negro, documentary on James Baldwin

DEADLINES AND REMINDERS

The deadline for submissions for First Parish's monthly newsletter, Bridging, is the 20th of the month. Please send your copy-ready blurbs to firstparishbridgewater@hotmail.com on or prior to that day.

The deadline for announcements to be included in the weekly email is 12noon on Wednesdays. And if you have something that needs to be sent out on consecutive weeks, you must resubmit it each week.

If you are in charge of a First Parish committee, and you meet regularly, please forward your meeting schedule to firstparishbridgewater@hotmail.com so that it may be posted on the church calendar, website, and in the newsletter.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION

The Science and Religion Discussion Group will meet on Wednesday, January 17 at 7pm in the Hive.



JANUARY SHARE THE PLATE

The charity for January is [Sunshine Farm Sanctuary](#) in Bridgewater, an outdoor organization that provides services to foster children ages 5-18. At Sunshine Farm Sanctuary the mission is to help children heal who have experienced trauma and are now living in the state's foster care system. At Sunshine Farm they create a new emotional world by healing through compassion and happiness. The experience is for children to

feel welcomed into a world where people and animals cherish them, protect them, meet their needs, make them feel at home and give them a sense of belonging.

MAINSRING HOUSE LUNCHESES

Monday, January 1, 2018 at 9:30 am (note later time in deference to party goers) come celebrate New Year's Day by making 100 lunches for MainSpring House Homeless shelter in Brockton. Volunteers and donations always welcome. Speak with Betty Gilson to offer help.

FULL SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, January 4 at 7pm at the church the Full Social Justice Committee will meet for brief reports from all branches and to discuss plans for the coming year.

CARING COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, January 22, 2018 at 7pm the Caring Committee will meet at the church. If you have joys or concerns that the committee should be addressing, please contact a member.

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

BLACK LIVES MATTER FILM SERIES

On Tuesday, January 23 at 7pm, the Social Justice Committee and the Bridgewater Citizens for Civility and Respect will present the acclaimed film *12 Years A Slave* (2013).

Storyline: In the antebellum United States, Solomon Northup, a free black man from upstate New York, is abducted and sold into slavery.

This is the first in a series of films addressing racism in America from the time of slavery to the present. The showings will be in the Upper Parish Hall. Future films and their tentative dates are:

February 13 – 13th, an in depth look at the U.S. prison system.

March 13 - 42, Jackie Robinson breaking Major League Baseball's color barrier

April 10 - Detroit, award-winning film about the 1976 riots

May 8 - I Am Not Your Negro, a documentary on James Baldwin

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF OUR ELEVATOR.

Our elevator (or "lift") was installed in 2000. Long time members of First Parish recall that the elevator worked well for a number of years. Unfortunately, that's not been the case more recently - the elevator has not operated reliably over the past 3-4 years.

Chris Kasmarek, (Betty Gilson's son-in-law, whose family attended First Parish) owned and operated an elevator company. Chris installed the elevator and for 16 years generously serviced and repaired it without charging us for his labor or parts. In December 2016, Chris sold his company and retired to Vermont.

We signed up with a new elevator company in March 2017. When the elevator wasn't working in late April we called the new company in to fix it. That was the first of a series of service calls during May, August and October. Since the last service call on October 20th the elevator has worked. But getting it to work for more than a week or two at a time came at a high cost.

At an hourly rate of \$235 for 1 mechanic and \$410 for a team of 2, plus travel time, we ended up with invoices totaling \$4,880! The Parish Committee considered ending our relationship with this company a number of times but was not confident that starting over with a new company would be a more reliable or more economical choice. As it has turned out, the company has chosen to end our relationship. They have been unhappy with our complaints about their failure to fix the elevator promptly or at a reasonable cost, so don't want to do business with us any longer.

Although we had not anticipated almost \$5,000 in elevator costs and did not include that amount in the current year's budget, we have been able to cover the costs with funds in the Facilities Committee budget that might have been used for other projects.

We have recently hired a new company, Garaventa, the manufacturer of the elevator, to service it. We are also looking into pricing a new elevator. This might be something to consider if we continue to incur high repair costs on our unit.

At this point we are keeping our fingers crossed that the elevator does not require additional repairs anytime soon -- and the new company will provide better service at a more reasonable cost.

Eileen Hiney



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.

JANUARY 2018 CALENDAR

Monday, January 1

- 9:30am MainSpring House lunches prep at FP
- 3pm New Year's Day Open House at Eileen & Frank's

Thursday, January 4

- 7pm Social Justice Committee Meeting at First Parish

Saturday, January 6

- 7:30pm Off the Common Coffeehouse featuring The Kennedys with Quentin Callewaert

Sunday, January 7

- 9am Choir Practice
- 10:30am Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher, "Resolution Dissolution"

Monday, January 8

- 1pm Green Sanctuary Committee will meet at Janet Dye's
- 7pm Committee Council meeting

Thursday, January 11

- 7pm Blithe Spirit

Friday, January 12

- 7pm Blithe Spirit

Saturday, January 13

- 7pm Blithe Spirit

Sunday, January 14

- 9am Choir rehearsal
- 10:30am Worship with Vernon Domingo, "On being an ally for transgender rights"

Wednesday, January 17

- 7pm Science & Religion Discussion Group

Thursday, January 18

- 7pm Worship Committee meeting at First Parish

Saturday, January 20

- 2pm Women's March, New Bedford, MA, hosted by *Action Together Southeastern MA*

Sunday, January 21

- 9am Choir rehearsal
- 10:30am Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher, "Intending Revolution"
- 12pm Reading Group, *Waking Up White, and Finding Myself in the Story of Race*

Monday, January 22

- 7pm Caring Committee will hold its monthly meeting at First Parish

Tuesday, January 23

- 7pm "12 Years a Slave" showing at First Parish

Thursday, January 25

- 7pm Parish Committee meeting

Sunday, January 28

- 9am Choir Practice
- 10:30am Worship with Rev. Richard Fewkes, "On Truth and Lies in Our Public and Private Lives"

**First Parish Church
Unitarian Universalist**

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