

THE MEETINGHOUSE NEWS

First Parish in Cambridge, Unitarian Universalist

June 2019



Thank you all for the Annual Meeting this weekend. As promised, I wanted to recap some of the information about Ministry that I shared with you regarding upcoming priorities, staffing updates as well as providing you with a link to the Annual Reports compiled by the Ministry Teams.

Priorities

As indicated, I will be focused on infrastructure and resilience this coming year. Specifically, I will be looking for ways to strengthen the work of the staff, generate more income for the church (and increase giving from within), preparing us for the large building projects ahead and helping us develop a system of robust internal care. In order to make space for these priorities, I will spend the summer developing the Worship Associates/ Worship Team to begin taking a significant role in the creation and shaping of worship which will include finding guest speakers.

Programs/ Ministry Teams

Here is the link to the [Ministry Team Annual Reports](#). The ministry teams are becoming stronger and much more of an influence within the congregation. We will decide on a meeting schedule that will likely be a quarterly effort. In between these meetings, I will schedule regular updates with the team leaders. We will also look for specific opportunities for the teams to share their work with the board. This may occur at the quarterly meetings or at specific board meetings. The reports included here (and additional ones to come) are a great insight into some of the exciting work already happening at First Parish.

Staffing Update

At the annual meeting, I announced that Rev. Danielle will be leaving First Parish as Developmental Minister as of July 14. I recognize that Rev. Danielle's departure this summer will be very difficult for some people in the congregation. Over three years, she has given generously of herself and her skills and there is great attachment to her. Although she was hired for a temporary role, it does not diminish the depth or commitment with which her impact has been felt. The board is working to create space for people to share and process their feelings about her departure and we will continue to keep the congregation apprised of these opportunities as well as plans to celebrate her work.

My goal is for a new permanent position that we hope to create in the staff to take shape over the summer. This process will include in-depth conversations with the staff and board as well as opportunities for the congregation to weigh in. As a reminder this position is being conceived as a means of improving communication, scheduling and information management within the church systems including social media and the website.

Thank you all for your dedication to making First Parish a great place to worship and a wonderful community to be part of. – ALD

First Parish 2019 Retreat

On **Saturday, June 8**, everyone at First Parish is invited to Salisbury Beach State Reservation (a state park) for fun, food and socializing! We have the exclusive use of a large covered pavilion all day. There is a small beach on the river and a much larger beach on the ocean. The park is open 8 am- 8 pm. You are welcome to arrive and leave at whatever times work for you.

Reservations: Please [fill out the Registration form linked here if you have not already done so](#). It is definitely not too late to [register](#) and pay. All payments (including cash) should be made prior to June 8.

Rain or shine: There was a question about what to do in case of rain. There is no alternate date. We have a covered pavilion. Let's just assume it will be fine weather.

Food: Pizza and salad will be provided for the payment (\$10 for adults; \$5 for children 10 and under). There is a drinking water spigot available at the pavilion. We encourage you to bring along snacks and favorite foods to share as well as whatever you may need for later in the day. If you can bring along what you need in the way of plates, cups, water bottles and flatware, that would be great, but there will be items available for those who need them. **Please note that alcoholic beverages are not permitted.**

Activities: At the moment, we have the following activities planned:

- 9 am- Nature walk with Kyle Eichner
- 11 am- Yoga with Meghan Shaw
- 12 noon- Lunch
- 3 pm- Jam session/songs with Pepper Green. Kyle will provide songbooks, but everyone is encouraged to bring instruments

There may be additional activities if leaders can be found - e.g. for a book talk/book swap or a small group discussion for adults. Also, supervising and judging a sand castle/sand sculpture contest, or other activities for kids.

There will be some items available: bubbles, a large Jenga, a frisbee and a corn hole. Does anyone have a kite? How about shovels and pails or other beach toys?

If you would like to pitch in, please email kyle.eichner@gmail.com.

Transportation: The planning team will be matching up those who offered rides with those who need them. We'll be in touch. In the meantime, any changes or concerns can be communicated to Grace Hall at gracewhall@msn.com or text to 215-858-5448.

Note: There is a \$14 parking fee per car with a MA license plate. (If the driver is 62 or over, a lifetime pass is \$10 and can be purchased at the park. Bring along a recent utility bill or bank statement in case they ask for that in addition to your driver's license.)

Accessibility: The beaches and restrooms are accessible.

Additional information: Check out the park website for a more complete description of the facility: <https://www.mass.gov/locations/salisbury-beach-state-reservation>

Plan to come join your First Parish friends for a day at the beach!

Shared Offering for June

The Middle East Education Group is pleased to announce that the recipient of the Shared Plate for June is the Palestinian House of Friendship. The following is from their website.

"We are a non-profit, non-governmental, politically independent humanitarian organization in the West Bank city of Nablus, Palestine.

The Palestinian House of Friendship is dedicated to serving the needs of children, youth, and their families in the West Bank of Palestine. The area PHF serves includes the city of Nablus, nearby villages, and the surrounding refugee camps. The main goal of PHF is to invest in Palestinian individuals while promoting the ideals of democracy, human rights, and love for the other. Our vision is a Palestinian civil society that possess a generation of young people who are educated in the values of democracy and ready to become leaders.

PHF has been engaged in a variety of activities ranging from civic education to programs in democracy and local culture. The activities include workshops, camps, lectures, seminars, concerts and folkloric festivals. PHF is dependent on the generous contributions of individual supporters, as it does not receive any funding from the Palestinian Authority.

Smiling Faces summer camp is PHF's crowning achievement. The summer camp targets children and youth who are very poor, from families with unemployed parents, families in which parents are separated, and families whose fathers are in Israeli prisons. The camp's rationale is to give these children a taste of childhood pleasures, protect them from delinquency and give their families a sense of hope.

The camp serves boys and girls, ages 6 to 14, with older youth trained to help staff the camp. Activities include painting, crafts, music, drama, dance, computer training, visiting local academic and civic institutions, and sports. Everything the children do is within the framework of conflict resolution and mediation, assisting the children and youth to build peace and self-respect within themselves and to address their differences productively."

Website: <https://www.palestinianhouseoffriendship.com>

The Middle East Education Group expects that Dr. Mohammed Sawalha, the founder and Executive Director, will be in worship on Sunday June 23 to speak briefly about the work of the organization. The Group will also be a co-sponsor of a fundraising event for the Palestinian House of Friendship on Saturday June 22 at 3 PM at the Community Church of Boston. There is a flyer for the event on the bulletin board and more details will be in weekly announcements as the date draws near.

BATHROOM SURVEY INTERIM REPORT

In the May Meetinghouse News, readers were asked their opinions on whether First Parish should designate the remaining two of its six bathrooms All Gender.

Six responses came in, four in favor, and two opposed. One who wrote in opposition was concerned about women's needs and another about children's safety.

One of the respondents suggested that Cambridge regulations regarding bathroom designations be investigated before a decision is made. We will utilize advice from City agencies.

- A City plumbing inspector advised that when inspecting remodeled buildings, Massachusetts law is applied as follows: if **any** bathroom is multiple occupancy, one must be reserved for women and another for men. Only if **every** bathroom is single occupancy can all of them be designated All Gender.
- The Cambridge Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus (LGBTQ+) Commission is presenting a mid-June workshop — **Gender Identity & the Law: Training for Business** — which someone from First Parish will attend.

No change will be made in bathroom assignment at this time.

The Music Team

Gospel Sunday is June 16!

The Music Team is pleased to announce the return of Linda Brown-San Martin to lead another Cambridge area gospel choir at First Parish on Sunday, **June 16**.

Cambridge Forum

Fake News vs Facts: Living in a Post-Truth World Wednesday, June 12, 7 pm in the Meetinghouse

Are we living in a post-truth world where alternative reality replaces hard facts, and where opinions carry more weight than evidence?

Philosopher and author, Lee McIntyre, will discuss his book **POST-TRUTH**, which traces the roots and considers the ramifications of fake news. Free and open to all.



Eastern Middlesex County Gun Buy-Back

Cambridge

Saturday, June 8
9 a.m. – 12 Noon
Reservoir Church &
Pentecostal Tabernacle

Watertown

Saturday, June 22
9 a.m. – 12 Noon
First Parish Church

Newton

Saturday, June 15
10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
The Second Church

Arlington

Saturday, June 29
10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Dept. of Public Works

**Make our communities even safer
by disposing of any unwanted guns!**

**NO ID REQUIRED,
NO QUESTIONS
ASKED**

You'll receive a gift card for each firearm you turn in and help reduce the risk of suicide, accidental discharge, and domestic violence.

Bring firearms unloaded with the safety engaged in a bag, box, or case. Leave the unloaded firearms inside the trunk of your vehicle upon arrival. The Middlesex Sheriff's Office and Massachusetts State Police will safely destroy all guns. For further information please visit www.middlesexsheriff.org.

This event will take place on Saturday, June 8 from 9:00 am to Noon at two locations:

- The Pentecostal Tabernacle North, 77 Columbia St.
- Reservoir Church, 170 Rindge Avenue.

The focus of the Gun Buy Back is on getting unwanted and unsecured guns out of homes where they pose a serious risk to children, people with mental illness who may contemplate suicide and those at risk of domestic violence. No questions asked and no identification required.

Cambridge Police and the Middlesex Sheriff's Office will be managing both sites and handling the guns turned in, and the State Police will destroy the guns. Residents turning in guns and ammunition will be given a gift card to a local grocery or restaurant.

This is an interfaith and community-led partnership by Cambridge churches, synagogues and mosques, including First Parish, and by the Cambridge Peace Commission, the Cambridge Police Department, the Cambridge Public Health Department, the Middlesex County Sheriff and State Police.

Please help get the word out to friends and neighbors and beyond so that residents who have or know people who have guns in their homes will consider getting rid of them in this way.

GROUPS

Our Elders Group is open and meets on the 1st Tuesday of every month at 2:30 pm in the Chapel. If you are interested, please contact Rev. Danielle at devminister@firstparishcambridge.org.

Spanish Conversation Group

¿Habla español? First Parish's Spanish Conversation Group meets on first and third Tuesdays of every month at 6:00 p.m. in the Baldwin Room. Come join us for informal conversation in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. All levels are welcome and no commitment is required! For more information, email spanish@firstparishcambridge.org. ¡Nos vemos pronto!

The **Young Adult Group (YAG)** is a community for people ages 18-35. YAG meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 7pm upstairs in the Nursery and sometimes meets for food and social events on other occasions. Newcomers are always welcome. For more information visit our website cambridgeyag.org