



# The Parishioner

*News of the First Parish in Bedford*

*Unitarian Universalist*

*On the Common, Bedford, Massachusetts*

*Spirit...Justice...Community*

Volume 58, Issue 5

January 2025

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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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**Sandra LaBarge-Neumann**, organist

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## Inside this issue:

A Note from Jamie

3

Minister's Musings

4

Office Matters

4

Parish Board Notes

5

Social Responsibility Council

6

Youth Happenings

6

Musical Notes

7

Choir Rehearsal Schedules

7

Hosting Immigrant Families

8

Annual Plant & Craft Fair

8

FP Women's Book Group

9

Abásfalva Scholarships

9

Climate Café

9

MLK Day Clean-up

9

Annual Spaghetti Dinner

10

Great First Parish Bake-Off

10

Vespers

11

Stop Private Jet Expansion

11

FPB Facility Upgrades

11

Bingo Challenge Winners!

12

Carleton Willard Discussion

12

## **Upcoming Sunday Services\***

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

### **Sunday, January 5th**

Title: "Dubious Prognostications for a New Year" (*Rev. Jamie preaching*)

It is the first service of the new year. What does 2025 hold in store? Wouldn't we all like to know! Join us for some prognostications about the challenges and opportunities that await us. Oracular accuracy not guaranteed!

### **Sunday, January 12th**

Title: "Into the Mystic" (*Rev. Jamie preaching*)

We say that one of the sources of our living tradition of Unitarian Universalism is "Direct experience of transcending mystery and wonder." Sometimes people have experiences that feel very direct indeed! This Sunday we will talk about the religious and spiritual phenomenon of mystical experiences, which happen to people of all walks of life and all religious/spiritual backgrounds (including none.) We will look at some famous and not-so-famous examples and ask what might this mean and what do we do with it? Join us for a service that is less about concrete answers and more about wondering about wonder.

### **Sunday, January 19th**

Title: "Reparations and the Radical Dr. King" (*Rev. Jamie preaching*)

The public veneration of Dr. King as an American hero after his death often obscures the true extent of his radicalism during his life, reducing his message to palatable words about judging people based on "the content of their character." The real Dr. King imagined (and demanded) fundamental changes to society to address what he called the "three evils" of militarism, racism, and poverty, which included material redistributions of wealth and power, also known as reparations. This MLK weekend let's spend some time with the radical Dr. King and also learn more about the modern reparations movement.

### **Sunday, January 26th**

Title: "Mystery at Walden Pond" (*Led by Guest Speaker Rev. Ken Reeves*)

This service tells the story of a community coming together to explore a mystery. Their exploration begins when Henry David Thoreau walks into a detective agency and reports, "I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and a turtle dove and have been on their trail ever since."

The reading will be from *Walden*. It is an obscure little passage:

*I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and a turtle dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travelers I have spoken concerning them, describing their tracks and what calls they*

Volunteers Needed!	13	<i>answered to. I have met one or two who have heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a cloud, and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves.</i>
Annual Chili Cook-off!	13	
FP Committees	14	
Valentine's Concert	16	Our story takes Thoreau literally as he says this to a detective who embarks on a search for the missing animals. Join us on the search.  The Rev. Ken Reeves is a graduate of the Starr King School for the Ministry and has served congregations in Ohio and Delaware. He has also earned a Masters in Pastoral Counseling and a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology. He is currently a practicing clinical psychologist and Clinical Director of the Center for Career Development and Ministry. He is also the author of: <i>The Whole Church, Congregational Leadership Guided by Systems Theory</i> .
<b>Next deadline is Jan. 27th</b>		The Parishioner is published monthly. Deadline is generally the <b>last Monday</b> of each month. Send submissions to: <a href="mailto:editors@uubedford.org">editors@uubedford.org</a> .

## A Note from Jamie

Dear First Parish Members and Friends,

It has been quite a remarkable month of worship and celebration and service and community here at First Parish, capping off another remarkable year. It is such a privilege to be your minister. Thank you for all you do! Now, wherever you find yourself reading this, please pause a moment and join me in offering thanks and appreciation as well to the incredible First Parish staff team and to your Parish Board for all their hard work and dedication and creativity and care.

I want to thank the Board in particular for enthusiastically supporting Rev. Annie in taking her oh-so-well-deserved sabbatical. Annie, we will miss you! May your sabbatical time be everything you are hoping it will be. And to First Parish, rest assured that Annie is leaving us in great shape with everything well-planned and prepared for so we can carry on our exceptional Faith Development program until she returns. And we are in good hands with our DFDC Nate Sellers and the support of the Faith Development committee and many dedicated adult volunteers.

As we turn now to 2025, we are not so much *turning into* the New Year as we are *launching ourselves* through its doorway. We are cartwheeling across the floor, maybe with some flips and ninja-style shoulder rolls thrown in. We are hitting the ground running, wheeling, and ready for action.

Here are just some of the exciting events happening in the first six weeks(!) of the new year: Not one, but two Friday Night Potlucks, a Climate Café, a documentary screening of "Long Strange Trip" (by FPB's own Ron Cordes!), an Our Whole Lives overnight, Games Club afternoon, the return of the Annual Spaghetti Dinner (woo-hoo!), the all-Church cleanup (with food!) on MLK weekend, the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Chili Cook-Off, and the much beloved Valentine's Day concert and chocolate reception. Rest assured, we are bringing it in 2025.

There are two other events in particular that I would like to highlight for you amidst all this amazingness. On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, after the service, you are invited to join a conversation about an exciting Board initiative to upgrade our beloved church building and facilities for the next twenty-five years. The event, led by a special Board appointed task force, is part presentation, part Q&A, and part brainstorming session. We want to hear your questions, thoughts, and big ideas as we begin to prepare for the future of First Parish together!

The second event, I am very excited to say, is another step forward in our work with immigration justice. At the end of January, after more than six months of conversation, exploration, planning, and preparation, First Parish will be hosting a migrant family in room 201, for a period of up to four nights and five days, as temporary overnight shelter. This is a *trial run* we are undertaking with the support of the Brazilian Workers Center and the approval of the Parish Board. **On Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, there will be a special Q&A session after the service led by me and members of the Immigration Justice Team to hear your thoughts and answer your questions.** We will hold an additional Q&A session on Zoom, date/time to be determined. Please plan to attend to learn more about this important undertaking.

First Parish is a special place. Amidst all the uncertainty of 2025, we will have many opportunities to show up for each other and show up for the larger community in ways beloved and familiar and also new and exciting. Happy New Year!

Peace, Jamie

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

## Minister's Musings

Six years ago, I missed my first ever Christmas Eve service at First Parish in Bedford. My pre-recorded voice was piped in through the sound system because my father-in-law had died unexpectedly and I was with family. The next year I was running the Christmas Eve service with Rev. John Gibbons on sabbatical and I couldn't get the confetti cannons to fire. The year after that it was 2020. Our services were, of course, on Zoom. And then there was more COVID adaptation and then there was an interim minister and a new Director of Faith Development for Children and then there was me as the acting senior minister and then there was a new senior minister and then there was a new DFDC who was actually sick for his first Christmas Eve service here.

We've been through a lot together. And we haven't had one "regular" Christmas Eve yet, among the 7 of them that I've had with you all. But I wouldn't trade it for anything. I am so grateful for the incredible privilege to take a sabbatical, a time of rest and learning, offered to me as a minister by this congregation. From Jan 1st to April 30<sup>th</sup>, I will be pausing my work at First Parish while I do a bit of travel, work on improving my Spanish, train for a marathon and experiment with more silence in my life. I'll also be around, continuing some amount of organizing given our political landscape, parenting, and participating in my household and hobbies. A combination of staff and volunteers will be making sure key pieces of my ministry move forward, such as JYG, SYG, OWL, small group ministry guides, etc. It is wonderful to leave things in such good hands. I'll see you all again in May!



## Office Matters

As we welcome in the new year, we prepare for our first full winter month. In the event of a blizzard or bad storm, please stay tuned to WBZ news and ParishBiz for any closures.

January seems to be filled with loads of yummy, comfort food events, such as a baked potato fundraiser, the Annual Spaghetti Dinner and the Great First Parish Bake-Off! Please be sure to read further in this newsletter and visit the main [Calendar](#) to see all of our upcoming activities.

**\**NEW: Year-end Giving Statements***.....statements will be going out at the end of January. At the bottom of the statement, you will also find your 24/25 pledge balance due (if any).

**\**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.

**\*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

We are a busy community at First Parish! In the past month, we held the Cookie Express where parishioners baked cookies, bagged, boxed, and delivered them while visiting with home-bound members. The choir sang at the VA Hospital and celebrated the holidays with veterans. Youth from Faith Development made crafts to sell at the Artisan Fair and donated the proceeds. Migrant families living with Rev Jamie and others learned about our traditions and culture of caring while participating in many First Parish led activities. In other news, Gov Healey signed the comprehensive climate bill for which the EJC and FPB advocated. At Town Meeting, residents of Bedford voted by an overwhelming majority to pass the Town Common rehab project. There is much being done within and beyond the walls of our church.

Looking ahead to January there will be a multi-generational Cupcake Bake-Off, a Friday night spaghetti dinner, a potluck supper, and monthly drop-in games session on a Sunday afternoon. The EJC will sponsor a Climate Cafe and the IJC is

planning a Q&A session on providing temporary housing for unhoused migrant families. On Martin Luther King Day we will have a church wide clean up event (for those willing to forgo the televised Presidential Inauguration).

These activities and many others that take place throughout the year are all organized by our active members. The commitment, participation and time spent cannot be measured and we are grateful for their ideas and initiative.

As we move into the new year we recognize that it is more important than ever to work together, pool our caring resources, and attend to each other and the world around us. While we can all do our part individually, it is surely more effective to work collectively. Rev Jamie shared a Howard Thurman poem on Christmas Eve that truly resonated for me. The inspiring message that there is always much to be done is one I will carry as we begin 2025.

For those who may wish to more formally join First Parish or any of our many committees, please know we enthusiastically welcome you!

-Susan Lincoln, Board President

## **Social Responsibility Council Update**

Greetings from your Social Responsibility Council (SRC)! We are excited to announce that the first Share the Plate recipient for 2025 is [Lawyers for Civil Rights](#) (LCR), a Boston-based organization that works with communities of color and immigrants to fight discrimination and foster equity through creative and courageous legal advocacy, education, and economic empowerment.

In partnership with law firms and community allies, LCR provides free, life-changing legal support to individuals, families, and small businesses, focusing on impact areas that represent the front lines in today's battle for equality and justice. LCR represents clients across Massachusetts and surrounding communities, and the impact of its work ripples across the country.

**Please come to the service on Sunday, January 5, and give what you can to support LCR's good work in the community and beyond. You can donate via cash/check or [online at OneChurch](#).**

Parishioners are invited to [submit proposals](#) for grants to fund social action projects or for Share the Plate recipients.

Please contact [socialresponsibility@uubedford.org](mailto: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**

### **Senior Youth Group (High School)**

Last month members of our SYG sorted our CityReach donations, took a field trip into Boston to volunteer with a toy drive at the UU Urban Ministry and had a festive holiday party with creatively decorated cookies. We also moved our communication functions over from a text thread to a WhatsApp group.

In January we'll have:

1/5 - Regular SYG to prep CityReach 2:30 - 4 PM in room 203

1/10-1/11 CityReach overnight trip to volunteer with unhoused folks in downtown Boston

1/19 - Regular SYG to debrief CityReach and hang out 2:30 - 4 PM in room 203

1/26 - a UU Mass Action youth corps event 2-4 PM here at FPB

## Musical Notes

*"We must build dikes of courage to hold back the flood of fear. If you can't fly, then run; if you can't walk, then crawl, but by all means keep moving."*

– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968) from his Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech (December 10, 1964)

Here's the planned music for 10 a.m. services in the upcoming month –

**Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup>:** Steve Sussman will be playing piano.

**Sunday, January 12<sup>th</sup>:** Steve Sussman will be playing piano.

**Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup>:** Steve Sussman will be playing piano. The adult choir will sing two spirituals, "Wade in the Water", arranged by Harry T. Burleigh, the first black composer who helped shape the course of what we now call "American" music, and "Down by the Riverside", arranged by John Rutter, who includes a delightful tribute to beloved American composer, Scott Joplin, in the arrangement.

**Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup>:** Sandra LaBarge-Neumann will be playing organ and Steve Sussman will be playing piano. To honor the birthdays of both Wolfgang Mozart and Franz Schubert, the adult choir will sing three different settings of the text *Dona nobis pacem*. One setting will be from Mozart's Mass in c minor, K. 139, a piece Mozart wrote when he was 12 years old. Another setting will be from Mozart's "Coronation" Mass, K. 317 which the choir will be singing on Music Sunday 2025. And a setting by Franz Schubert, an arrangement based on his beloved *Impromptu* for solo piano in G Flat Major, Op. 90, No. 3.

Be sure to **mark your calendars** for the upcoming **15th Annual Valentine's concert** and chocolate reception sponsored by the Music Committee on **Sunday, February 9, 2025 at 4 p.m.** And **BIG NEWS!** The Music Committee is hosting an album release celebration and reception for **Natan Wythe's first commercial recording**. Mark your calendars for **Sunday, February 23, 2025 at 1 p.m.** More details about both events will follow in the coming weeks.

Now that the craziness of the holidays is finished, maybe it's time to think about joining the adult choir? If you're interested, e-mail me at [bconner@uubedford.org](mailto:bconner@uubedford.org). Besides always singing great music, plans for the coming months 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.

If you know parents with children who are looking for a good youth choir for their kids, send them to Natan Wythe for any questions [nwythe@uubedford.org](mailto:nwythe@uubedford.org)

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](mailto:bconner@uubedford.org). For youth choirs information, please contact Natan Wythe at [youthchoirs@uubedford.org](mailto:youthchoirs@uubedford.org)

## Planned Trial Run Hosting an Immigrant Family at First Parish in Bedford

Under Massachusetts' "Right To Shelter" law – which has been in effect since 1983—all homeless families in the Commonwealth are guaranteed emergency shelter. However, since 2023, the Healey Administration has implemented increasingly tighter shelter restrictions, contributing to the existing housing crisis. These steps have especially impacted new immigrants who are here legally under Temporary Protection Status.

With the approval of the Parish Board and the initiative of the Immigration Justice Team (IJT), First Parish in Bedford is poised to take a significant step to address this crisis. First Parish plans to conduct a 5-day/4-night trial run providing stop-gap housing at the church in Room 201 for one immigrant family that would otherwise be homeless. We believe that by undertaking this trial run, we are "walking the walk" of our faith's core values: justice, interconnectedness, the common good, and love.

Coordination of the family's stay at the church will be done by the state-authorized Brazilian Workers Center (BWC). BWC will remain responsible for the family. First Parish, as a volunteer host, is only asked to provide food and shelter. The trial run is planned to start in late January and will be managed by members of the IJT.

The IJT looks forward to providing the congregation with many more details in the days ahead.

Rev. Jamie will be hosting a Q&A about this initiative with representatives from the Immigration Justice Team after the service on January 5th at 11:30am in the Bacon Room. We will hold another Q&A session on Zoom, date/time TBD.

Immigration Justice Team: Christine Dudley-Marling, Debbie Flannery, Tom Flannery, Carolyn Grose, Cecile Mercado, Maureen Richichi, Ellen Scheiner (chair), Anne Schmalz

## 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Plant and Craft Fair



69th Annual Plant and Craft Fair  
10 AM- 3 PM, May 17, 2025

Meet with us on Sunday Jan. 5<sup>th</sup> at Community Hour to find out how you can help plan our next Plant Fair!

What is your favorite part of Plant and Craft Fair Day? Would you miss it if it wasn't there? If you look forward to the event, and have favorite activities in your memory, or if there are new ones you would like to see, let us know. The co-chairs Bea Brunkhorst and Dorothy Africa (committees@uubedford.org), along with other members of the group, will welcome you in to work together on making this First Parish tradition happen again, for the sixty-ninth time, on May 17, 2025. This year several stalwart members of previous plant fair organizing groups will not be available to help, so we need some folks from the First Parish Community to step up and help out. We are recruiting for the following: Plants

Team (Wholesale Plant Manager, Heritage Plant Manager), Publicity, Parish Engagement, Physical Plant Coordinator, Tech Team, Financial Czar, Bake Sale Manager, Craft Vendors Co-Manager, and Entertainment. It may seem daunting, but with group effort it all gets done, and in the end, we bring our church to the wider community.

-Regards, Bea Brunkhorst and Dorothy Africa

## First Parish Women's Book Group

We'll start 2025 with the annual book group swap on Sunday, January 5 at 1 p.m. at Corinne Doud's house, 4 Redcoat Road in Bedford. Please bring a wrapped book or two (gently used is fine) and a dish for the lunch potluck. The dates/books for the rest of the 2024 - 2025 church year are:

Meeting Date	Book	Author
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	

## Abásfalva Scholarships

Annually for almost 30 years FPB has sent money to our partner village in Transylvania to help kids attending school. The Abásfalva Unitarian Church recently selected 19 kids from member church families to receive our scholarships. January is the month the Partner Church Committee will be collecting donations for the fund. Each child will receive \$150 US. Please donate what you can by writing a check to First Parish in Bedford with "Transylvania Scholarship" on the memo line --- AND another way to help: we'll be selling baked potatoes (with all the toppings you could ever imagine!) after the service on January 12 and 26. A yummy way to help sponsor a student!

For more info, contact Sharon McDonald, [shar.mcd77@gmail.com](mailto:shar.mcd77@gmail.com)

## Climate Café Jan. 19<sup>th</sup> after Service

Join us for a discussion on how we can move forward with active hope for the climate with so much at stake as we transition to a new president/administration (11:30am, Bacon Room, possibly with a zoom option - stay tuned).

Coordinated by the Environmental Justice Committee & facilitated by Rev. Jamie.

## MLK Day Common Room/Kitchen Clean-Up

Are you looking for a way to engage in a service project on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day?  
Need to get away from the news coverage for the day?

- Stop by the Common Room, grab a snack and a chore, and get busy in good company.
- There will be a task for every ability and age (supervision may be required depending on age!). Window washing, banister wiping, cobweb clearing, dusting, coffee maker cleaning, and more!

- Snacks and beverages will be available, but we will never turn down a special treat to share!

**Monday, January 20**

**10 am to 2 pm, drop-in when available**

**No need to RSVP / Cleaning supplies will be provided.**

## **ANNUAL INTERGENERATIONAL SPAGHETTI DINNER – Friday, Jan. 24<sup>th</sup>!**



**What:** A delicious spaghetti dinner for families and children.

**When:** **Friday, January 24 6-9 pm**

**Where:** The Common Room at First Parish

**Why:** To provide a time for parents and children to socialize with each other after a week at work and school.

**A notice with an RSVP will be sent out shortly on the Anno List. We will need responses to know how many people to cook for.**

- Sarah Dorer, for the Sustaining Membership Group

## **Great First Parish Bake-off**

On **Saturday January 25th** a subset of the Faith Development Committee is planning a multigenerational baking competition and celebration. Up to 4 teams of 3-4 bakers will make cupcakes from 3-5 pm. Each team must include at least two distinct generations of people. We will also be recording and possibly streaming the event, and of course we'll need judges to taste the cupcakes and award the winners in multiple categories including creativity, appearance, flavor and technique. Plus, we need extra people to eat the cupcakes! Sign up to participate at [bit.ly/FPbakeoff](http://bit.ly/FPbakeoff).



## Vespers Services

Second Tuesday services will continue! Our next service of silence, song, movement and sharing will take place on January 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00PM.

## Stop Private Jet Expansion

### Webinars of Interest:

- **Sustainable Aviation Fuels: Can they meet 2050 Climate Goals?**

**Webinar Date:** Wed, Jan. 8th, 7- 8 pm [Register Here!](#)

**Event Flyer:** [Click here](#) for details

Much of the research and policy discussion about the future of “sustainable aviation fuels” has been funded by the aviation industry. This webinar features independent researchers who receive no aviation industry support.

- **People of Faith: A Call to Stop Private Jet Expansion at Hanscom or Anywhere**

**Webinar Date:** Thurs, Feb. 6, noon - 1 pm [Register Here](#)

**Event Flyer:** [Click Here](#) for details

A call to action for people of all faiths to oppose private jet expansion by having their house of worship or a relevant committee create/sign a resolution to send to MA Governor Healey and other government officials.

Note: First Parish in Bedford was the first church to adopt Faith Resolution: [Signed Faith Resolution Opposing Private Jet Expansion 10.3.24](#)

### Article of Interest:

- [Plan to expand airport for private jets runs into new Massachusetts climate law](#)

*“Climate advocates say an expansion of Hanscom Field will add to the state’s climate emissions and mostly benefit the very wealthy. A new state law will force decisionmakers to consider the impact”* 12/18/24 Energy News Network

Sign [THIS PETITION](#) to Gov. Healey to urge her to stop private jet expansion at Hanscom or Anywhere.

## Imagining FPB Facility Upgrades for the Coming Decade

Every dozen years or so, First Parish undertakes a major effort to significantly improve its physical infrastructure. For example, in 2010, the congregation installed a new elevator system as part of a "Bility" campaign to make the entire church building accessible for all. In 2018, FPB installed solar panels on the church roof to reduce its carbon footprint. That effort resulted in a centuries-old building entering the modern era of climate change mitigation. 2025 is our community's next opportunity to seriously consider how best to physically shepherd our church into the future.

A newly-formed task force invites all FPB members and friends to attend a brainstorming session in the Bacon Room starting at noontime on Sunday, Feb 2, 2025. Participants will be encouraged to think big about how our historic structure on Bedford's Common could and should be upgraded over the coming decade. We will discuss major infrastructure needs which have long been postponed (e.g. HVAC, fire suppression, organ repair). Other ambitious ideas like backing up power via electric batteries, installing geothermal heating and overhauling the Common Room's rear entry will also be raised. And of course, fund raising for these large efforts will be addressed.

We sincerely hope a large cross-section of the FPB community will join this "uplifting" conversation in early 2025.

- Dan Bostwick, Joan Bowen, Peter Cho, Jamie Hinson-Rieger, Brett Leida, and Jenn McClain

## Bingo Challenge Winners!

The new winners of First Parish *Bingo Challenge!* are **Alan MacRobert** and **Ellen Scheiner!** Please claim your ribbon at the Welcome Table.

Everyone is a winner when you play *Bingo Challenge!* It's a fun way to be recognized for participating fully in all that First Parish has to offer. New members are encouraged to get involved, and all members may be inspired to try something new!

There is still time to play this year's game. BINGO cards are available at the Welcome Table. Mark off activities completed *since Ingathering 2024*. When you get five activities in a row it's BINGO! Write your name and put completed cards in the box provided.

The prize is the satisfaction of being an active member. You'll be recognized in the newsletter and receive an exclusive *Bingo Challenge!* ribbon for your name tag. It's a great conversation starter at Community Hour. Full bragging rights included. Have fun!



## Carleton Willard Discussion Forum

**Thursday, January 23rd, 11am Discussion Forum at Carleton Willard Village**

Join us for an engaging discussion at Carleton Willard Village on a topic of interest to UUs and hopefully just people in general. This month we will share some readings from Dr. King in honor of MLK Weekend and also leave time to share our thoughts and feelings about the inauguration. PLEASE NOTE TIME CHANGE: The CWV discussion will no longer be on the 3rd Thursday of the month. For most months in 2025 it will be the **Second Thursday**, but please check the calendar for updates.

## Volunteers Needed!

Help with the Sunday Morning Ministry of Coffee in 2025!

Sign up [HERE](#) or click the Volunteer! link at [UUBedford.org](#)

All of the dates are up through June, and while we have a bunch of wonderful "usual suspects" who help make Community Hour caffeinated, it is important for everyone who can to chip in!

**Not Sure what to do?** Sign up as a trainee a few times and learn the ropes!

**Can I sign up with people?** Helping in the kitchen is a great way to meet folks, and we are also happy to have groups. **You can sign up as a family** (If you think your kids are ready, they can help you) or with friends. Your **committee** can sign up for one day to raise attention to the work you do (with info on the tables and notice in the order of service) or you can sign up with your **Small Group** as a service activity. Please contact Cath Van Praagh if you want to coordinate a group!

*Thank you for all you do!*

-The Hospitality Team

## 14<sup>th</sup> Annual First Parish Chili Cook-off: SEE YOU THERE!



First Parish Chili Cook Off

This wonderful First Parish intergenerational event will take place in the Common Room on Saturday, Feb 8. Bring family, friends, and your appetite!

### JUST THE FACTS

What: First Parish Chili Cook-off!

**When: Saturday Feb 8th, 6:30PM to 8:00ish**

Where: Common Room at the Church

Who: Chili cooks and fans

How much: suggested donation \$10/person \$25 family

More info [gene.kalb@gmail.com](mailto:gene.kalb@gmail.com) or [linda.pollitz@gmail.com](mailto:linda.pollitz@gmail.com)

# 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, *Co-Chair  
(rotating chairs)*  
Renu Bostwick  
Don MacIver  
Brown Pulliam  
Lois Pulliam  
Marjorie Roemer  
Ginny Steel

### 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  
Rich Suval  
Lisa Tohline  
Rev. Annie Gonzalez  
Rev. Jamie Hinson-Rieger

**Committee on Ministry**

TBD

**Membership**

TBD, *Chair*

**Outreach Team**

Ron Green  
Deb Picciuto  
Chris Tohline  
Rev. Jamie, *Staff liaison*

**Pathway to Membership Team**

Sharon McDonald  
Doug Muder  
Dave Southard  
Rev. Annie, *Staff liaison*

**Sustaining Membership Team**

Sarah Dorer, *Chair*  
Sandy Boczenowski  
Carla Bradford  
Ron Green  
Art Smith  
Jenn McClain  
Nina Wampler  
Rev. Jamie, *Staff liaison*

**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  
John Gibbons  
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*



THE 15 TH ANNUAL

# Valentine's Day Concert

Sunday, February 9, 2024 at 4:00 PM

A TRIBUTE to the SONGS of  
FRED ASTAIRE & GINGER ROGERS  
*and piano solo masterpieces*  
by DEBUSSY and RAVEL



Featuring: Bradford Conner (*piano*)  
Cynthia Mork & Ben Sears (*vocals*)



Leslie Amper



## Chocolate Reception after the Show!

Net proceeds to benefit First Parish in Bedford

**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](http://www.uubedford.org) • 781-275-7994

*First Parish is Wheelchair Accessible*

