

The Spire

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

February 7, 2018
Volume XVI, Issue 6

Sunday Services - 10:00 am

Rev. Lise Adams Sherry
preaching unless otherwise indicated

**February 11: “The Challenges of Overcoming
Domestic Violence”**

This Sunday is an **Outreach Sunday** and donations will benefit the Norwell Food Pantry, a much-needed program for women and families trying to step out of the cycle of domestic violence.

February 18: “Black and Not Baptist”

The above is the title of a book written by Don Barbera in 2003. It counters a belief that many of us have about the religious lives of African Americans and one that sometimes keeps us from being inclusive as Unitarian Universalists.

**February 25: A Multigenerational Service to
Celebrate Black History Month**

Led by Rev. Lise and DRE Jessie Slade

We’ll learn more about the Civil Rights era through story, song and readings.

March 4: “Sharing Hearts Lead the Way”

It’s Stewardship Sunday and the “official” beginning of our annual canvass drive. Come celebrate our hopes and dreams for our congregation and the community that surrounds us.

WE ARE UU!

OFFICE HOURS

(September to mid-June):

Closed on Mondays

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 9 am-1 pm

Friday: 9 am-12 pm

Minister:

Rev. Lise Adams Sherry, x11

lsberry@uuma.org

Director of Religious Education:

Jessie Slade, x12

drefpnuu@gmail.com

Music Director:

Gingy Grimes

gingygrimes@gmail.com

Office Staff:

Hope Weinman, Office Administrator, x10

office@firstparishnorwell.org

Donna McDonald, Bookkeeper, x14

donna@firstparishnorwell.org

Parish Committee 2017-2018:

Chair: Les Taylor

Members: Scott Garland, David Hockman, Amanda Metzger, Gabrielle Millins, Mary Nickerson and Jim Pickel

Treasurer: Marta Reese

Minister Emeritus: Rev. Richard M. Fewkes

The deadline for the next issue of the Spire is **Monday, March 5, 2018**. Submissions should be emailed to Hope at office@firstparishnorwell.org.

LISE'S LETTER

On Sunday I made a mistake.

I announced it was Black History month, and then I said that we weren't going to do anything special for it as we regularly weave the voices of black citizens and other people of color into our worship services. My decision was based on a conversation shared between two colleagues almost a decade ago in a public forum. One colleague was a black ministry student under the tutelage of a white minister; the other colleague was that white minister. The conversation they shared is one they had about how excited white people get because they celebrate Black History month. Majority white congregations make big plans to honor their black siblings all through the month of February, and then there is nary a word about the contributions of African-Americans and other people of color throughout the rest of the year. February becomes a token month of equality, and while it makes white people feel better about inclusion, it doesn't really do the difficult work of truly including black folks and people of color into our society, welcoming them into leadership positions and correcting the other systemic problems that have dogged our society for 400 years. I didn't want us to be part of a token month of equality.

Fortunately, on Sunday I also invited people to come talk with me if they disagreed, and some of you did, helping me to clarify my own thoughts in the process. Rather than being a month of "feel good" inclusion, Black History month can be a time to *highlight* more contributions African-Americans have made in our society, despite the very real opposition they have faced. This month can be in addition to the anti-oppression and inclusion work that we already do. And truthfully, I, and others among us at FPNUU, believe that we need this month given the inequities and sometimes deadly behavior that all people of color still struggle to overcome. Frankly, it was probably rather presumptuous of this white Euro-American minister to think that we



were doing enough at First Parish during the rest of the year to justify skipping Black History month. So, we will celebrate and honor the contributions and history of our black siblings during the month of February, *and* continue to do our best to be inclusive of all during the entire year as we strive to create our Beloved Community.

Blessings,
Rev. Lise

PS- In March, Elizabeth Robinson and I will facilitate an adult religious education class that discusses the Native American experience in New England.



CARING CORNER

We are sad to report the death in early December of Harriet Meyer in Oakton, Virginia. Harriet lived in Norwell and was a life-long member of First Parish before moving to Virginia with her husband, Ernst. She is survived by her son, Stephen of Boston and her sister, Sarah Lincoln of East Greenwich, Rhode Island.

All members of the FPNUU community are invited to a baby shower for Amanda Peterson and Colby Ring. It will be hosted by their daughter Addie, Mandy Metzger, Debb Welsh and Adrianna McLane. It will be held on **Sunday, February 11** from 11:30 am to 1 pm in the Fogg Parlor. Lunch will be served. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Mandy Metzger at jmetzger80@comcast.net.

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 781-659-7122 or 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).



SHARING HEARTS LEAD THE WAY... FABULOUS PRIZES... LUNCH

Our upcoming 2018-2019 Stewardship Drive, for the pledge year beginning July 1, 2018, in support of our wonderful worship, music, religious education program, outreach and office staff, has begun. On February 18, 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 **March 4, 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 will be there to answer any questions you may have. The following **Sunday, March 11**, 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 am that morning. Only those who have turned in their pledge forms by 10 am on Sunday, March 11, 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 painting commissioned by the Parish Committee as a gift to Rev. Vicki Weinstein when she moved to her new church in 2013.)*

The Church Office will be closed February 20 to 23 during school vacation week. Regular office hours will resume on Tuesday, February 27.



THE ALLIANCE INVITES YOU...

Please join the Alliance on **Wednesday, February 21** for a book review led by Betsey Detwiler. For many years, Betsey had her own bookstore in Cohasset and because of her extensive knowledge, always gives an interesting book review. The meeting will begin with refreshments at 10 am in the Fogg Parlor followed by the review. We hope to see you then.



FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Hello First Parish,

I hope you are all enjoying a wonderful winter season full of joy, hope, and peace. Although I do love a steaming mug of hot chocolate, a good book, and a cozy night inside with my family, I am always energized by later sunsets, warmer days, and the return of chirping birds. Living in New England has a way of bringing Mother Nature's cyclical dance into sharp focus, with all of its beauty, quiet stillness, and rigorous rebirth. I am thankful to have spent these quiet months surrounded by kind people, at home, in the world, at of course, at First Parish. It takes a village to do many things, perhaps for some of us, that includes braving the challenges and absorbing the beauty of a New England winter...together, children and adults alike. From my perspective as Director of Religious Education, I have the pleasure of seeing first hand just how much joy, hope, and life the children of our congregation bring to our parish. Of course, my viewpoint is that of a seasoned educator and mother who has centered her life on serving children and celebrating their gifts, while at the same time supporting children as they rise up and meet their own challenges. The children of First Parish act as a type of glue that is woven into our services, our coffee hour, our events, and

our extended church life. They hold a unique place in our community, for they bring fresh eyes, an honest outlook, and an unwavering curiosity and optimism to those around them, and we undoubtedly benefit deeply from their presence whether we are fully aware of it or not. And that is the beauty of simply having children near. They make us all a little bit better.

I thank everyone for embracing the children of First Parish and helping to make their time in our church enriching and enjoyable. For without the later, we may miss the mark on providing the children of our parish with the spiritual and intellectual opportunities for growth to which we are so deeply committed. The ways in which we embrace the children of our congregation may take many forms, from something as seemingly small as smiling across the Meeting House when you catch their eye, to chatting about the best sweet-treat on the Coffee Hour display, to larger acts of giving such as teaching an RE class, or offering to serve on the RE Committee.

Mini-sessions are also a wonderful example of members of our community stepping up to support children and helping to make them feel important and cared for, while also providing FUN and educational experiences. I would like to send a sincere thanks to the following people for dedicating their time and talent to our First Parish children. It takes a village, and these villagers definitely deserve a sincere THANK YOU!

RE Teachers

Debb Welsh (RE Committee), Amanda Adams (RE Committee), Emily Grant (RE Committee), Jordan Grant, Mary Nickerson, Abbie Yardley (RE Committee), Tom Yardley, Erin Puleio (RE Committee), Gabe Carroll Millins, Julia Traggorth, Elizabeth Robey, Thad Robey

Mini-Session Leaders

Marcia Babcock, Lorna Phillips, Erin Puleio, Mary Nickerson, Patti Walters, Aidan Robey, Ben Metzger, Amanda Adams, Bev Gardner,

Linda Hurt, Bernie Gardner, Tschol Slade,
Joanne Howard, Adrianna McLane

With sincere gratitude and an eye toward the soon-to-be budding tulips, I wish you all a healthy and happy February!

~Jessie

Upcoming RE Events

Sunday, February 11 - Chocolate Fundraiser for Youth Group

Movie Night - TBD

Junior Youth Group sleepover - TBD

Game Night has been a wonderful tradition at First Parish in years past. With busy family schedules however, attendance at this monthly event began declining last year and has continued to do so. The RE Committee is dedicated to coordinating fun events for the church community and wants to be responsive to the needs of busy families as well. Rather than continuing with monthly game nights, the committee will put its energy and enthusiasm into planning other RE sponsored events, such as a family-friendly movie night and a junior youth group sleepover. Please stay tuned for details!



CHOCOLATE FUNDRAISER

Our annual Chocolate Fundraiser will take place on **Sunday, February 11** 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 selection however, so if you have a great chocolate recipe you've been dying to try out, now is the time! Please contact Jessie Slade, our Director of Religious Education, at drefpnuu@gmail.com with questions or to sign up.

"GROWING UP TRANS"

Sunday, February 11 - 2 to 4 pm

Join us in the Parish Hall for a viewing of the PBS documentary, "Growing Up Trans," after which a Q & A will be facilitated with questions and comments regarding transgender students and their families.

A description of the documentary: "Just a generation ago, it was adults, not kids, who changed genders. But today, many children are transitioning, too - with new medical options, and at younger and younger ages. In 'Growing Up Trans', FRONTLINE takes viewers on an intimate and eye-opening journey inside the struggles and choices facing transgender kids and their families."

All are welcome. Refreshments will be served. The movie will be followed by a guest speaker from SShAGLY (South Shore Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth)

If you are in need of babycare, please let Mary Nickerson know. This event is hosted by our CHALICE Social Justice Committee on LGBTQ Issues.

"Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is time for home."

~Edith Sitwell



FIRST PARISH BOOK GROUP

If you love to read - and love to talk about reading - join the First Parish Book Group! We meet the first Wednesday of the month at 7 pm in the Fogg Parlor. Come to one discussion or come to them all. Our upcoming selections are:

March 7: "This Is How It Always Is" by Laurie Frankel

April 4: "Daughter of Fortune" by Isabel Allende. Our guest discussion leader will be Rev. Lise

May 2: "Hillbilly Elegy" by J.D. Vance

June 6: "The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane" by Lisa See

SPIRIT IN PRACTICE SERIES SCHEDULE

with Rev. Lise Adams Sherry
in the Fogg Parlor at 12 pm

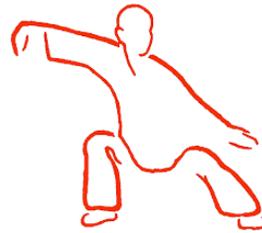
Folks are welcome to attend one session or all. The classes are based on a model developed by the Zen Mountain Monastery in Mount Tremper, NY. It focuses on eight spheres of holistic and wholehearted spiritual practices. The remaining spheres are:

Tuesday, February 13: Workshop 6: Body Practices

Tuesday, February 27: Workshop 7: Soul Practices

Tuesday, March 13: Workshop 8: Life Practices

Tuesday, March 27: Workshop 10: Looking Back and Moving Forward



TAI CHI

As part of adult programming to the congregation and greater community, First Parish of Norwell continues its popular Tai Chi/Qigong class on Tuesday mornings from 9:15 to 10:15 am in the Parish Hall. Mike Showstack, instructor, has over 25 years experience in Shaolin Hung Gar Tiger Crane Kung Fu and Yang Tai Chi Chuan. It is an ancient Taoist system of exercise to preserve health, mind and body and to cultivate physical and spiritual harmony within oneself. It is a meditation in motion, balance and harmony. Practiced daily, it is an excellent stress management technique and is documented to help with many physical and emotional issues. No special clothing or equipment needed.

You may join the class at any time - we are all beginners. Because of recent cancellations, the current class will run through February with a final class on March 2h. Mike will be away the first two weeks of March. Anyone who would like to come for four weeks to "try it out" would pay \$25. Our next 8 week session would begin **Tuesday, March 27**. Feel free to invited friends and come join us. Any questions may be directed to Sue Robinson.



FROM THE PARISH COMMITTEE CHAIR

Happy 376th anniversary, First Parish of Norwell! As I mentioned a few months back, a new exterior banner is being made to replace our large 375th anniversary banner which was proudly displayed over the past year on the north side of our church. The old banner will be removed shortly with the new one soon set to rise, displaying a message which reflects our UU values.

Speaking of signs, the Parish Committee has decided to obtain a movable “sandwich board” with easily changed letters and numbers that will be displayed along River Street. This messaging will rotate between special sermon announcements, notable church events and quotes that reaffirm our “We Are UU!” qualities. As always, we welcome your ideas and suggestions.

The Parish Committee recently accomplished a goal set during last June’s annual meeting which was to update the church website’s descriptions of our committees and organizations. I would like to first thank Marie Miller for the suggestion, followed by all the church committee chairs for their diligent review and rewrites. I would also like to thank our amazing webmaster Debi Meddaugh for the implementation! This much-needed update may be found in two different spots on our website:

1) Under “*About Us*” then under “*Documents*” it first states “*Congregational Governance and Practice*” where you will see the list of elected committees, standing committees and organizations. Here is the direct link: <http://www.firstparishnorwell.org/gov.html>

2) Under “*Programs & Services*” all the committees and organizations are listed alphabetically, which then may be clicked for their individual descriptions. Here is the direct link: <http://www.firstparishnorwell.org/programs.html>

One more recent addition to the church website is the list I posted in last month’s column, “Basic Committee Chair Tasks/Guidelines.” It is also listed under “*About Us*” and “*Documents*” with the quick link here for easy access: <http://www.firstparishnorwell.org/Basic-Committee-Chair-Tasks.pdf>

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Parish Committee member, Dave Hockman, for facilitating the new “Sutter Bequest Task

Force.” He is ably representing the Parish Committee and working with at least a dozen different folks representing various church committees, organizations and interests. For those who have not heard, our dearly departed church members, Bob & Mary Lou Sutter, bequeathed an extremely generous monetary gift to our church. Many excellent ideas are being generated regarding possible use of these funds, while keeping in mind what Bob and Mary Lou would have wished and supported. I appreciate the effort being made by this team and look forward to hearing what suggestions come forth in the months ahead.

In fellowship and love,
Les Taylor



SHOUT OUT SUMMARIES

In case any recent Sunday worship services were missed, the Parish Committee would like to re-cap our pulpit “SHOUT OUT” recipients:

Les Taylor

He has donated countless hours to this church at meetings and conferences, showing intelligence, determination and character. Les has organized and conducted meetings with tact, care, reverence and a necessary degree of ruthlessness, while quietly being in control and willing to do much more than is required. We thank Les for devoting two years heading our Parish Committee.

Joanne Howard

There IS too much to say about how much Joanne has done for our church and community. For starters, we enjoy hearing her beautiful reflections from the heart whenever she is at the pulpit. Our church has benefited from Joanne’s personal touches: setting up the worship table, cleaning the

silver service, creating the small rainbow banner below the pulpit, making the Christmas banner, as well as the FPN church banner for General Assembly, making curtains in the Parish Hall, the drapes in the Fogg Parlor, the beautiful pulpit gown for Lise. Plus Joanne has knitted hundreds of sweaters, hats, shawls, scarves and mittens for those in need. We also recognize and appreciate Joanne's profound impact with researching, archiving, writing and preaching about FPN's history and ancestral members.

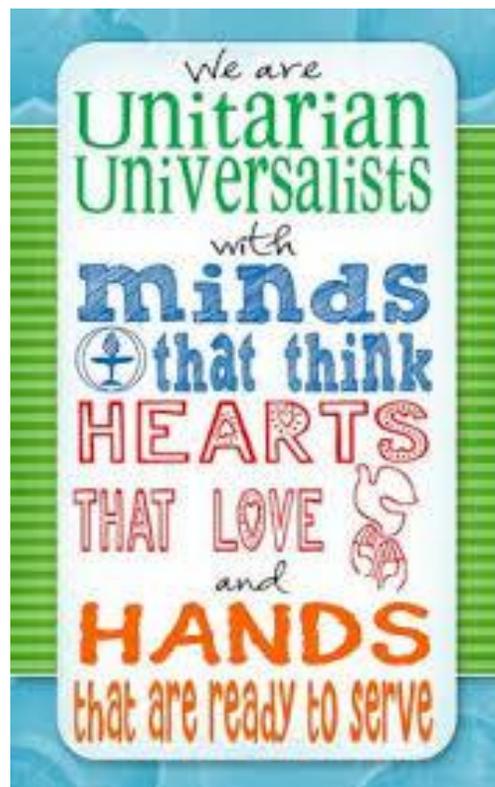
Worship Committee

Their important responsibilities are to create, coordinate and/or support Sunday services and other religious celebrations for the entire congregation. The Worship Committee regularly works to support & assist the Minister to ensure that worship services are meaningful, reflect our Unitarian Universalist values, and run smoothly. And they accomplish this by meeting every single month to carefully review and plan for each Sunday service. Thank you to the entire team led by point person, Marie Miller; DRE Jessie Slade; Service Committee representative, Bev Gardner; Head Usher, Thad Robey; and members Scott and Marcia Babcock, Joanne Howard, Mary Mercier, Staci Carey, Linda Goodwin and Rev. Lise.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

First Parish of Norwell is a religious community where adults, youth and children can evolve spiritually, morally, and intellectually through worship, education, and service to the community and the world. Recognizing no distinction of class, sex, nationality, race, age or sexual orientation, we are a welcoming congregation that stresses the need for community amidst the impersonality of the secular world. We unite to:

- Create a safe place in which to nurture our spirituality and celebrate life's passages.
- Provide a place where all persons are accepted and respected and can find mutual care and support.
- Welcome and gather strength from diversity.
- Sustain and promote Unitarian Universalist principles and purposes and participate in the larger fellowship of the Unitarian Universalist Association.
- Be a forum for the discussion of contemporary issues and a catalyst for social action.
- Support outreach to the community, to both children and adults, and through educational and artistic programs of both the performing and fine arts.
- This mission is grounded in a nearly four hundred year history as a congregation.



Activities Questionnaire

February 2018

(It is okay to check more than one or add your own comments.)

HOLIDAY FAIR - Raises \$7,000-8,000 for budget. It is also felt to support church fellowship and community interaction. It involves many hours over the year and the week of fair. It disrupts other church uses.

Your overall feeling: Really like it Enjoy it Go to Support Don't like Worth the effort

Other _____

My favorite things are: Food Crafts Gift Baskets Books Toys Jewelry
 Grandma's Attic

Other _____

I wish we had _____

I would change _____

I currently help by _____

I'd like to help by _____

We currently need crafty people to help chair the Handcraft table, and Jewelry, Publicity & others need help.

Other comments or thoughts:

If the Fair were not held, what would you like in its place?

AUCTION OF GOODS & SERVICES - Raises \$4,000-\$5,000. Every other year we hold the Auction. Donations include home dinners, paintings, boat trips, dog or child sitting, tutoring, hand crafted items, baked goods, cottages.

I have attended I have not attended

Things I would add/change _____

EASTER BREAKFAST Held at 8:45 before the worship service on Easter morning.

in family Do you usually attend? Yes No Can you help? _____

Baked Egg Casserole Yes, keep it No, skip it.

Feel free to write additional comments/suggestions on the back. Please return the survey to the basket on the Welcome Table outside the Parish Hall.

February 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			7 Dancers, PH 7-9 pm Book Group FP 7 pm	8 Church Office closes at 11:30 am Choir, Sky. 7:30 pm	9 Piano lessons, PH 2-5 pm	10
11 Outreach Sunday Morning Service & Church School 10 am Coffee Hour, PH 11 am Chocolate Sale, PH 11 am Membership Comm., Ofc. 11:30 am Baby Shower, FP 11:30-1:30 "Growing Up Trans" PH 2-5 pm Youth Group, PH & Kit.	12 AA, PH 8:30 pm	13 Tai Chi, PH, 9:15 am Knitters, FP 9:30 am Adult RE, Sky. 12 pm Dancers, PH 6-8 pm	14 iSpi deadline, 9 am Alliance Board, FP 10 am Dancers, PH 7-9 pm 	15 Choir, Sky. 7:30 pm	16 Piano lessons, PH 2-5 pm Dancers, PH 6-8 pm	17
18 Morning Service & Church School 10 am Coffee Hour, PH 11 am RE Comm., FP 11:30 am Finance Comm., Ofc. 11:30 am	19 AA, PH 8:30 pm 	20 Church Office Closed Tai Chi, PH 9:15 am Knitters, FP 9:30 am Dancers, PH 6-8 pm	21 Church Office Closed iSpi deadline 9 am Alliance Book Review, FP 10 am Caregivers' Support Grp., FP 7 pm Dancers, PH 7-9 pm	22 Church Office Closed Choir, Sky. 7:30 pm	23 Church Office Closed Piano lessons, PH 2-5 pm	24 Private rental, PH 7 pm
25 Morning Service 10 am Coffee Hour, PH 11 am Membership Comm., FP 11:30 am	26 AA, PH 8:30 pm	27 Tai Chi, PH 9:15 am Knitters, FP 9:30 am Dancers, PH 6-8 pm Parish Comm., FP 7 pm	28 Dancers, PH 7-9 pm	1 Choir, Sky. 7:30 pm	2 Piano lessons, 2-5 pm	3 Scrapbookers, PH 11 am-11 pm

