

The Spire

The Newsletter of
First Parish of Norwell
24 River Street
P.O. Box 152
Norwell, Massachusetts 02061
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www.firstparishnorwell.org

February 7, 2017
Volume XV, Issue 7

Sunday Services - 10:00 am

Rev. Lise Adams Sherry
preaching unless otherwise indicated

February 12:

Pascale's Wager – To Believe or Not?

The 17th century scientist, Blaise Pascale, put forth a wager he hoped would encourage people to follow a Christian life. We'll discuss how his life took him to this train of thought and how it might still influence our lives today.

February 19:

**Ida B. Wells, Fighting for Everyone's
Inherent Worth**

Born in the middle of the Civil War, Wells became a teacher, writer and civil rights activist. What did she fight for and where do we now need to take this struggle? This is an Outreach Sunday. Our collection will go to the Massachusetts branch of the NAACP.

February 26: A Guest Speaker - Topic TBA!

March 5:

What Else Do We Know about First Parish?

As we continue to celebrate our 375th anniversary, I'll find some more good stories about the people and events that have shaped us.

Worship volunteers are needed! If you would like to host a Coffee Hour, be an usher or greeter, or provide the pulpit arrangement, please sign up in the Parish Hall or contact the Church Office. If you are interested in acting as a Worship Associate and assisting Rev. Lise during a Sunday service, please contact her directly at lisherry@uuma.org.

OFFICE HOURS (September to mid-June):

Closed on Mondays

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 9 am-1 pm

Friday: 9 am-12 pm

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HOME PAGE: www.firstparishnorwell.org

Minister:

Rev. Lise Adams Sherry, x11

lsherry@uuma.org

Director of Religious Education:

Julian Baptista, x12

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Music Director: Gingy Grimes

Office Staff:

Hope Weinman, Office Administrator, x10

office@firstparishnorwell.org

Donna McDonald, Bookkeeper, x14

donna@firstparishnorwell.org

Parish Committee 2016-2017:

Chair: Les Taylor

Members: Scott Garland, David Hockman,
Mary Nickerson, Jim Pickel, Elizabeth Robey
and Dexter Robinson

Treasurer: Marta Reese

Minister Emeritus: Rev. Richard M. Fewkes

The deadline for the next issue of THE SPIRE is **Monday, March 6, 2017**. Submissions may be emailed to Hope at office@firstparishnorwell.org.



Happy Birthday to us! I want to thank everyone who made our 375th anniversary service so wonderful: the 375th committee for organizing the reception and getting our story in the paper, our wonderful founders

actors, Brennan for his amazing words about our chalice, all the folks who put their hopes and dreams into our wishing well (those will be typed up and posted soon), our ushers and greeters, everyone who brought food and helped to clean up, our choir and musicians, our wonderful staff—basically *everyone*. Each day I continue to learn what a wonderful religious community this is and am so grateful you called me to be with you. And we still have more celebrating to do!

However, as much as we are enjoying celebrating our traditions, we are also looking forward, and sometimes that means doing things a little differently. A couple of weeks ago, I met with the other four ministers who with me create our Union Sunday service every year. As we started our planning meeting, each one of us admitted that we really don't like closing four out of five of our church doors on Sunday morning so we all can gather at another church. While we can post signs about where we'll be, it just seems a little unwelcoming, especially since most of us are experiencing an uptick in visitors given our current social climate. So, we came up with an alternate plan.

On Sunday afternoon, March 12 at 3 pm, we will be hosting Fred Small at First Parish of Norwell to sing songs rallying us to protect our environment at our "Union Sunday Celebration." Our choirs will still sing together, as will all of us with Fred Small, and we'll have an opportunity for conversation and snacks afterwards. I've never heard Rev. Small perform, but the few people in our

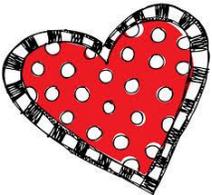


LISE'S LETTER

congregation that I've mentioned this event to seem very delighted. So, mark your calendars, Sunday, March 12 at 3 pm!

In the meantime, the other work and fellowship of our congregation continues. We still have three more cottage meetings slated for discussing growth, financial contributions and our covenant of right relations on **Wednesday, February 15, Sunday, February 26, and Friday, March 10**. Please plan to attend one as we want to hear as many voices as possible on these topics. We're starting to gear up for our annual pledge drive and will have Stewardship Sunday on March 12, followed by Commitment Sunday and lunch on March 19. And of course, we are having ongoing opportunities to get to know one another like Knitters on Tuesday mornings, (Men's) Breakfast at Sam's in Scituate Friday mornings (women are welcome—I go!), Game Night this Friday at 5:30 and Sundays for worship and fellowship. I hope to see you all soon!

Love and blessings,
Rev. Lise



CARING CORNER

Addie Chase-McCann, daughter of Debbie Chase and John McCann, had successful eye surgery Tuesday, February 7. We wish her a speedy and complete recovery.

Jack Christensen will be remembered at a memorial service on **Saturday, April 8** at 11 am, with a collation afterwards in the Parish Hall.

Help us to keep in touch, celebrate the happy moments in life and support you during the difficult times. Please send your news to Hope Weinman in the Church Office at office@firstparishnorwell.com, or contact any member of the Pastoral Care Team (Sue

Robinson, Rev. Lise Adams Sherry, Marcia Babcock, Noel Constantino, Betsey Detwiler, Joanne Howard and Joyce Hockman).

LEGACY GIVING COMMITTEE

How Do You Want to be Remembered?

[*Third in a series*] Everyone wants their life to make a difference and many people want to be remembered after they are gone. How do you want to be remembered?

Legacy giving is a way people support our church with gifts larger than they could make from their income. These gifts are often substantial and come from the estate or trust after the will takes effect. The purpose of the Legacy Giving Committee (LGC) is to *lead the congregation in good stewardship toward its legacy donors*. We:

- Educate all congregants on the facts and benefits of legacy giving for them and the parish
- Recognize, acknowledge and thank givers in an organized and thoughtful manner that matches the generosity of the donors
- Ask potential donors to consider making First Parish of Norwell part of their legacy

Without legacy giving, our church would not be what it is today: healthy, enthusiastic and beautiful. Over our 375 years, including very recently, people have left substantial gifts to First Parish. The purpose of the Legacy Giving Committee is to make that giving easier and more fulfilling. You can help:

- Tell Jack Wallace if you have put First Parish in your will
- He will respect your confidentiality
- Choose from one of several projects to further legacy giving at First Parish
- You don't need to join a committee
- Add First Parish to your will, even if it's a small amount, so you can start to

sketch out how you want to be remembered

See Jack Wallace at coffee hour or give him a call if you are curious or think you might be able to help.

Today's article, the third of three, is about asking. This article starts with a question, "How do you want to be remembered?" Asking people to think about the things they are passionate about in life and offering to help them continue that into the future is a ministry. After providing for your loved ones, are there things at First Parish of Norwell that you'd like to see continue or improve? To be good stewards, legacy giving needs to part of our everyday conversation with people who support the mission of First Parish of Norwell. This regular dialogue includes education, recognition AND asking individuals about their passions and their legacy. That conversation also includes First Parish of Norwell's mission and what we are trying to achieve as a church. We are asking people to leave a gift that will achieve something big in the future. How do you want to be remembered?

DID YOU KNOW WE ARE A "WELCOMING CONGREGATION"?

In 1999, this UU community made a pledge to welcome and celebrate the presence and participation of people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or queer. The Welcoming Congregation status is given to a UU community whose efforts through workshops, community outreach and a rethinking of what the principles of our UU faith means to them - especially the one that affirms the inherent worth and dignity of every person - made a commitment that makes their UU congregation a welcoming and inclusive place for all people. **WE ARE RENEWING THE PLEDGE!**

Through recommendations by the UUA we are now going to re-commit our pledge to be a

Welcoming Congregation. Through the efforts of our CHALICE Social Justice Committee on LGBTQUI Issues, we have started the process of:

- Revisiting the Welcoming Congregation Guidelines and Action Steps and use them to create new goals toward inclusivity.
- Celebrate the progress we've made and identify areas where we have room to grow.
- Strengthen relationships with local and state groups and organizations that serve LGBTQUI needs.
- Create diverse opportunities for engagement to our community through language and symbols of inclusivity.

We know there are a lot of great ideas and ways that you can help us re-commit to being a Welcoming Congregation. There is a table set up in the Parish Hall for you to write down any suggestions you have. We are going to show our local community that we care and we would like your help. Ask your friends... ask your kids... what you would like to see here either inside the Parish Hall or on our FPNUU grounds? Would you like to join the committee on LGBTQUI Issues and help us "continue the pledge"? There is a sign-up sheet on the rolling bulletin boards in the Parish Hall or let Rev. Lise or Mary Nickerson know.



CHALICE SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE: PREVENTING GUN VIOLENCE

Next scheduled meeting: **Tuesday, February 21** at 7:00 pm in the Church Office

Would you like to find out some of the reasons behind gun violence and how we as a UU community can help PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE? Join our CHALICE SJC on Preventing Gun Violence which meets the third Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm. We meet for an hour or so and try to find common ground on this very serious issue. We started off the year by trying to educate ourselves on what our current Massachusetts gun laws are and to encourage stricter enforcement of those laws. We are looking for ideas from you. If you are interested, please sign up on the rolling bulletin boards in the Parish Hall or let Rev. Lise, Deane Howard or Mary Nickerson know.



THE JOY OF GIVING... FABULOUS PRIZES... LUNCH

Our 2017-18 Stewardship Drive, for the pledge year beginning July 1, 2017, in support of our wonderful Worship, Music, Religious Education, Outreach, Office Staff, and Building starts in February. Parishioners will share what First Parish means to them as we take the Sunday collection. On February 26, we will mail the annual Stewardship letter with your Pledge Form and Giving Guidelines. You may mail or drop off your pledge at any time. This year's Pledge Drive includes a "Raffle of Fabulous Prizes", given by members of the Finance Committee. On **Sunday, March 12**, Stewardship Sunday, Rev. Lise will give her "Sermon on the Amount." We will have a box in the Parish Hall to receive your pledge and

answer any questions you may have. The following **Sunday, March 19** is Commitment Sunday. The *Raffle Drawing for Fabulous Prizes* will be done during the service, so make sure you get your pledge in by 10:00 that morning. Only those who have turned in their pledge forms by 10 am, Sunday, March 19, will be eligible for the prizes. Following the service, the Finance Committee is providing a delicious hot lunch in place of Coffee Hour. Come celebrate with us!

(The artwork accompanying this article is by local artist Sally Dean Mello. It is a copy of the painting the Parish Committee commissioned in 2013, to be given to Rev. Vicki Weinstein in gratitude for her years of service to the parish.)

CHOCOLATE AUCTION



Our annual Chocolate Auction will take place on **Sunday, February 12** during Coffee Hour. Each year, the Youth Group puts on this event right before Valentine's Day to give everyone a chance to get something sweet for their sweetheart (or maybe just for ourselves), as well as raise money for their service projects and UU scholarships. We still need more donations to fill out the auction however, so if you have a great chocolate recipe you've been dying to try out, now is the time!

"Go into the arts. I'm not kidding. The arts are not a way to make a living. They are a very human way of making life more bearable. Practicing an art, no matter how well or how badly, is a way to make your soul grow, for heaven's sake. Sing in the shower. Dance to the radio. Tell stories. Write a poem to a friend, even a lousy poem. Do it as well as you possibly can. You will get an enormous reward. You will have created something."

~Kurt Vonnegut



OUR 375TH YEAR!

Wow, what a special Sunday service, February 5, when we celebrated the founding of our church community formed 375 years ago.

We shared the story of our founding, the highlights of our history and the goals for our future.

The “high tea” reception was enjoyed by all ages, singing “Happy Birthday” to ourselves and indulging in the wonderful Carol Neely cake. So many thanks to all who assisted in any way making this event such a joyful success. It was truly a village that came together.

We will continue to celebrate this special year with our next event, **Wednesday, March 15** at 10:00 am. With the Alliance, we will cosponsor a program by Plimoth Plantation to learn what life was like for a woman in early 17th century Massachusetts. Bring friends and neighbors to this educational and entertaining program.

Additionally in April we will be planting a tree to symbolize the future of First Parish and culminate the year on May 6 with a “Taste of 1642” dinner.

And if you did not see the article in the Mariner last week, here is the link: <http://norwell.wickedlocal.com/news/20170202/375-years-in-making-at-first-parish-of-norwell>

Hello
my name is

**MEMBERSHIP:
“IT TAKES A
VILLAGE”, INDEED!**

Welcome to our new friends, old friends, and newcomers!

Pop quiz!

How many volunteers do you imagine are involved in an average Sunday Service at First Parish of Norwell? Guess. Not including the behind the scenes people, during the hour of service it’s about 25 volunteers! Between 2 greeters, 2 ushers, 1 kitchen helper, 8 religious education teachers, 1 worship associate, coffee hour hosts, and the dedicated choir members... it’s a significant and impressive number. Thank you to all of you who volunteer to make our time together on Sunday “click”. It makes a positive difference in our day!

Name tags

If you have not confirmed your preferred name spelling and choice of magnet vs. pin for your new blue name tag, please email gabecarroll@gmail.com or look for sheets from Membership Committee in the pews on Sundays.

Upcoming Spring dates

UU 101- Sunday, April 2 and 9 from 11:30 am-1 pm if you are curious about UU history, membership and voting rights, deepening your involvement at first parish, or the functions of committees then this is a conversation for you. Please RSVP to secure adequate childcare and supplies to either Rev. Lise or Gabrielle Carroll.

Bring a Friend to Church- Sunday, March 26

Are you looking to try something new?

Greet or usher with an experienced partner! Book group gathers on the first Wednesday of the month! Knitters on Tuesday and/or Men’s breakfast on Fridays. Monthly Friday night game nights. Conversation on Ethics is meeting every other week on Tuesdays with Julian Baptista our religious education director. There are several committees that would welcome new hands! Jump on in, the water is fine! Let us help you find your place.

Gabrielle Carroll and the Membership Committee of Betsey Detweiler, Chris Kitchenham, Shastin Garland, Mary Nickerson



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Hello First Parish!

We are now officially 375 years old. Our celebration went great, and I can't wait to see you all next Sunday!

Up in March our RE program will be going to volunteer at the **Cradles to Crayons** collection center in Boston. As part of this visit we will be taking a collection of various goods for donation to low income children and families in the greater Boston area. We'll be collecting items at First Parish all month, and you can see recommended items at this link: cradlestocrayons.app.box.com/v/donationguidelines.

The end of February marks the beginning of our second semester of Religious Education at First Parish of Norwell. We have a great group of teachers raring to go, and I know it's going to be a blast!

Our K- grade 1 class will be using the *Stories About God* curricula this year. This program helps children to develop a language with which they can talk about God, and shows the wealth of different ideas of what that God figure can look like.

Our grades 2-3 class will be tightening focus from their *Picture Book World Religions* program to a new curricula called *Honoring Our Mother Earth*. This curriculum is based around pagan beliefs, and will teach the students about modern pagan practices, in addition to using nature to learn more about spirituality.

Our grades 4-6 class will be using the *Holidays and Holy Days* curricula. This class uses the holidays of different religions to teach about belief systems, and allows the class to explore the culture and ideas behind a wide variety of world religions.

Our grades 7-8 class will be continuing the **Our Whole Lives** or OWL program. This is a sexuality and relationships program intended to give our young people the information and grounding they need to be in responsible adult relationships.

For adults, we have our course entitled "**What We Choose**" continuing on **Tuesday, February 14** at noon in the Fogg Parlor. All are welcome, so feel free to bring friends! Unitarian Universalism is grounded in the understanding that our actions speak louder than our words or beliefs. Faithful living for us includes discerning the course of action that best reflects our beliefs and values and then acting or choosing accordingly. As inheritors of a faith tradition that honors a wide variety of sources of religious understanding and authority, our big questions are: How do we discern the moral course of action in a particular circumstance? To what source(s) of authority do we turn for help—personal experience, community wisdom, conscience, religious texts, the words and deeds of prophetic people, reason, science, God? If we are intentional in developing a personal ethical framework to live by, then the behavioral choices we make and the actions we do or do not take can reflect our most deeply held values.

Now you may ask, how do my kids take part in all of these great programs? Well the answer is **Registration!** This year we are supporting both in person, and web-based child registrations. So if you haven't registered yet, come see me in person, or go to our new online registration form here: www.goo.gl/forms/BT1HXgMKY9hZLVL2.

Julian Baptista,
Director of Religious Education





MYSTERY FRIENDS

From **March 5** to **April 9**, the RE program will be sponsoring our second annual Mystery Friends program. This is a great way for people of all ages to make a new friend of a different generation. Sign up for Mystery Friends, and we'll match you with a pen pal in the church. Each week you'll exchange letters, and then at the end of 6 weeks, have a party where you meet your new friend in person for the first time. Sign ups will be available in the Parish Hall each Sunday in February, so sign up soon!

FROM THE PARISH COMMITTEE CHAIR

Happy 375th to First Parish of Norwell! What a celebration we just enjoyed to mark this historic occasion. Hats off to all the people involved (which seemed to be a “cast of thousands”) but especially to our fantastic 375th anniversary team, led by Sue Robinson. Well done, everyone!

The first of our winter cottage meetings was held several weeks ago and was very well attended. Thank you for your cooperation in participating, as we hope to get everyone involved with one of these sessions. Three more dates remain and are listed elsewhere in the Spire. As I mentioned in a previous column, a somewhat controversial question in which we are seeking your input, is in regard to the idea of having an annual “financial contribution of record” or membership dues. There would be exceptions for financial hardship in consultation with the minister. Please remember that a church member charged your Parish Committee with exploring this particular issue at last June’s annual meeting. This topic is a year-long exploration to investigate the pro’s & con’s of this concept. Many other UU congregations already have established this practice. However, nothing will change unless we vote

to change our church by-laws. At this point, we are simply evaluating whether or not this issue should be brought to a vote this spring at our annual meeting. This question and other topics are in need of your valuable and most welcomed opinions at our series of cottage meetings.

One of these “other topics” is in regard to our big focus this year on growth. Since Jack Wallace began the Growth Team last fall, we are now taking these issues directly to the congregation via the cottage meetings. What are the pro’s & con’s of First Parish growing? Should we remain the same size as we are now? Your responses will be helpful as we gather initiatives which may be worth further exploration by Gabe Carroll and her team on the Membership Committee. Jack Wallace, who is more intrigued by a strategic, long-view approach on growth, would like to lead and investigate the “deeper issues” on how the church could evolve and grow. Should the congregation decide to support a growth initiative, could First Parish one day become a UUA ‘Breakthrough Congregation’ (which is defined as a congregation that is recognized as having achieved *significant and sustained* numerical growth)? There are paths to get us there if that is what we choose as a congregation!

Aside from the cottage meetings, we are investigating ways to make our Meetinghouse more accessible, as we are very limited in our current configuration. Once inside the worship area, there is one comfortable and ideal wheelchair spot as it stands now. Don Messinger, Chair of the Building and Grounds Committee, in consult with the Parish Committee, is exploring some concepts to improve the current situation. Please expect to hear ideas on how we can be more accommodating to our members, friends and visitors with mobility issues over the coming months.

There is good news to share that one of our newer church members, Tschol Slade, has

agreed to fill our church “publicity coordinator” position. We will be helping him get up-to-speed on these responsibilities and will also be reaching out to committee chairs regarding ways Tschol can help support your publicity efforts. We sincerely thank Tschol for accepting this role as we enhance our church publicity.

Finally, we will be making room in this issue of the Spire to print the current Parish Committee Covenant and Mission Statement. There never seems to be enough room within my column to include them, so we will just append these documents for your perusal. Please know that each year, once the entire Parish Committee convenes at our annual retreat, we seek to analyze and refine these important documents and do our best to abide by these important words and deeds.

Thank you for being a part of our church community, one that has now flourished for 375 years. As Bill Belichick, head coach of our Super Bowl Champion New England Patriots might say, “... on to 400!”

In fellowship and love,
Les Taylor

FIRST PARISH OF NORWELL PARISH COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT FY17

It is the Parish Committee’s mission to represent the interests of the church, to develop church policy and to . . .

- Oversee the implementation of the church’s priorities, programs, and activities in order to assure that they are congruent with FPN’s mission.
- Create an ever evolving partnership of shared ministry with the Minister to oversee the administration of the church, its committees, and its paid staff.
- Oversee the church’s finances, assets, and campus.

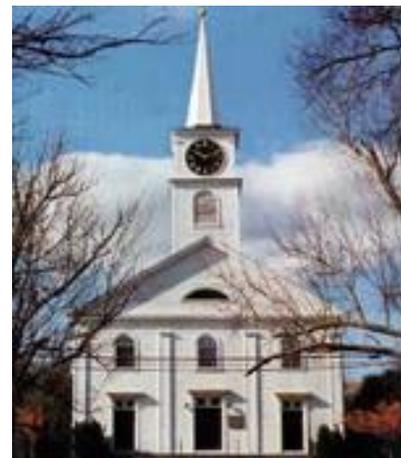
- Set realistic, clear goals for the congregation.
- Encourage leadership and commitment among the congregation.
- Work to promote the values of the church within the larger community.

WE FULFILL THESE RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE SPIRIT OF OUR UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES AND THE COVENANT OF OUR CONGREGATION

FIRST PARISH OF NORWELL PARISH COMMITTEE COVENANT FY17

We, the members of the Parish Committee commit ourselves to the mission of the Parish Committee and promise to . . .

- Assume good faith on the part of all and respect confidentiality.
- Take responsibility by doing our fair share of the work, being prepared and respecting the value of one another’s time.
- Listen actively; communicate openly, directly, and honestly; and attempt to resolve conflict respectfully.
- Speak with one voice by publicly supporting the decisions of the Parish Committee.
- Serve with generosity, good humor and acknowledge the service of others.





ALLIANCE BOOK REVIEW

On a snowy day in the depths of winter, it's lovely to be able to curl up with a cup of tea or coffee and a good book. To help you choose your next "read", please join the Alliance of First Parish at their book review on **Wednesday, February 15** at 10:00 am in the Fogg Parlor. We will have refreshments followed by the book review by Betsey Detwiler, who is an avid and discerning reader. As she did last year, Betsey will review one fiction and one non-fiction book, which she hopes will encourage a lively discussion. The Alliance welcomes all members and friends of First Parish and their guests to our meetings. We look forward to sharing this book review with you.

prisoner throughout his/her incarceration, visit the prisoner once every other month with another member of your team and to write a note or letter once a month- that is all! Your prisoner will be in the BA program at Boston University which sends professors to the prisons for the classes. Let Bev Gardner know if you are interested.

The CHALICE groups ("Changing Hearts And Lives by Inspiring Community Efforts", our 375th Anniversary service projects) are moving along fine, studying their topic, choosing a project and doing good work! There is still time to join a group- Helping Children and Families, Reintegrating People into Society (including working with recovering addicts, prisoners, released prisoners, education, legislative work, Partakers-educational mentoring in prison and Mass. Bail Fund), Preventing Gun Violence, Food Pantries, LGBTQI Issues, and Race Issues. If one of these speaks to you, please sign up!



HELEN FOGG SERVICE COMMITTEE

Our Outreach Project for January was South Shore Peer Recovery. Thank

you to Staci Cary for her short talk about the local organization for which \$360 was collected in the plate to which the Fog Service Committee will add.

Our next Outreach Sunday is February 19, and the collection will benefit the Massachusetts branch of the NAACP.

We have two volunteers to become Partaker mentors- Cathi DiMassa and Anne Kannan, both new to the parish this year! We need two more volunteers to join this team of 4 to mentor a prisoner at either MCI Framingham or MCI Norfolk. You will agree to follow that

From the "Reintegrating People into Society" CHALICE group... Some of us are going to a screening of a relevant documentary in Lexington on **Saturday, February 11** at 10 am. "Beyond the Wall" follows the lives and stories of a small community of men released from prison and attempting to rebuild their lives with little support from the criminal justice system. Through this compelling personal account, the film vividly shows their struggle to survive beyond the walls of prison. Director Jenny Phillips and Louie Diaz, the man highlighted in the film, will be coming for the post film discussion. The screening will be at the Lexington Venue Theater, 1794 Massachusetts Avenue, Lexington. If interested, let Bev Gardner know!

Jack Wallace and Bev Gardner (co-chairs), Marcia & Scott Babcock, Debbie Chase, Penny Corbett, Pat Crumley, Alex Gordon, Bill Montuori, Cathie DiMassa, Jeannette Mitchell, Elizabeth Robey (liaison with the Parish Committee), and Lise Adams Sherry (Minister).



FIRST PARISH BOOK GROUP

We have adjusted our schedule a bit - we're reading the same books as planned, but in a slightly different order. Our discussions (informal, often meandering, but always a lot of fun!) take place on the first Wednesday of the month at 7 pm in the Fogg Parlor.

March 1: I am Malala by Malala Yousafzai

April 5: Threading My Prayer Rug by Sabeena Rehman

May 3: Touching Spirit Bear by Ben Mikaelson

Rev. Lise will be leading some of our upcoming discussions. As well, these three books may be of interest to some of our high school aged bookworms, who are especially welcome to read and participate.

PARTNER CHURCH NEWS

Betsey Detwiler kindly shared this email she received in December from Rev. Zsuzsa Vass, minister at our partner church in Kadacs.

Dear Betsey,

I've been extremely delighted when reading your letter, it's been a while since I last heard about you. Hope that all is well with you. I am sure that you have plenty to do especially now that the winter holiday is around the corner. All is well here in Kadacs. This fall we managed to finalize the renovation of the tower. We obtained most of the financing through tender however we also had our own share from the costs. But it was really worth it, the tower now looks gorgeous. We finally installed the church door back to its original place. So our work in progress in the church is advancing step by step. In the future according to our plans we would like to fix the nave and the roof structure, after which we would like to start the renovation of the parsonage building. We hope by the hand of God all will be well.

Also in the fall, in mid October we have greeted our elder, those people who have passed the age of 70. Their has been a short festive show in the church, we handed out small giveaways, food so

that they will have to buy less. At the end we had tea time with biscuits and chat. It's been a successful event.

Right now in the advent period we have launched a new project called "being tuned for advent" an arts and crafts event in which we get ready and fine tune ourselves for Christmas celebration. Please find enclosed some photos of the event. As you can see we are preparing advent crown, pearl jewelry and lampion holders.

All is well with the youth as well, they are not many in number but they are very active in church life. With the little ones we are preparing a play that comprises the nativity scene. It will be presented on Christmas eve in the church. We hope all will go well, they are very keen.

Last but not least I would like to ask you about the future of the scholarship program. I have sent a list with all the candidate willing to participate to Lise this spring with all the names and photos. I am eagerly looking forward to your and her response. Please let me know if there is anything else you need from me concerning this program. I eagerly stay at your disposal. Please find below a list of students from the program:

High school students :

Kiss Edith; Fábíán Hermina Hajnalka; Kiss Jenő; Kovács Izabella, Pál Renáta, Fábíán Zsófia, Kocás Csaba, Pap Barna, Vaszi Richárd, Pál Levente, Fábíán István -Attila

College students :

Ilyés Csilla, Pál Enikő, Dénes Szilárd.

In this time of preparation for the advent period I hope that all will go well also in your congregation. Please let us know about what's been happening lately. We think of you often and we pray for everything to be well for you.

We wish blessed Christmas holidays both for you and the congregation. Please forward our best wishes to them as well. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,
Zsuzsa

**CALENDAR
FEBRUARY 2017**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			8 Dancers, PH 6-8 pm	9 Choir Rehearsal, Sky., 7:30 pm	10 Piano lessons, PH 3-5 pm Game Night & Potluck, PH 5:30 pm	11 Scrapbookers, PH 4-11 pm
12 Morning Service & Church School 10 am Coffee Hour, PH 11 am Chocolate Auction, PH during Coffee Hour Budget Setting Meeting, FP 11:30 am	13 Men's Dinner @ Nelson Sherry's, 6 pm AA, PH 8:30 pm Boston	14 Knitters, FP 9:30 am Adult RE, FP 12 pm Meditation, Sky. 7 pm Dancers, PH 5-8 pm 	15 Alliance Book Review, FP 10 am Cottage Meeting, FP 7 pm Dancers, PH 7-9 pm	16 iSpi deadline, 9 am Choir Rehearsal, Sky., 7:30 pm	17 Boston Red Sox Spring Training Begins  Piano lessons, PH 3-5 pm	18
19 Outreach Sunday Morning Service & Church School 10 am Coffee Hour, PH 11 am Service Comm., 11:30 am FP Private Baby Dedication, MH 5:30 pm	20 AA, PH 8:30 pm	21 <i>Church Office Closed</i> Tai Chi, PH 9:15 am Knitters, FP 9:30 am Dancers, PH 6-8 pm CHALICE - Gun Violence, Ofc. 7 pm	22 <i>Church Office Closed</i> Dancers, PH 6-9pm	23 <i>Church Office Closed</i> iSpi deadline, 9 am Choir Rehearsal, Sky., 7:30 pm	24 <i>Church Office Closed</i> Piano lessons, PH 3-5 pm Dancers, PH 6-8 pm	25 Scrapbookers, PH 4-11 pm
26 Morning Service & Church School 10 am Coffee Hour, PH 11 am Cottage Mtg., FP 11:30 am Finance Comm., Ofc. 11:30 am HS Youth Group, FP 5 pm	27 AA, PH 8:30 pm	28 Tai Chi, PH 9:15 am Knitters, FP 9:30 am Adult RE, FP 12 pm Meditation, Sky. 7 pm Parish Comm., FP 7 pm Dancers, PH 6-8 pm	1 Alliance Board, FP 10 am Dancers, PH 6-9 pm Book group, FP 7 pm	2 iSpi deadline, 9 am Private rental, PH 8:30 am-5:30 pm Choir Rehearsal, Sky., 7:30 pm	3 Piano lessons, PH 3-5 pm	4