



The Parishioner

News of the First Parish in Bedford

Unitarian Universalist

On the Common, Bedford, Massachusetts

Spirit...Justice...Community

Volume 58, Issue 4

December 2024

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Rev. Annie Gonzalez, minister of faith development

Nathan Sellers, director of faith development for children

Susan Lincoln, parish board president

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Bradford Conner, music/choir director

Natan Wythe, youth choir director

Sandra LaBarge-Neumann, organist

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TBD, sexton/custodian

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Upcoming Sunday Services*

*To join us via ZOOM, click on: <https://www.uubedford.org/worship/upcoming-services/>

Sunday, December 1st

Title: "Practicing Hope: Choosing Life" (Rev. Annie preaching)

The small choices we make in our daily lives can be a chance for us to choose life and practice hope. In the face of many reasons to despair or retreat into apathy, we must commit to the daily practice of hope.

Sunday, December 8th

Title: "Between Two Tigers" (Rev. Jamie preaching)

December 8 is Bodhi Day, a day celebrated by many Mahayana Buddhists around the world, particularly in China, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and the Philippines, as the day Siddhartha Gautama achieved enlightenment and became the Buddha. In this Buddhism inspired service we will retell a very famous Zen story about a man caught between two tigers and where and how he found hope in that predicament.

Sunday, December 15th

Title: "Looking Back from the Future: Service Auction Sermon" (Rev. Jamie preaching)

The topic of the Service Auction Sermon is: What might people living 50-100 years from now think when they reflect on our beliefs and our actions (or inactions) taken during our lifetimes? Visions of justice evolve over time. What are the things we might not be seeing now that future generations will see? How can we sharpen our vision in the meantime?

Sunday, December 22nd

Title: "Honoring the Dark: Winter Solstice Service" (Led by the Worship Team)

The Winter Solstice marks the longest night of the year and the beginning of the return of the light. After the solstice, nights grow shorter, and days grow longer. Pagan traditions are replete with stories and rituals celebrating the dance of dark and light, and many contemporary UUs honor the dark as a time of rest, regeneration, and creativity, equally as necessary as the light. In this fun and engaging all-ages service we will draw on ancient traditions and stories to give the darkness its due even as we look toward the return of light and warmth.

Immediately after the service everyone is invited to grab coffee or cocoa and a treat and rejoin us at 11:30 in the *Sanctuary for our traditional Holiday Carol Sing led by our Music Director Brad Conner*. It is always a rousing and joyful time singing our holiday favorites together!

Beethoven Birthday Concert 16	<p>Tuesday, December 24th, 3:30PM - Christmas Eve Family Service Title: "No Rehearsal Christmas Pageant" (All-Ages Service with the Worship Team) A (newish) First Parish Holiday Tradition! Join us as we tell the story of the birth of Jesus together and celebrate the messages of hope, peace, joy and love in the Christmas season. Costumes for the pageant will be given out "on the go" to anyone who would like to join in the fun. The Youth Choirs will also be singing. We'll close this fun, family-friendly service in candlelight, singing "Silent Night" together.</p> <p>Tuesday, December 24th, 8:00PM - Christmas Eve Traditional Service (<u>Music Prelude 7:40PM</u>) The First Parish's Traditional Christmas Eve service will include a homily by Rev. Jamie Hinson-Rieger. Our adult choir & soloists accompanied by orchestra will be performing carols from many Spanish speaking countries around the world including <i>Riú, Riú, Chiú</i>, "Fum, Fum, Fum" and de Victoria's choral masterpiece <i>O magnum mysterium</i>. Favorite Christmas carols will include "Silent Night", "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear", "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" and "Angels We Have Heard on High". This service will pay tribute to the many Spanish speaking people who have come to this country to seek a better life.</p> <p>Sunday, December 29th Title: "Making Room for Hope: Burning Bowl All-Ages Service" (Rev. Jamie preaching) The "Burning Bowl" ritual is a Unitarian Universalist end of year tradition, in which we let go of the things we are ready to let go of with a flash of fire courtesy of magician's flash paper, to make space for new things in the new year. Rev. Jamie will also be preaching on what it might mean to make space for hope in 2025. And we will light candles to honor the fourth day of Hanukkah and reflect on the meaning of that holiday. Music by Steve Sussman.</p>
Next deadline is Dec. 30th	The Parishioner is published monthly. Deadline is generally the last Monday of each month. Send submissions to: editors@uubedford.org .

A Note from Jamie

Dear First Parish Members and Friends,

As we enter the holiday season, perhaps a little more frazzled than usual even for this time of year, this is my annual reminder that you don't have to say yes to all the things over the holidays. It is good to say no to some things so you can say yes to the things that really matter. This year in particular I recommend saying yes to rest, to community, to peaceful things, and to whatever brings you joy. Especially joy. And if paintball or monster truck rallies or the Trans-Siberian Orchestra brings you joy, maybe say yes to some not-so-peaceful things as well!

I found this lovely little poem on the internet the other day in a discussion forum for UU ministers:

they say nobody is coming to save you,
but many people have saved me,
even if they didn't intend to.
it can be as small as a smile from a stranger,
a nudge from an animal, words from a writer,
the lyrics to a song, an observant friend.
we are all saving each other every single day
in tiny seemingly insignificant ways.
~ iris rose, *fragile feelings*

I hope you are saved in many small ways this holiday season. Let's lean into beauty, connection, and compassion. And did I say joy? I am wishing us all much joy. Fortunately, we are a community that is good at creating and sharing joy together.

Peace, Jamie

* A minor note on my schedule: I have changed my day off from Monday to Friday. This works better for the flow of my work week. When special church events happen on a Friday, I will be flexible with my day off so I can attend them. Otherwise, if you need me on a Friday and it is an urgent matter, please call or text, as I may not be checking emails.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'J' at the beginning.

Office Matters

It's hard to believe the holidays are already here (again) along with more seasonal temperatures. As a reminder, we are still experiencing a heating issue in several sections on the first floor. If you have an upcoming event, please check in with the office if you need to borrow space heaters for the main kitchen or gender-neutral restroom. The good news is that the Physical Plant Team has worked very hard to find a solution which should be in place before Christmas (fingers crossed)! Meanwhile, we have SO many exciting things happening this month, such as the Artisan Fair on Dec. 7th, the annual Cookie Express, the Beethoven Bash on Dec. 15th, etc... Please be sure to read further in this newsletter and visit the main [Calendar](#) to see all of our upcoming events.

***NEW: Animal Policy** stay tuned to ParishBiz for a new policy on animals in the building. The announcement will be associated with a new graphic from our very own DFDC (Nate Sellers). Once distributed, the image will appear at both entrances.

***Reimbursement Requests**....there are green reimbursement forms in the office, so if you would like to grab a couple the next time you are in the building, please feel free. Hold on to your receipts and submit them (along with the reimbursement form) to the appropriate Committee Chairperson for approval/signature. Once that's complete, please submit everything to me in the office or leave them in my mailbox out back. Also please remember to include the address where you wish to have the check mailed. Typically, I work on accounts payable every Thursday morning and checks go out in Friday's mail.

***Booking Rooms/Zooms**....in an effort to accommodate everyone fairly, I ask that all requests for rooms/Zoom meetings be made in advance by at least 3-5 business days. We understand last minute requests will occasionally happen, but if everyone tries to work within these parameters, we will be more successful in meeting your needs.

***UPDATE: Hybrid Meetings/Technology**....If you're having a hybrid meeting, please reach out to the office and request our OWL camera or **our brand new speakerphone**! The camera, phone and all the accessories can be found in the locked cabinet under the mailboxes. Also, we now have ethernet cables (and two types of adapters available) in the following rooms: Common Room, 204 and 203. **To book** the Owl camera, **the speakerphone** or request to use one of the adapters, **please contact Stacey at the office**.

***IMPORTANT REMINDER: Leftover Food Policy**....at this busy time of year, this is a reminder about our leftover food policy we put in place last fall with regards to Memorial Services, receptions, parties, etc.... This policy was created in conjunction with the members of the Hospitality to addresses safety concerns (i.e. food allergies) and food waste concerns. Below please find the details:

- Leftover perishable foods can only be served to children/youth the same day;
- Common allergen food labels in bowl/basket to be put out with foods being served to reduce accidental consumption;
- Provide communication to internal/external groups that **all food must be removed after the event**, with the exception of packaged food or one medium tray per item (i.e. one vegetable tray, one fruit tray, etc...);
- Tape/marker will be left in the kitchen for easy labeling of dates on food;
- Ice cream related toppings need to be checked for expiration dates so they don't pile up.

***Email Lists**....please find below an explanation of **our three email lists** for use by the First Parish community. For anyone who would like to join one (or more) of the three email lists, please contact me so I can verify whether or not you're already signed up. If you're not, I can add you with your preferred email address. *(Note: sometimes these messages might end up in your Spam/Junk folders, so please double-check those folders)*. As always, we ask that you be mindful of each of their uses, and please remember to be kind and respectful with your communications.

- Parish Business (ParishBiz) List – communicates important news and events from FP staff and leadership to the parish. **We encourage all Parishioners to subscribe to ParishBiz.**
- Announcement (Anno) List – used to *facilitate* announcements of news and events of general interest to the community (i.e. Does anyone know a good chiropractor?).
- Discussion (Disc) List – a means of promoting (*or responding to*) the discussion of issues of general interest to the community.

- Brenda Rybicki, Parish Administrator

Parish Board Notes

While there is distressing global and national news, there seems to be a noticeable uptick in the positive energy buzzing around First Parish. It almost feels contagious - and that certainly feels good! Sundays are lively, meetings are active, children are laughing, and the calendar is very full. We are carrying on.

In the midst of the uncertainty that many of us are feeling, we mustn't forget how fortunate we are to be part of such a special, beloved community. So many are showing up with a smile, a suggestion, or some kind of gift. We offer up our home to those who have no safe shelter; make a meal for a member who is grieving; provide gloves and socks for those who are without. When a request is made for a ride to church or medical appointment, or a recommendation for a medical specialist or a trusted home repair person - the congregation answers. If a call goes out for assistance with a faith development class or help with youth choir practice, a member becomes available. Perhaps you are one of the volunteers who teach teenagers about healthy relationships, stand vigil outside the entrance to Hanscom to protest private jet expansion, show up on a Saturday afternoon because the sprinkler system is leaking, or the clock needs winding. Such an amazing village of responders!

We are a caring and generous home where people look out for each other. That is beautiful and optimistic. It brightens the darkest of days and makes all the difference. It is good to be in this together and I am so grateful to be a member of this community.

-Susan Lincoln, Board President

Social Responsibility Council Update

FPB's Social Responsibility Council (SRC) is excited to announce the Share the Plate recipients for the December 1 service and the Christmas Eve family and adult services.

December 1:

- The non-profit [Boston Immigration Justice Accompaniment Network \(BIJAN\)](#) has established an emergency program to fund hotel stays of 1–2 nights for immigrant families left indefinitely without housing due to changes in Massachusetts's "Right to Shelter" law that cap the number of new immigrant families who can receive state-funded temporary emergency housing. FBP's Share the Plate donation will help fund this emergency program. Please come to the service to learn about BIJAN from Maureen Richichi and give what you can to support their work. You can also [donate online through OneChurch](#) by selecting Give Now and Share the Plate.

Christmas Eve:

- **Family service:** FPB's Junior Youth Group selected the [Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans' Hospital](#) in Bedford as the Share the Plate recipient for the family service.
- **Adult service:** To help [BIJAN](#) with the immediate need it is addressing, its emergency program for supporting vulnerable immigrant families will be the Share the Plate recipient of the adult Christmas Eve service as well as the December 1 service.

Parishioners are invited to [submit proposals](#) for grants to fund social action projects or for Share the Plate recipients. Please contact socialresponsibility@uubedford.org or any SRC member: Moriah Tumbleson-Shaw (chair), Heather Black, Doug Denny-Brown, Pam Foresman, John Laferriere, Jaclyn Olsen, and Elise Randazzo.

- Heather Black, on behalf of the Social Responsibility Council

Youth Happenings

Junior Youth Group (Middle School)

Mark your calendars for **December 7th**! The Junior Youth Group (JYG) has been hard at work creating crafts for the annual Artisan Fair. On the day of the fair, they'll also be serving hot chocolate. Be sure to stop by, say hello, and enjoy a warm drink while supporting their efforts.

And...the holiday season wouldn't be complete without some fun and festivities. The **JYG Holiday Party on December 18th** is shaping up to be a highlight of the season. This year's event will feature a Yankee Swap—always a fun and lively tradition. We can't wait to see the creative and unique gifts our youth bring to trade and win!

Senior Youth Group (High School)

Last month members of our SYG took a field trip to Eastie Farm in East Boston along with regular meetings to plan our CityReach trip, which is now postponed to January on CityReach's end.

In December we'll have regular SYG sessions:

- 12/1 - Regular SYG 2:30 - 4 pm in room 203
- 12/8 - Regular SYG 2:30 - 4 pm in room 203
- 12/15 - Regular SYG 2:30 - 4 pm in room 203
- 12/22 - SYG Holiday Party 2:30 - 4 pm in room 202

Faith Development for Children

The fall has been a season of growth and creativity for the Faith Development for Children (FDC) program, filled with exciting initiatives, meaningful discussions, and opportunities for connection. Here are some highlights from the past few weeks and a glimpse of what's to come:

A Warm Welcome to the New FDC Website

We're thrilled to announce the launch of our stand-alone FDC website, now accessible via the church's main site. This new hub has already received a tremendous outpouring of support and appreciation, affirming its value as a tool for communication and outreach. Families can explore our curriculum, register for programs, and access UU resources in one convenient location.

Looking ahead, we're excited to expand the site with an Events page and calendar. These additions will make it easier for families and the wider community to stay informed about upcoming activities and share them with others.

Food For Thought: November Success & January Preview

We hosted our first **Food For Thought** event on **November 15th**, an intergenerational gathering focused on meaningful dialogue and connection. It was a fantastic start to this new program, which will continue every other month through May. The next Food For Thought evening is scheduled for **January**, the theme being *IDENTITY*, so stay tuned for details! We look forward to even more participation and insights as we continue to shape this event together.

Looking Ahead

As the holiday season approaches, there are plenty of opportunities to engage, connect, and celebrate with the FDC program. From the Artisan Fair to the JYG Holiday Party, we're excited to continue fostering a vibrant and inclusive community for children, youth, and families alike.

Musical Notes

"Hear the song of hope come out in lyric form, like a whippoorwill who did weather through the storm. Always look beyond, good is waiting in the wing. When you find it, come and join us now and sing." ~ lyrics for the Spanish Carol Riú, Riú, Chiú by musician and arranger Linda Spevacek (b. 1945)

Here's a list of music in the upcoming month –

Sunday, December 1st (10 a.m. service): *Hope*. Steve Sussman will be playing piano.

Saturday afternoon, December 7th (2:00-3:00 p.m.): Members of the adult choir will be singing at the **Holiday Artisans Market**. More information about the full event from 2-6 p.m. is located elsewhere in this newsletter.

Sunday, December 8th (10 a.m. service): *Peace*. Sandra LaBarge-Neumann will be playing organ and the adult choir will be giving a preview of Christmas Eve music by singing a medieval Spanish carol, *Riú, Riú, Chiú*.

Wednesday evening, December 11th (6 p.m.): It's the annual **Holiday Sing at the VA!** This is a significant gift from First Parish to our veterans and the Bedford Community. Rev. Jamie and the adult choir will be sharing some holiday stories and songs with the many veterans whom we truly appreciate and keep in our thoughts.

Sunday, December 15th (10 a.m. service): *Joy*. Sandra LaBarge-Neumann will be playing organ. Clarinetist Elizabeth Connors will join Sandra in Charles Callahan's livery arrangement of the carol "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" and flutist Carol Epple will join Sandra in the beautiful and haunting *Récit de Nazard* from the *Suite du deuxième ton* by French composer Louis-Nicolas Clerambault.

Sunday afternoon, December 15th (3 p.m.): The Music Committee will host a **Beethoven Bash** in honor of Beethoven's birthday featuring the return of popular and esteemed pianist Paul Bempechat playing a program which includes Beethoven's "Moonlight" and "Appassionata" sonatas. A fun and festive birthday celebration will follow the concert. Look for the flyer with more information elsewhere in this Parishioner.

Sunday, December 22nd (10 a.m. service): *Love*. Steve Sussman will be playing piano.

Sunday, December 22nd (11:30 a.m. service): ***First Parish Angels We Have Heard on High!*** I will lead our annual Holiday song/Christmas carol sing along. Sandra LaBarge-Neumann will play the organ and Ben Sears will be joining me to lead a couple of songs. There will be some short readings by Reverends Annie Gonzalez and Jamie Henson-Rieger and, as always, it will be great musical fun. Please come and bring anyone and everyone you think would enjoy singing. And don't forget to dress festively!

"Christmas Eve", Tuesday, December 24th (3:30 p.m.): This service will feature the Junior and Senior Youth Choirs as well as KidSing under the dynamic direction of Natan Wythe. This service is an uplifting way for families to spend time together and celebrate the joy of the evening. Sandra LaBarge-Neumann will be playing organ; Steve Sussman will be playing piano; there will be other instrumentalists. Alumni of the youth choirs will be returning to sing "Carol of the Bells".

"Christmas Eve", Tuesday, December 24th (7:40 p.m. Prelude Music; 8:00 p.m. Traditional service): "Angels We Have Heard on High", "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing", "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear", "Silent Night" and the ringing of the church bell. The service will also include Jamie Henson-Rieger's homily and the adult choir and soloists with orchestra performing Spanish carols from around the world including "Fum, Fum, Fum", "My Little Donkey Knows", *Riú, Riú, Chiú*,

Riú, Chiú, "Eager Shepherds on Their Way" and Tomás Luis de Victoria's masterpiece *O magnum mysterium*. The music for this Christmas Eve was selected because, while over the years the First Parish Adult Choir has paid tribute to carols from many countries, they had yet to sing carols from Spanish speaking countries. More importantly, the Spanish carols will pay tribute to the many Spanish speaking people who have come to this country to seek a better life.

Sunday, December 29nd (10 a.m. service): Steve Sussman will be playing the piano.

I want to give a special shout out to **Dean Groves** who, over the past few months, has worked with me to participate in a proposed UU Virtual Hymn project. Dean did the lion's share of the work to help organize the responses from our team which included Buffie Groves, Craig Jackson, Beverley Matthews, Cynthia Mork, Linda Pollitz, Chris Tohline and Paul Vancutsem. I felt very good about what we did and our well-informed responses.

After the craziness of the holidays are finished, maybe it's time to think about joining the adult choir? If you're interested, e-mail me at bconner@uubedford.org. Plans for the coming year include a Good Friday service with lots of Mozart and Music Sunday 2025 (May 4, 2025) will be more music by Mozart including his beautiful "Coronation Mass" and his famous "Alleluia" featuring the First Parish Adult Choir, soloists and orchestra.

Additional information about both the adult and youth choirs is below.



- Bradford Conner, Music Director

Rehearsal Schedule of First Parish Choirs for All Ages

- **Adult Choir** – every Thursday from 7:30-9:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary
- **Senior Youth Choir** (Grades 6-12) and **Junior Youth Choir** (Grades 3-5) – a joint rehearsal every Monday from 3:45-4:30 p.m. in the Common Room (please note that rehearsals are scheduled for 45 minutes)
- **KidSing** (Age 5 through Grade 2) every Wednesday from 4:00-4:30 p.m. in the Overlook Room 202/203 (please note that rehearsals are scheduled for 30 minutes)

For adult choir information, please contact Brad Conner at bconner@uubedford.org. For youth choirs information, please contact Natan Wythe at youthchoirs@uubedford.org

Special Note: There will be no rehearsals between the Christmas and New Year holidays!

First Parish Women's Book Group

The book for December is "How To Read A Book" by Monica Wood. We'll meet **at 6 p.m. on Sunday, December 8** in the First Parish common room. Please bring a dish to share for dinner.

For future planning - our annual book swap for 2025 will happen at 1 p.m. on Sunday January 5th at Corinne Doud's house. More details to follow in the January Parishioner and through the anno list.

The rest of the 2024 - 2025 church year book group dates and books are:

Meeting Date	Book	Author
1/5/2025	Book Swap	
2/2/2025	Rough Sleepers	Tracy Kidder
3/2/2025	Tom Lake	Ann Patchett
4/6/2025	The Frozen River	Ariel Lawhon
5/18/2025	The Rulebreaker: The Life and Times of Barbara Walters	Susan Page
6/8/2025	Book Selection for the following year	

Artisan Market Coming to Town on Saturday, December 7

The Bedford Cultural District and the Gallery@First Parish are hosting a holiday Artisans Market on Saturday, December 7, from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. at First Parish, 75 The Great Road. This event is a centerpiece in Bedford's Holiday Kickoff, which features the town's annual tree lighting on the Common at 5:00 p.m., followed by the arrival of a special visitor from the far north.

There will be two floors with more than 25 creative vendors selling handmade, giftable artwork and crafts, including original paintings, photographs, ceramics, jewelry, baskets, stained glass suncatchers, ornaments, candles, books, and more.

The joyful sounds of the First Parish choir will fill the halls as shoppers browse two floors of artisans' tables. In the kids' rooms, art and craft activities promise a world of fun to wide-eyed young visitors.

The Winter Walkabout around the Town Common is back. Business owners and staff at local cultural (and other) institutions, including the Bedford Historical Society, will roll out their welcome mats and serve up holiday cheer. The Bedford Historical Society will have an open house at Old Town Hall. There will also be a Holiday Storybook Trail along Great Road, ending at the Artisans Market.

First Parish is fully accessible through the Elm Street entrance. Parking is available at the Town Center/Town Hall complex.

Providing opportunities to support Bedford arts, culture, artists, and crafters is a key component of the Bedford Cultural District's mission. For ongoing updates on the Artisans Market and other initiatives of the Bedford Cultural District, including the New Song Music Series, visit the district's website, www.bedfordma.gov/culturaldistrict, or contact Bedford's Housing and Economic Development Director, Eric Salerno, at esalerno@bedfordma.gov or by phoning 781-918-4006.

Kids' Holiday Shopping Event at Artisan Market on Saturday, December 7

For the last 3 years, there has been a free kid's holiday market/babysitting event during the Artisans Market. This tradition will continue this year!



When: Sat. Dec. 7 from 2-5pm

Where: First Parish Bedford basement

What: new/gently used items will be available for Littles to "shop" for the Grownups in their lives. Typical gifts include gadgets, jewelry, books, puzzles and more. Littles will be escorted to the shopping area by an "elf" who will help them find their gifts and then will help them with the wrapping and or to do a craft.

Timeline:

2:00-3:30 drop off babysitting (grownups must stay in the building but are not allowed in the shopping area)

3:30-4:30 Littles can shop with their grownups and are welcome to wrap gifts in the craft room (the elves will have left to get ready for the tree lighting and Santa)

4:30-5:00 quiet shopping time for Littles needing a more sensory friendly environment.

Any cash donations will be for the food pantry and leftover gifts will be available in room LO5 during community hour on Sunday. After that, they will be donated.

If you would like to help with the kids' market, please contact Liz Hanegan at committees@uubedford.org to donate items or gift wrap. There will be a bin in the Elm Street lobby at First Parish and at the Minuteman Diner.

Vespers Services

Second Tuesday services will continue! Our next service of silence, song, movement and sharing will take place on **December 10th at 7:00PM.**

Community Discussion

Community Discussion: How do we live UU's new expression of Shared Values?

Unitarian Universalism reviews our core values at least every 15 years, recognizing that our faith embraces a living tradition. General Assembly 2024 adopted a new expression of Shared Values, captured in this graphic:



What does it mean to each of us to have love at the center? Carter Heyward, a feminist theologian quoted in the fall/winter 2024 issue of UU World, writes "Love is the active realization of relation." What does this 'love' at the center feel like, look like to you? Is it inherent or do we create it? Come to explore and build meaning from and into our new shared values! Join us on **Sun. Dec. 8 at 12 PM** for a discussion of these issues. A light lunch will be provided courtesy of the Faith Development Committee.

EJC – Green Holiday Eco-Chat

First Parish Green Holiday Eco-Chat (virtual): **Wed. Dec. 4, 2024, 7:00- 7:45 PM**

Sustainability matters! Share your green ideas/tips on how to create a more sustainable holiday at the First Parish Green Holiday Eco-Chat. We will ask folks to share one sustainable holiday tip (or one thing you love about the holidays) and then open it up for discussion. How can we embrace the holiday spirit while improving our carbon footprint by making better choices, such as during festive gatherings, with gifts, food, trees, decorations, etc. Come share your sustainable holiday ideas!

Zoom Link for Green Holiday First Parish Eco-Chat:

<https://zoom.us/j/91919517749?pwd=SVgsdPSkv18zaVQ4rwFHxBA6arzcPi.1>

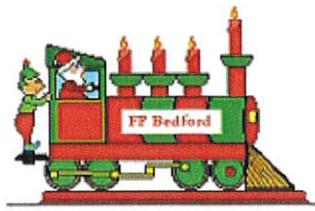
Meeting ID: 919 1951 7749

Passcode: 267619

This event is being hosted by the Environmental Justice Committee.



Cookie Express



We're excited to announce that the time for our Annual Cookie Express is fast approaching! This festive tradition is a great way to connect and get to know our senior parishioners and those who may be homebound.

How to be part of the fun:

- Bake or shop for festive treats. Bring 3 dozen homemade cookies, fancy bakery cookies or individually wrapped chocolate or holiday candies to the FP Kitchen by 10:00 am on Dec.14th
- Decorate and fill containers from 10:00-11:00 in the Common Room
- Sign up to visit our parishioners and deliver goodies over the next few days. Packages can be picked up on Saturday December 14th after 11:00am

Sign Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D48AEAA22A7FE3-53472036-2024#/>

If you have suggestions of people who'd appreciate a treat and a visit, please let us know.

Bring your contribution labelled "Cookie Express" to the kitchen anytime from Thursday afternoon until 10:00am on Saturday December 14th.

Questions, please contact Sandy Boczenowski at committees@uubedford.org

Sponsored by the Lay Pastoral Visitors Team

Carleton Willard Discussion Forum

Discussion Forum at Carleton Willard Village: Thurs. Dec. 10 at 11:00 AM

Every third Thursday we lead an engaging discussion at Carleton Willard Village on a topic of interest to UUs and hopefully just people in general. We will leave our December session open to discuss events in the world as we close out 2024 and look ahead to 2025.

Games, Games, Games!

Please note that our monthly games gathering will be on **SATURDAY** (not Sunday) **December 14th at 2pm** in the Common Room. Bananagrams, Betrayal at House on the Hill, Ticket to Ride, Codenames, or whatever you would like to play.

Bring a friend, and family - all are welcome.

After games, please stay and eat dinner together. Some may choose to bring their own food. Others may get take-out from a nearby restaurant.

What Do We Do Now?

Many people are wondering in the wake of Trump's election what actions we should take to protect ourselves and our communities. Come together for some thoughtful grounded conversation that can help each of us discern our roles in the coming months and years.

Sunday December 15th

In person: 11:30 - 1pm in room 202, bagels provided

On zoom: 5 - 6:30pm

RSVP: bit.ly/whatnowdec15

The Parish Nose

The Parish Nose: Personal Notes from the Life of the Congregation

Please send submissions of personal joys, sorrows, or milestone moments that you would like shared in the Parishioner to minister@uubedford.org by the fourth Friday of the month.

Mercedes Kane shares: A 'thank you' from the Kane family, for the development and upkeep of the Memorial Garden...a very special place for comfort and remembrance.

Dianne Marston shares that she will have knee replacement surgery on November 25 at Emerson Hospital. We wish her a successful surgery and smooth and easy healing!

A note from Ian Carroll and Carlough Faulkner-Carroll:

Carlough and I would like to share that her mother, Mary Murrell (Bennett) Faulkner, died on the evening of October 27th, in Houston, TX. She was 80 years old. A memorial service is planned for January 18th in Houston.

Bill Ingraham shares:

Long time parishioner Yoma Ingraham has entered comfort care with Hospice. Yoma was the Parishioner editor during Jack Mendelsohn's ministry, working closely with Teddy Evans, the church secretary. Yoma and her husband Bill taught AYS classes during the 1980s. Please contact the Parish office for Bill & Yoma's contact information.

Rev. John Gibbons, Minister Emeritus, and Sue Baldauf share:

Sue and I are most appreciative of the many kindnesses we've received since our fire on October 12. Of course we are most thankful to be uninjured, but we are overwhelmed and traumatized. Some things were burned but there was water and smoke damage throughout. Others have experienced far worse. On the night of the fire, a neighbor gave us coats & later described his escape at age 9 from Vietnam...a story that involved loss of lives, homes, a riverboat that sank, & being chased by pirates...the last of whom had a change of heart and made his family "the most delicious fish soup of my life!" So, things do change and sometimes for the better. For now, we're staying with a generous neighbor who is temporarily in FL. Soon we're likely to be at an extended stay hotel and then possibly to an apartment. We expect to be out of our house for many months. It sounds strange but the good news is that demolition has begun! Our insurance helps but expenses are certain to exceed those limits, so the many diverse generosities, hugs, and kind words truly help. We feel well cared for. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. -John, Sue, and Eric

Beethoven Birthday Bash!

Beethoven Birthday Bash!

Paul-André Bempéchat, piano

Sunday, December 15 at 3pm

The First Parish in Bedford
75 Great Road, Bedford MA 01730

Suggested Donations Collected at the door: \$20 adults \$15 seniors and students

Celebrate Beethoven's 254th birthday with a piano concert followed by a birthday party reception.

Pianist Paul-André Bempechat has toured in virtually every country in Europe, including major appearances at the Konzerthaus Berlin, the Barbican Centre London, the Philharmonics in Meiningen, Stockholm, Helsinki, Rotterdam and Belgrade. Colleagues and critics alike have hailed him as a singularly lucid, introspective interpreter capable of drawing audiences into a near-palpable relationship with the select composers he performs.

PROGRAM

Piano Sonata No. 2, "Moonlight", Opus 27

Piano Sonata in G Major, Opus 79

Piano Sonata in B-flat Major, Opus 22

Piano Sonata No. 23, "Appassionata", Opus 57



First Parish Committees

2024-2025

Parish Board

Susan Lincoln, *President* (2026)
Mark Bailey (2025)
Bea Brunkhorst (2027)
Stacy Chandler (2027)
Peter Cho (2026)
Wendy Innis, *Treasurer* (2027)
Jennifer McClain (2025)
Jamie Hinson-Rieger, *ex officio*
Annie Gonzalez, *ex officio*
Nathan Sellers, *ex officio*

Clerk: Rebecca Green Neale
Moderator: Bob Dorer &
Paul Bradford, *Deputy Moderator*
Zoom

Leadership Team

Jamie Hinson-Rieger – Sr. Minister
Annie Gonzalez – Minister of Faith Dev.
Nathan Sellers – Dir. of FD for Children
Susan Lincoln – Board Pres.
Bea Brunkhorst – Parish Council Chair
Brenda Rybicki – Parish Administrator
Wendy Innis – Treasurer

Parish Council

Bea Brunkhorst
Jamie Hinson-Rieger
Annie Gonzalez
Nathan Sellers
[All Committee Chairs]

Social Responsibility Council

Moriah Tumbleson-Shaw,
Chair (2025)
Pam Foresman, *Treasurer* (2026)
Heather Black (2025)
Doug Denny-Brown (2026)
John Laferriere (2026)
Jaclyn Olsen (2027)
Elise Randazzo (2027)

Nominating

Linda Pollitz, *Chair* (2025)
Sarah Dorer (2027)
Dave Southard (2026)

Audio Visual Team

Sandy Currier, *audio*
Bob Dorer, *audio*
Kath McCafferty, *audio*
Bill Rabinowitz, *audio*
Bob Bass, *video*
Bob Batt, *video*
Chris Tohline, *video*
John McClain, *video + zoom*

Paul Bradford, *zoom*
Craig Jackson, *zoom*
Cecile Mercado, *zoom*
Jerry Ross, *zoom*
Delsey Sherrill, *zoom*

Environmental Justice (EJC)

Corinne Doud, *Chair*
Dorothy Anderson-Perales
Renu Bostwick
Don MacIver
Brown Pulliam
Lois Pulliam
Marjorie Roemer
Mary Van der Mude

Faith Development

Annie Gonzalez, *ex officio*
Nathan Sellers, *ex officio*

Children's FD Subgroup

Kristin Hall
Moriah Tumbleson-Shaw
Ian Carroll
Eloise Carroll (child)

Jr. Youth Subgroup

Mark Bailey
Devin Sonpal (youth)
Nina Sonpal (youth)

Sr. Youth Subgroup

Bob Doud
Jerry Ross
Carinna Dogan-West (youth)
Taelor Nichols (youth)

Adult FD Subgroup

Randi Currier
Doug Muder
Jerry Ross

Finance

Wendy Innis, *Chair & Treasurer*
Vicki Gaw, *Asst. Treas.*
Joan Bowen
Irene Gravina
Bill Rabinowitz
Jeff White

Fundraising

TBD, *Auction*
Karl Winkler, *Haunted House*
Dorothy Africa & Bea Brunkhorst,
Plant Fair

The Gallery@First Parish

Maria Green, *Co-Chair*
Doris Smith, *Co-Chair*
Bob Batt
Stacy Chandler
Kati Oates
Chris Tohline
Christine Wojnar
Christine Dudley-Marling
Nancy Willet, *emeritus*

Hospitality

Kath McCafferty, *Chair*
Catherine van Praagh

Information Technology (IT)

Sandy Currier, *Chair*
Renu Bostwick, *google groups*
Craig Jackson

Webteam

Paul Bradford
Craig Jackson
Cecile Mercado

OneChurch Facilitators

Dean Groves
Dave Southard

Interiors Committee

Erin Dorr, *Chair*
Carlough Faulkner-Carroll

Lay Pastoral Care

Liz Connors, *Chair*
Sandy Boczenowski
Laurie Groves
Marge Heckman
Anita Raj
Lisa Tohline
Rev. Annie Gonzalez
Rev. Jamie Hinson-Rieger

Committee on Ministry

TBD

Membership

TBD, *Chair*
Pamala Foresman
Dawn La France
Sharon McDonald
Doug Muder
Deb Picciuto
Trudy Sadgehpour
Dave Southard
Chris Tohline

Sustaining

Sarah Dorer, *Chair*
Sandy Boczenowski
Carla Bradford
Ron Green
Art Smith
Nina Wampler

Music

Lisa Tohline, *Chair*
Sara Angus
Dot Bergin
Mike Boczenowski
Bea Brunkhorst
Nancy Daugherty
Carol Epple
Dean Groves
Cynthia Mork
Luana Read
Bill Rasschaert
Chris Tohline
Lee Vorderer

Brad Conner, *ex officio*
Natan Wythe, *ex officio*

Partner Church

Sharon McDonald, *Chair*
Dorothy Africa
Nancy Daugherty
Rich Daugherty
Sarah Dorer
Marge Heckman
Linda Pollitz
Ben Sears
Julie Zacharakis
Ron & Cathy Cordes, *emeritus*

Personnel

Bob Dorer, *Chair*
Carol Gregory
Ed Schwartz

Physical Plant

Joel Parks, *Chair*
Bob Dorer
Vern Gaw
Norm Heckman
Brett Leida
John McClain
Christine Rabinowitz, *Parsonage*

Stewardship

Sarah Dorer, *Co-Chair*
Bill Rabinowitz, *Co-Chair*
Irene Gravina
Rev. Jamie Hinson-Rieger, *ex officio*

UU Urban Ministry Delegates

Cecile Mercado
Robert Schmalz

Worship Associates

Jenn McClain, *Chair*
Ian Carroll
Marya Dantzer
Ron Green
Doug Muder
Joe Pompei
Rich Suval
Andrew Van Praagh

AD HOC / TASK FORCES

Memorials

Carla Bradford, *Chair*
Kath McCafferty
Wendy Innis
Rich Suval

Memorial Garden

Sarah Dorer
Dean Groves
Janet Powers

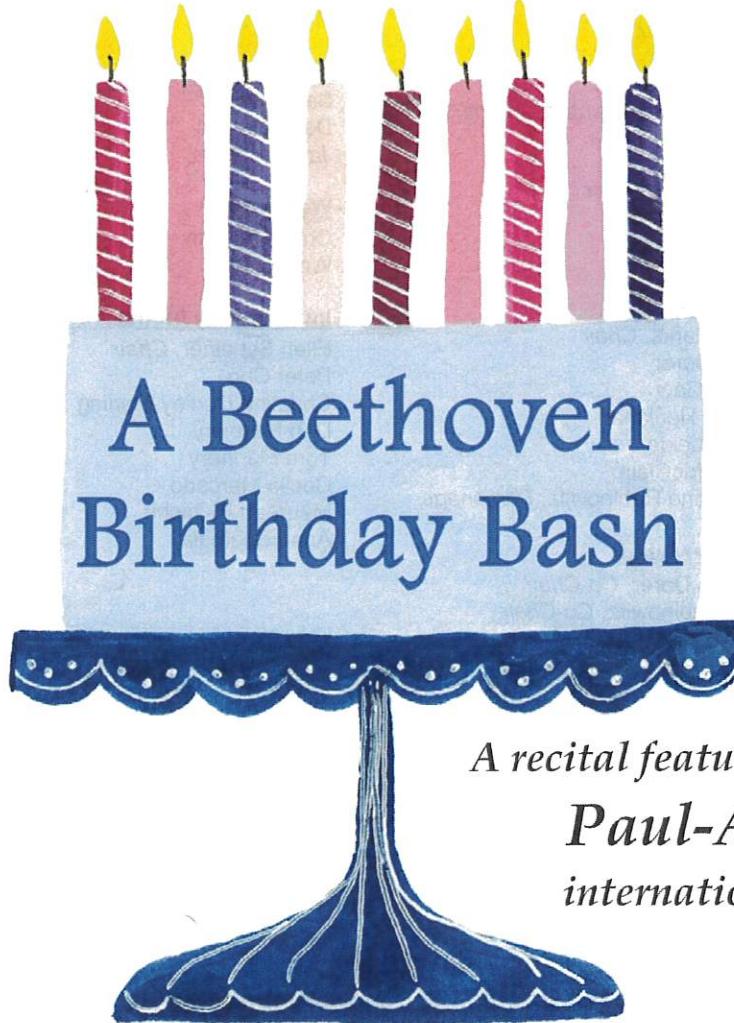
Welcoming

Craig Jackson
Webb Tilney

Immigration Justice Team

Ellen Scheiner, *Chair*
Peter Cho
Christine Dudley-Marling
Deb Flannery
Tom Flannery
Cecile Mercado
Maureen Richichi
Anne Schmalz

First Parish Music Committee
presents



Sunday,
December 15,
2024
at 3:00 PM



A recital featuring

*Paul-André Bempéchat,
internationally-reknowned pianist*

PIANO SONATAS: "Moonlight," Op. 27, No. 2
G Major, Op. 79 Bb Major, Op. 22 "Appassionata," Op. 57

*Net proceeds to benefit both First Parish in Bedford and
The Shelf (www.massart.edu/food-resources-massart-area)*

Suggested Donations (gratefully accepted at the door)

\$20 for Adults \$15 for Seniors/Students

First Parish in Bedford, Unitarian Universalist • 75 The Great Road • Bedford, MA 01730
www.uubedford.org • 781-275-7994

First Parish is Wheelchair Accessible

