



BRIDGING

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

February 2019

From the Minister...

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

I've come to trust not that events will always unfold exactly as I want, but that I will be fine either way.

- Marianne Williamson

Our Unitarian Universalist Living Tradition has generally understood “faith” to be more about trust than about belief. As a creedless tradition, we hold that spiritual truths can be expressed in many different words that point to truths that can't be captured in any particular set of words. Our faith is more about the experience of being grounded in our selves and in our world than about believing a particular creed. Margaret Fuller, a pioneering feminist from the Transcendentalist strand of our forebears expressed this deep sense of belonging when she said, “I accept the Universe.” Of course, that simple but profound statement also opened her to mockery; the English critic Thomas Carlyle responded, “Gad! She'd better!”

What I hear Fuller saying is that we can have trust in this world of which we are a part. Our principles express this trust when we “affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person” (even when we wonder if this can possibly be true of some people); in “the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all” (even when it seems hopelessly naïve); and in “respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part” (even when it seems impossible to prevent the fraying of this fragile web).

We can trust that we are a valuable and important part of this whole cosmos in which each of us has a role to play. Mary Oliver in her poem “Song of the Builders,” taking inspiration from a single cricket doing its part, speaks of

each of us going on
in our inexplicable ways
building the universe.

The psychologist Eric Ericson spoke of the development of basic trust as one of the main tasks in the first several years of the life of a child – a time to learn that parents and caregivers can be trusted and the world made safe for them to grow in. Unfortunately, trust is often betrayed or challenged when life turns out not to be fair or just or safe. Hence the importance of supporting programs and people that help to restore trust as we at First Parish did by sharing our plate in January with Comfort Zone Camp, whose bereavement work with children helps to restore trust even in the face of the grievous loss of loved ones.

Trust is also betrayed and sometimes broken in our society as a whole, especially with African Americans and more broadly with other people of color. The long history of slavery, Jim Crow and racism in its many forms stand in the way of creating what the founders of our nation referred to as “a more perfect union.” Hence the particular importance at this point in our history of creating the kind of trust that promotes the goal of a national community with peace, liberty and justice for all of our citizens. One part of that work is our ongoing assertion in films and flags and study here at First Parish that Black Lives Matter and that we have a part to play in ending White Supremacy.

Studying White Supremacy: We had to cancel the second session of our very rich discussion of *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* by Robin DiAngelo because of weather. We will pick it up on **February 17th** after coffee hour, discussing Chapter 6 to the end.

In Faith, Rev. Paul

WORSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

FEBRUARY 2019



THIS MONTH'S WORSHIP THEME IS TRUST

"To have faith is to trust yourself to the water. When you swim you don't grab hold of the water, because if you do you will sink and drown. Instead you relax, and float."

— Alan Wilson Watts

***On Sunday, February 3, in place of coffee hour, there will be a luncheon sponsored by the Parish Committee and a presentation on the results of this year's house meetings. Afterwards, we invite you to stay and participate in break-out circles to generate action to match the goals and address the needs that our congregation outlined. There is a two sheet summary outlining the house meeting outcomes that is attached. All are encouraged to read it before the luncheon; there will also be copies made available at church before and during the luncheon.**

If you had any hesitation in participating in the original house meetings because you didn't think your opinion would make a difference, that's even more a reason we want to hear from you. If you can't make the lunch or stay for the meeting, you can either call McKayla or Laurie Lessner 508-345-1454, or anyone on the Parish or Shared Ministry Committees to discuss your thoughts or send us an email.

We would also be happy to have the Youth Group stay for the lunch and discussion.

Minister

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Worship Services:

February 3: Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher, "Breaking Trust" - How do we repair relationships when basic trust is violated?

February 10: Worship with Rev. Richard Trudeau, "A Sign of Progress" - The preacher tells of a discovery he made about an old stone mileage-marker in Easton, and the encouragement it has given him when he is tempted to dismiss the hope of moral progress as naive.

February 17: Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher, "Random Acts of Kindness" - It's Random Acts of Kindness Day -- What's in it for me?

February 24: Worship with Atwater Donnelly, "Action, Rest and Comfort in Difficult Times" - Through the beauty, joy, humor and sorrow of songs and stories, Aubrey and Elwood will explore the special combination of action and rest in our world during these difficult times, asking, in particular, what is rest? Where do we find our comfort and rest to shore up our energies for positive action?



About Atwater-Donnelly: Award-winning folk singers, Aubrey Atwater and Elwood Donnelly present American and Celtic folk music and dance, blending gorgeous harmonies and playing guitar, mountain dulcimer, Irish whistle, and other surprises. With humor, participation, and a relaxed presence, Aubrey and Elwood narrate to give songs added meaning and relevance. Aubrey and Elwood are longtime members of the First Unitarian Church of Providence, and have performed in and visited churches throughout the US. They also ran their own monthly community spiritual gathering "Church in the Barn" at their farm in Foster, RI from 1997-2012.



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, February 21 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.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

*Broad Wings
and
Deep Roots*

RE CALENDAR

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| February 3: | Religious Education Classes |
| February 10: | One Room Schoolhouse -- Valentines + Preparing a chocolate/candy buffet! |
| February 17: | One Room Schoolhouse |
| February 24: | Religious Education Classes |

THE EMPTY BOWLS PROJECT



Empty Bowls Painting Parties

Saturday, February 23rd
3-5 pm and 6-8 pm

This year the RE Committee will be hosting an Empty Bowls Project pottery painting party and soup dinner. We will host a day of bowl painting in February, where participants can decide to purchase the bowls they paint (and keep them forever!) or donate them for sale. Proceeds of the bowl sale will be donated to Support The Soupman, a cause which helps the homeless in the direct area.

We will then host an Empty Bowls soup dinner in March (keep your eyes out for the official date) to sell both the painted pottery bowls and also some delicious soup, with proceeds going to Support the Soupman.



VALENTINES DAY SECRET PALS

This year, we're hosting Secret Pals with a new twist! Bring a valentine to swap with another congregation member or child on February 10th! Much like flower communion, every person will create a valentine to share and leave it in a display of valentines. Each person will then choose a valentine to take with them.

Feel free to also create and deliver valentines for those you love, and you are welcome to even add a "Secret Pals" guessing spin to it.

We'll be creating valentines in the One Room Schoolhouse on February 10th -- please join us!

VALENTINES DAY CHOCOLATE BUFFET

The RE Committee will be preparing coffee hour on February 10th, and will have a huge assortment of chocolates, candies, and other Valentines Day-themed goodies. During the One Room Schoolhouse that day, the children, youth, and teachers will work together to create a beautiful and delicious display. Feel free to bring something to share and spread the love!

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

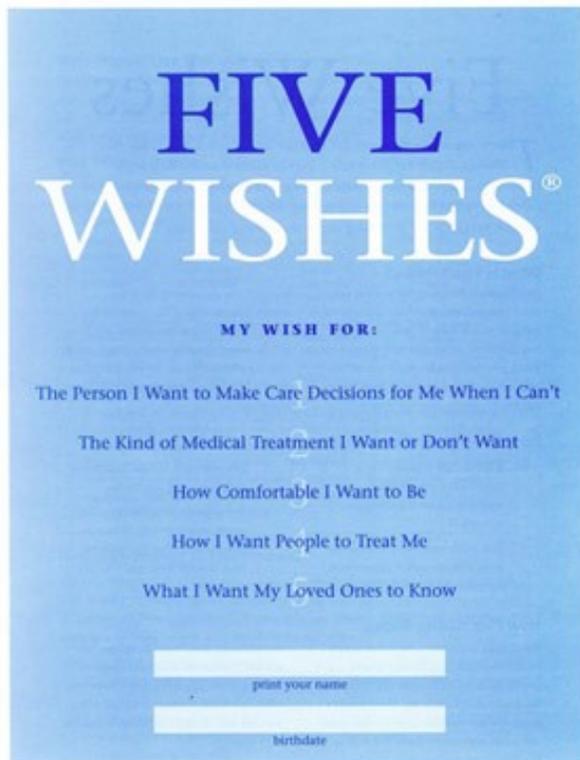


FIVE WISHES WORKSHOPS

Five Wishes is an easy-to-use legal advance directive document written in everyday language. It helps all adults, regardless of age or health, to consider and document how they want to be cared for at the end of life. *Five Wishes* is unique among all other living will and health agent forms because it speaks to all of a person's needs: medical, personal, emotional and spiritual. *Five Wishes* also helps to guide and structure discussions with your family and physician, making conversations easier.

All adults (whether a church member or not) are invited to attend the first of our Five Wishes workshops on Sunday, February 10 after social hour. Please let Rev. Rachel know if you plan to attend. This workshop and a copy of the document are free. A second workshop will be scheduled to review and sign completed documents. Some of you who attended this workshop a few years ago may want to come again for a refresher.

Talk to Rev. Rachel at church or contact her by email (revrayted@comcast.net) or phone: 508-378-3904.



Annual Happy Valentines Lasagna Dinner

Live Music, Dessert w/ Male Bonding Band

Friday, Feb. 15th, 6:30 PM, Upper Parish Hall

Various Lasagna's Needed: Meat, Veggie, Creative!?

Contact: David Wilson dcw@wilsonevent.com 813-789-8059

Volunteers set-up and clean-up crew needed.



Off the Common Coffeehouse

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

Saturday, February 2 at 7:30pm

Featuring The Boxcar Lilies

Ric Allendorf (opening act)

Potluck dinner at 6:30pm



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!*

FEBRUARY SHARE THE PLATE CHARITY

The Share the Plate charity for February is Health Imperatives. Health Imperatives promotes healthy, safe, and vibrant families and communities. They support families and individuals who are struggling to cope with the devastating effects of poverty and violence, individuals who are worried about their health and safety, and parents who may be unprepared for the challenges of raising young children. Their health, nutrition, and counseling programs provide help, hope, and opportunity to local families and individuals. Their motto is ***We're Here for You.***

T"UU"RNING LEAVES BOOK CLUB DATES

Friday, February 1 at 7pm the T"UU"rning Leaves Book Club will meet at First Parish to discuss *Working* by Studs Terkel. Please note this is a date change due to a conflict with the musical production *Working*. The book investigates the meaning of work for different people under different circumstances, showing it can vary in importance. This book is the inspiration for the First Parish Players January presentation.

Friday, February 22 at 7pm the T"UU"rning Leaves Book Club will meet at First Parish to discuss *The Right Stuff* by Tom Wolfe. This is a 1979 book about the pilots engaged in U.S. postwar research with experimental rocket-powered, high-speed aircraft as well as documenting the stories of the first Project Mercury astronauts selected for the NASA space program.

MAINSRING HOUSE LUNCHES

Monday, February 4 at 8:30 am 100 lunches will be prepared for MainSpring house Homeless Shelter in Brockton. Donations and volunteers always appreciated. Speak with Betty Gilson for more information.

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, February 7 at 7pm a meeting of the Social Justice Committee will be held at the church. We will be discussing plans for the year including upcoming BLM films, the spring Pride meeting, participation in projects of U U Mass Action, and other issues. New members and visitors welcome. Speak with Rev. Rachel Tedesco or Betty Gilson for more information.

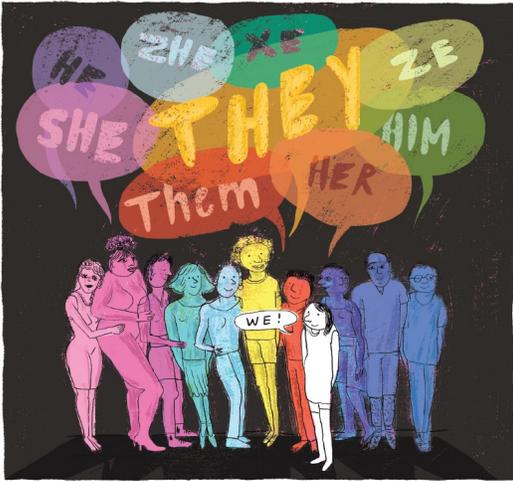
BLACK LIVES MATTER FILM SERIES

Tuesday, February 26 at 7pm the next film in the BLM series will be presented. It is *Loving*, the story of an interracial couple, Richard and Mabel Loving, who get married in 1958 while it is still illegal in their home state of Virginia. The film tells the challenges they face as a result and the legislation to which their marriage finally led.



CLASSES IN UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM

We have been fortunate to have seen several new faces at First Parish since the start of the church year this fall. We are happy that you chose First Parish and the Unitarian Universalist faith as part of your spiritual journey. If you are interested in becoming an Active Member of our church (with voting rights), we will be offering classes in Unitarian Universalism on Sunday March 3 and Sunday March 17 after the regular church service. Led by Reverend Paul, these classes offer instruction in the history of Unitarian Universalism and its principles. The first class on 3/3 will be centered around the text "The Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide" which will be provided to each participant before the classes meet. The second class on 3/17 will offer insight into how First Parish functions and how you can participate more fully in the work of the church. If you are interested in becoming a member of First Parish or would just like more information about Unitarian Universalism and our church, please contact Jan Thompson of the Membership Committee janicethompson22@comcast.net (508) 697-2492



PREFERRED PRONOUNS

If you would like to have your preferred gender pronoun printed on your name tag, please email Jamie at fristparishbridgewater@hotmail.com how you'd like it to display.

Green Sanctuary Committee's Green Tip

We serve fairly traded coffee in reusable cups for a reason.

This from the UUSC coffee project:

"In the world coffee is one of the most heavily traded commodities. Coffee links our communities to farming communities in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Our participation helps small farmers earn a fair price for their products, have access to affordable credit, and supports sustainable farming practices."

We buy and serve Equal Exchange Fairly Traded coffee during social our every Sunday. The Social Justice Committee is also selling at cost this coffee as well as tea, and chocolate in its many varieties. If you'd like to make a purchase please contact, Janet Dye (dyedyeo7@gmail.com).



Give your loved ones a lift! Make your Valentines happy with a gift of chocolate chips, baking cocoa, and chocolate bars. They will be available for purchase during our social hour on February 10 and 17.

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.

Building Bridges

a chance for UUs from Southeast Massachusetts to get to know each other and build relationships

July 13-16 or 20

Join us for an all-inclusive retreat on beautiful Star Island

Building Bridges is an all-inclusive vacation that offers UUs from Southeast MA a chance to build intentional relationships, connections, and a wider community. You will have the choice of registering for a 3-night or the 7-night, vacation.

The beginning half of the week will include morning workshops designed to help UUs from the neighboring areas get to know each other and form connections. The end half of the week will offer the freedom to explore those new connections outside of the morning workshop setting. That could be a group of new friends taking a hike around the island or doing some fishing.

Anything is possible when people are building bridges with one another.



Special rates for those new to Star!

30% off room and board for 3 nights, 50% off for 7 nights!

Per-Person Rates Include **programming, lodging, all meals, tips, and ferry** transportation

Adults (18+):	standard room	single occupancy room	room with half bath
3-night retreat	\$434	\$547	\$510
7-night retreat	\$603	\$784	\$720
Youth	under 6	6-11 years	12-17 years
3-night retreat	free!	\$208	\$275
7-night retreat	free!	\$283	\$383

Parking is \$14/night. Families with kids under 8 will be charged \$25 (\$50 for full week) for evening children's hall monitoring service.



REGISTRATION OPEN JANUARY 1: WWW.STARISLAND.THANKYOU4CARING.ORG

FEBRUARY 2019 CALENDAR

Friday, February 1

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

Saturday, February 2

7:30pm Boxcar Lilies at Off the Common Coffeehouse at First Parish

Sunday, February 3

9am Choir Rehearsal

10:30am Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher, "Breaking Trust"

11:30 House Meeting coffee hour after today's service at FP

Monday, February 4

8:45am MainSpring House lunches prep at FP

Thursday, February 7

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

7pm Social Justice Committee Meeting at First Parish

Sunday, February 10

9am Choir Practice

10:30am Worship with Rev. Richard Trudeau, "A Sign of Progress"

12noon Five Wishes Workshop at FP

Tuesday, February 12

7pm Facilities Committee will meet at First Parish

Friday, February 15

6:30pm Valentines Lasagna Dinner

Sunday, February 17

9am Choir rehearsal

10:30am Worship with Rev. Paul Sprecher, "Random Acts of Kindness"

12noon "Studying White Supremacy"

Monday, February 18

6:30pm RE Committee Meeting

Wednesday, February 20

7pm Science and Religion Discussion Group at FP

Thursday, February 21

7pm Worship Committee meeting

Friday, February 22

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

Saturday, February 23

3pm Empty Bowls painting party

6pm Empty Bowls painting party

Sunday, February 24

9am Choir rehearsal

10:30am Worship with Atwater Donnelly, "Action, Rest and Comfort in Difficult Times"

Tuesday, February 26

7pm Black Lives Matter film series at First Parish, featuring *Loving*

Thursday, February 28

7pm Parish Committee meeting

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