



# BRIDGING

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

November 2018

## From the Minister...

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

*Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.*

George Santayana

Some of my memories embarrass me. Some of my memories haunt me. Some of my memories inspire me. Some of my memories comfort me. All of my memories make me who I am. The relative importance of different memories changes over time for me. Sometimes memories of my childhood take on a particular prominence. A few weeks ago I went back to our family farm near Madison, WI, whose memories go back to when we moved there – I was 10. I walked part of the farm with my older brother John and a different part the next day with my high school girlfriend Kathy. John reminded me of the 100-car freight trains that ran on the tracks just on the edge of the farm, and of the time a circus train passed through and we waved to them and they threw candy to us. Kathy and I remembered going up to “the hill” to make out. I remembered a day when my grandfather gestured toward the hill and suggested that being a farmer was not a bad life after all, hoping that I would keep the farm alive for another generation and that I would carry forward the memories of farm life he cherished from his ancestors. I chose a road less traveled in my family. All of my memories offer opportunities to deepen my understanding of who I am, what potentials live in me, and what choices I can make to have less embarrassing memories and more inspiring ones.

Just as each of us as individuals are influenced by and made up of memories, our families and groups and communities and nations are also deeply influenced by memories, by history and the uses to which it is put. The ways we tell and teach and remember our history affect how we understand ourselves as human beings, as nations, and as people of faith. Some significant parts of our contemporary political conflicts originate in conflicts over how we understand and make sense of our national history. Confederate monuments and battle flags have been particular flash points over the past few years, but there is also the question of American greatness and whether it has been lost or ever was. The way we remember the fact that every non-Native American is an immigrant affects how we respond to the newest immigrants to our country, and remembering how our nation turned away Jewish refugees seeking asylum from Nazism affects how we respond to asylum-seekers today.

Our Unitarian Universalist congregations are also engaged in process of remembering together as we seek to come to terms with the ways that our religious tradition has responded to the realities of being part of a society in which “whiteness” has been the default for “rightness.” Our congregations at last June’s General Assembly committed themselves to study and take action on “Undoing Intersectional White Supremacy” – you can find the resolution here: <https://bit.ly/2qdMoVh> Here at First Parish we have begun a series of gatherings after coffee hour to study these issues and find ways to take action. Our next gathering after coffee hour is on

**Sunday, November 4,** when we will be watching the film *Wilderness Journey*, a documentary about the Empowerment Controversy of the late 1960’s, the first time our Unitarian Universalist Association confronted issues of racism in our own ranks. (More details below)

In Faith, Rev. Paul

# Worship Committee News

November 2018



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

*I am a collection of thoughts and memories and likes and dislikes.  
I am the things that have happened to me and the sum of  
everything I've ever done. I am the clothes I wear on my back.  
I am every place and every person and every object I have ever  
come across. I am a bag of bones stuck to a very large rock  
spinning a thousand miles an hour.*

**Macaulay Culkin**

## Worship Services for November



**November 4 – Rev. Paul: “Having Enough”** - What keeps us from recognizing that we have “enough” that “more” will not satisfy us no matter how much “more” there is to get? Gratitude is one step on the road toward being able to recognize that we have “enough.”

**November 11 – Rev. Paul: “Not Having Enough”** - While acknowledging that I have enough is an important spiritual insight, the reality is that in our country and in our world, far too many people don't have enough. Avoiding excessive inequality has been a religious commitment since the dawn of civilization -- so why is it so hard to build a society that actually embodies fairness in the distribution of wealth?

**November 18 – David Roth: “There's more to giving thanks than giving thanks.”**  
**A Sermon- in-Song service** – David Roth is “spiritual, not religious” folk artist and renowned songwriter and performer who, over the years, has done many sermon-in-song services in UU churches. This morning, David will speak and sing about gratitude and action beyond “thank you” and “sending thoughts and prayers.”

**November 25 – “Lift Every Voice!”** – A service focusing on the meaning and power of singing together. Do you love “Blue Boat Home”? How about “Earth Was Given as a Garden”? Did you ever notice they have the same melody? Come and hear the choir, sing your favorite hymns, and learn some interesting tidbits about them!

### Minister

Rev. Paul Sprecher  
psprecher@uuma.org  
781-210-2016

### Directory of Religious Ed

Sara Williams  
dre.bridgewater@gmail.com  
978-257-0240

### Parish Committee

**President:** Laurie Lessner  
laurie@yabroudy.com  
(508) 230-9440

### Vice President:

Janet Dye  
dyedyeo7@gmail.com  
508-697-9662

### Clerk:

McKayla Hoffman  
mckayhoffman@gmail.com  
(508) 813-0575

### Treasurer:

Kat Gillespie  
flopsykitty@gmail.com

### Members at Large:

James Hayes-Bohanan  
David Wilson

### Registrar

Jan Thompson  
janicethompson22@comcast.net

### Church Sexton

Scott Poulin  
scottspoop@hotmail.com

### Facilities Committee

**Chair:** Quent Jarvis  
dpoesepp@gmail.com  
questjarvis@juno.com

### Choir Director/Pianist

Denise Haskins  
denisehaskins@comcast.net  
508-264-7617

### Tone Chimes Choir Director

Lisa Rue  
lisa\_rue80@yahoo.com  
508-378-8359

### Religious Education Committee

Lisa Troy  
Jenny Donahue  
Sonia D'Alarcao  
Karen Reed-Messing

### Community Minister

Rev. Rachel Tedesco  
revrayted@comcast.com  
508-378-3904

### Social Justice Committee

**Convener:** Betty Gilson  
gillyflower@verizon.net  
774-226-0942

### Green Sanctuary Committee

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

### First Principle Project

**Convener:** Betty Gilson  
gillyflower@verizon.net  
774-226-0942

### Office Administrator

Jamie Doulette  
firstparishbridgewater@hotmail.com  
508-846-7778

## WORSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS (cont.)

### About 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.

**Worship Committee meeting:** The next regular meeting of the Worship Committee is scheduled for Thursday, November 15 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, Yasmeen Thompson, Tony Winters and Rev. Paul Sprecher.

**Next Worship Committee meeting:** The next regular meeting of the Worship Committee is scheduled for Thursday, November 15 at 7pm in the church office. (Note the change of time.) Members and friends are cordially invited to attend. You may share your ideas with us about worship or simply be present to observe.

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## STUDYING WHITE SUPREMACY

We will continue our study on **Sunday, November 4th after coffee hour** in the sanctuary by watching "Wilderness Journey: The Struggle for Black Empowerment and Racial Justice within the UUA 1967-1970," (1:16:10) Ron Cordes's compelling oral history comprised of interviews of several Unitarian Universalist leaders who were involved in the Black Empowerment Controversy.

## 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.



# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

*Broad Wings  
and  
Deep Roots*

## RE CALENDAR

- November 4:** RE Classes
- November 11:** One Room Schoolhouse
- November 18:** Intergenerational Service - Thanksgiving
- November 25:** Intergenerational Service - Hymn Sing

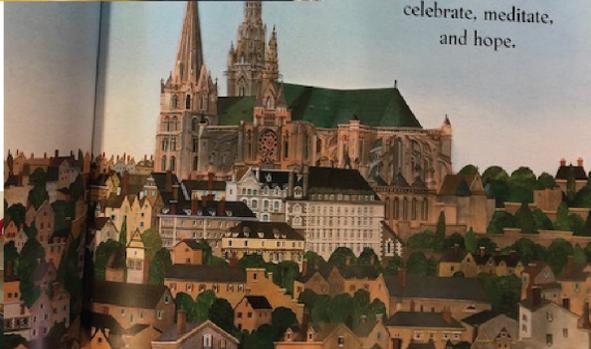
## WHAT'S HAPPENING?



People all over the world have made special places where they gather to worship, celebrate, meditate, and hope.

**The Preschool-Kindergarten** class has been exploring the “We Are Many, We Are One” curriculum. The children are learning about themselves, the world around them, and Unitarian Universalism.

**The Elementary** group has been working on the Soul Matters Sharing Circle curriculum, which directly links to the church’s monthly worship themes. The group has also been exploring different ways people worship.



**The Youth Group** helped in the younger classes for a few class sessions and then began the Harry Potter UU Curriculum. Upon diving in, the group has agreed to explore other options while staying with the topic of Social Justice.

We will begin to explore documentaries and extend the learning to our community.

SARA WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DRE.BRIDGEWATER@GMAIL.COM





## The 4 Most Important Things You Can Do for the Environment

If you feel you're not doing enough for the environment by replacing your incandescent light bulbs with LED lights & composting your table scraps, maybe you're ready to make a deeper commitment to environmental stewardship. Some of these strategies may seem a little radical, but they are among the most valuable actions you can take to protect and preserve Earth's environment.

**USE LESS WATER – AND KEEP IT CLEAN:** Freshwater supplies are much more limited, and today a third of the world's people lack access to clean drinking water. According to the United Nations, 95% of the cities worldwide still dump raw sewage into their water supplies. Use only as much water as you need, don't waste the water you do use and avoid doing anything to endanger water supplies. These include avoid using lawn pesticides; slow rainwater runoff; properly dispose of household chemicals & medications; attend to oil leaks on mower or car and avoid products with microbeads.

**EAT RESPONSIBLY:** Eating locally grown food supports local farmers and merchants in your own community as well as reducing the amount of fuel, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions required to move the food you eat. Eating organically keeps pesticides & chemical fertilizers off your plate & out of rivers & streams.

Eating responsibly also means eating less meat & fewer animal products such as eggs & dairy products. Farm animals emit methane, a potent greenhouse gas, and raising animals for food requires many times more land and water than growing food crops.

**CONSERVE ENERGY – AND SWITCH TO RENEWABLE ENERGY:** Walk, bike & use public transportation more; drive less. Turn off lights & unplug appliances when they are not in use. Substitute cold water for hot whenever practical & weather strip your doors & windows. Get a free energy audit from your local utility. Whenever possible, choose renewable energy over fossil fuel. Many municipal utilities now offer green energy alternatives to receive some of all of your electricity from wind, solar or other renewable sources.

**REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT:** Many human activities – from using coal-fired power plants to generate electricity to driving gasoline-powered vehicles – cause greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change. Online calculators (EarthLab.com and CarbonFund.org) can help you measure and reduce your personal carbon footprint, climate change is a global problem that requires global solutions. So, in addition to lowering your own carbon footprint, let your government officials know that you expect them to take action on this issue – and keep the pressure on until they do.



## Off the Common Coffeehouse

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



### Saturday, November 3rd at 7:30pm

Potluck dinner at 6:30pm

featuring 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!*

## HOLLY DAY FAIRE

Can it really be holiday time already? Yes, and the dates for the First Parish Holiday Faire are fast approaching. Please make sure you have the fair dates on your calendar. We still have a few spots for vendors, so if you know a "crafty" person who might like to have a table, please pass this information on to them or let Eileen Hiney know. ([fryleen@verizon.net](mailto:fryleen@verizon.net))

As always, we will be looking for volunteers to help decorate the church, make soup and cookies, setup and clean up and so much more. Look for more information about how you can help with this fun event in the next couple of weeks.

The Events Committee

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## HOLLY DAY FAIRE

FIRST PARISH CHURCH, 50 SCHOOL ST. BRIDGEWATER

Friday, December 7, 2018 6-8p

Saturday, December 8, 2018 10a-2p

### *Local Artisans & Crafters*

Wrap-up your holiday shopping - buy the perfect gift made locally. Beautiful jewelry, fragrant hand-made soaps, warm knitted hats and scarfs, home-made jam and more.

### *Cookie Walk! Select your favorites...*

More than twenty delicious varieties - pecan shortbread, chocolate peppermint bars, triple ginger, oatmeal crisps, etc. - take a dozen home.

### *Visits with Santa & Holiday Entertainment*



### **Saturday 11a – 2p Soup Buffet!**

Ten or more varieties - creamy corn chowder, chicken with rice, savory lentil, squash bisque, beef stew. Get a bottomless cup and sample them all. Take out available.

**Vendors:** a table is \$30 (includes both days.) Questions - or to reserve a table, leave a message at 508-697-2525 or email [firstparishbridgewater@hotmail.com](mailto:firstparishbridgewater@hotmail.com)

First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church, 50 School St, Bridgewater, MA 02324  
[www.firstparishbridgewater.org/](http://www.firstparishbridgewater.org/) <https://www.facebook.com/FPBwaterUU/>



## GLBTA COMING OUT DAY COFFEE HOUR

Tuesday, November 13 from 9:45 - 10:45am First Parish Social Justice Committee will host the BSU Pride group for our annual Coffee Hour and discussion. The discussion this year will be led by members of the program at BSU called PIES (Promoting Identities, Erasing Stigma). The topic will be "How LGBTQ Folks Experience Religion; A Conversation between PIES and UU".

The group will have a few students share a brief personal story about their experience as an LGBTQ person with a religion they grew up in or were involved in. Then we'd like to have an open discussion with UU attendees about how to bridge that gap so that members of the LGBTQ community might be more open to coming to the church and be engaged.

Come join us for a fun and informative program. If you would like to help with set up, clean up, or food, or just want to attend, please contact Betty Gilson [gillyflower@verizon.net](mailto:gillyflower@verizon.net)



## CHRISTMAS CARD PARTY

It's that time again, time to write Christmas cards. But what do you do with all of last year's cards, or the ones you get in the mail from Nature Conservancy or Amnesty International and the other organizations to which you contribute?

What are you going to do with all of those, you say?

Well, we have a solution for you!



Again this year, the Church of the Larger Fellowship, the Unitarian Universalist Association's "church without walls" is going to send greeting cards to the almost 900 UUs who are experiencing incarceration.

When we did this a few years ago, First Parish sent more than 225 cards; this year we can probably send even more.

On Wednesday, November 14 from 9am – 12pm, we will have a card signing party in lower parish hall. I'll bring pastry, tea, hot chocolate and coffee. You bring your favorite pen to sign just your first name and write pithy words of greeting, and energy to write many, many cards. Everyone in the congregation can contribute by bringing in cards and forever stamps and by joining us on the 14th.

Beginning right away, I'll start collecting the Christmas cards. They should be very plain with no glitter or lumps and should have plain white envelopes. Bring them with you to church and give them to me (Susan Holton) or Joe Snyders. We also need forever stamps, so bring as many as you can. If you have neither stamps nor cards, you can give me cash and I'll buy them for you.

For many incarcerated Unitarian Universalists, this card will be their only holiday greeting. Please contribute and come; it will make a big difference in their holiday.



## Circle Dinner Sign-Up

So, our new church year is in full swing and fall is in the air. Time for sharing memories and renewing relationships with our First Parish friends. A great way to strengthen friendships, old and new, is to participate in one of our First Parish Circle Dinners. Circle Dinners are small gatherings held at the homes of First Parish friends and members and

are a great way for us to get to know each other outside of the Sunday service church setting. Our fall round of Circle Dinners will be held **Fridays and Saturdays November 2 & 3 and November 9 & 10**. Some of the gatherings will be for adults and others will be open to children as well as parents. Hosts will provide appetizers and beverages and guests will bring the rest of the food including entrees, side dishes, salads, breads and desserts. We currently have 4 hosts who have graciously offered their homes for these dinners. Thanks to Laurie Lessner, Louella Mann, Linda Dunphy & Tom Springhetti, and Rev. Rachel & David Tedesco for hosting. If you would like to host or attend a Circle Dinner, please sign up on the appropriate sheets in the Upper Parish Hall, or contact Susan Irish [eirish2@aol.com](mailto:eirish2@aol.com) (508) 378-2906.

## SHARE THE PLATE

The November Share the Plate selection is the Guest at Your Table program of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. Guest at Your Table (GAYT) is UUSC's annual intergenerational program to raise support for and awareness about key human rights issues. Since UUSC works in over 25 countries, with over 75 grassroots partners, there are thousands of individuals involved in and who benefit from the work that our members make possible. The program is an opportunity to celebrate grassroots partnership, support human rights, and learn about just four of these individuals – the "guests" in Guest at Your Table.



## MORE ABOUT GUEST AT YOUR TABLE

In addition to sharing the plate with GAYT in November, you will be able to make specific donations to this special UUSC program. On Nov. 18 we will be passing out a special box to each family for your use in collecting money for this project. An insert in the Order of Service that day will explain more about this year's project which has the theme *Justice across Borders*. You will also receive a booklet with *Stories of Hope*. Make donations at each meal for the "guests" and then pass in your family donation on the first service of the new year. Please convert the donations into a check for First Parish with GAYT in the memo line.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, November 1 at 7pm the Social Justice Committee will meet at First Parish to discuss coming projects. We will be finalizing plans for the annual Coming Out Day program with the LGBTQA Pride group at BSU. (See a message about that further on.) Also, we will be discussing participation in the December Holly Day Fair.

## MAINSRING HOUSE LUNCHESES

Monday, November 4 at 8:30 am 100 lunches will be prepared in the LPH for MainSpring House. Donations and volunteers always welcome. Contact Betty Gilson to offer help.

## CARING COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, November 26 at 7 pm at the church the Caring Committee will meet. If you have any issues that should be addressed by the committee, please speak with a member.

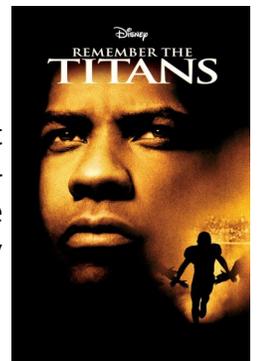
The last line of our Church Covenant is "...and to help one another." The Caring Committee often takes a lead in carrying out this part of the covenant. However, there are always other friends who help with various needs as they arise. It would be wonderful to have a list of others who would be able 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

## BLACK LIVES MATTER FILM SERIES

November 27 at 7pm the SJC and the Bridgewater Citizens for Civility and Respect will present the next film in our Black Lives Matter film series. Join us to view and discuss *Remember the Titans*. In 1971 high school football was everything to the people of Alexandria, VA. But when the local school board was forced to integrate an all black school with an all white school, the very foundation of football's great tradition was put to the test. How did they respond?



## T"UU"RING LEAVES BOOK CLUB

Friday, November 30 at 7pm at the church the T"UU"ring Leaves Book Club will discuss *The Plot against America*, a rather timely book in light of the mid-term elections. It is an alternative history in which Franklin D. Roosevelt is defeated in the presidential election of 1940 by Charles Lindbergh. The novel follows the fortunes of the Roth family during the Lindbergh presidency, as antisemitism becomes more accepted in American life and Jewish-American families like the Roths are persecuted on various levels.

# NOVEMBER 2018 CALENDAR

Thursday, November 1

7pm Social Justice Committee Meeting at First Parish

Friday, November 2

Circle Dinner

Saturday, November 3

Circle Dinner

7:30pm Off the Common Coffeehouse at First Parish

**Sunday, November 4**

9am Choir Practice

10:30am Worship with Rev. Paul, "Having Enough"

12noon "Studying White Supremacy", FP Sanctuary

Monday, November 5

8:30am MainSpring House lunches prep at FP

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

7:30pm Facilities Committee meeting

Thursday, November 8

Finance Committee Meeting

Friday, November 9

Circle Dinner

Saturday, November 10

Circle Dinner

**Sunday, November 11**

9am Choir Practice

10:30am Worship with Rev. Paul, "Not Having Enough"

Tuesday, November 13

9:45am GLBTA Coming Out Day Coffee Hour at First Parish

Wednesday, November 14

9am Christmas Card Party

Thursday, November 15

7pm Worship Committee meeting

Friday, November 16

7pm Song & Story Hour at First Parish

**Sunday, November 18**

9am Choir Practice

10:30am Worship with David Roth, "There's More to Giving Thanks Than Giving Thanks"

Monday, November 19

6:30pm RE Committee meeting

Wednesday, November 21

7pm Science and Religion Discussion Group in the Hive

**Sunday, November 25**

9am Choir Practice

10:30am Worship the Music, "Lift Every Voice!"

Decorate the Church for the Holidays

Monday, November 26

7pm Caring Committee will meet at the church

Tuesday, November 27

7pm Black Lives Matter film series will show "Remember the Titans" at First Parish

Thursday, November 29

7pm Parish Committee meeting in the UPH

Friday, November 30

7pm T"UU"rning Leaves Book Club will meet at First Parish

## First Parish Church Unitarian Universalist

50 School Street

Bridgewater, MA 02324

508-697-2525

[www.fpuubridgewater.org](http://www.fpuubridgewater.org)

[firstparishbridgewater@hotmail.com](mailto:firstparishbridgewater@hotmail.com)

[firstparishbridgewater.blogspot.com](http://firstparishbridgewater.blogspot.com)