

Next issue deadline  
Sunday, October 30

# The Spire

OCTOBER 2, 2022

THE FIRST SUNDAY RECORD

VOL. 65, No. 2

First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Arlington, 630 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, MA 02476 • Gathered 1733

## Walk to Support Refugees

First Parish and our ArCS Social Justice Working Group are joining together for a fun fundraiser to support the refugees who are making Arlington and surrounding communities their home. The 2.4-mile walk will start and end in the First Parish Courtyard, with refreshments afterwards. It steps off at 12:30 and finishes up at 2 pm.

Sign up and donate, or create your own campaign to send to family and friends to sponsor you!

ArCS, which stands for Arlington, Cambridge, and Somerville, provides hosting and related services to people from around the world who are seeking asylum from persecution. They come from Afghanistan, Honduras, Haiti, and other countries. The ArCS Cluster now supports 18 local asylum-seekers through our outreach programs.

In addition to our hosting program, we have expanded our services to offer a Passages program that provides short-term support to refugees not housed by the Cluster. The walking fundraiser and other donations will help us continue to deliver life-changing support services through our entirely volunteer-based network.

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## Sharing Our Offering

For many years now First Parish has donated half of the Offering from each Sunday service to an organization that makes a positive difference in the world. During September it was Cultural Survival, an Indigenous-led non-governmental nonprofit that advocates for Indigenous Peoples' rights and supports Indigenous communities' self-determination, cultures, and political resilience.

This month's Giving First recipient is the Women's Lunch Place, providing healthy meals, essentials, and one-on-one assistance from its daytime shelter and advocacy center in Boston. The group is dedicated to helping women experiencing homelessness, hunger, and poverty.



## Programs on Zoom

There are a few blessings we can count from our pandemic experience, and one is the advent of on-line programs that allow people to attend programs without having to leave their home. This month you can Zoom in to First Parish for two discussions. E-mail the sponsoring groups to receive the Zoom links.

> **Transition to Retirement**

Monday, October 3, 7 to 8:30 pm  
[layministry@firstparish.org](mailto:layministry@firstparish.org)

> **Women's Book Group**

Thursday, October 6, 7 to 9 pm  
[womensbookgroup@firstparish.info](mailto:womensbookgroup@firstparish.info)

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## Exploring Our Own Backyard

On four Tuesdays in October and November we will meet in the Parlor for a program called A History of Racial Justice/Injustice in Arlington.

Mark your calendar for:

October 4 and 11  
November 1 and 8  
7 to 9 pm

When our church was founded in 1739, slavery was legal in England's colonies, and many of our

congregation's founding members enslaved people. Our early congregational documents list some of their names: Rose, Punch, Kate, Flora, Dinah. It is rumored that they are buried in an unmarked grave in the Old Burying Ground next to our meetinghouse.

Come learn about this challenging history, the powerful legacies of Prince Hall and Rev. Samuel Abbot Smith, and how we might acknowledge these past injustices today.

We will meet over four sessions and have a (to be determined) fifth session in which we will visit the Prince Hall memorial in Arlington and view congregational records at Harvard Divinity School.

Please pre-register for this program on Realm. If you don't know how, contact the church office at [www.firstparish.info](http://www.firstparish.info).

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## Fair Share Amendment on the Ballot

The Fair Share Amendment (FSA) will be the first question on the November 8 ballot. The question asks us to vote on whether to amend the existing Massachusetts constitution to include an additional 4 percent tax on the portion of a person's annual income above \$1 million. This revenue would produce \$2 billion each year in badly needed revenue for programs to enhance education and transportation in our state.

First Parish's Defending Democracy Working Group has been busy since the Spring trying to educate everyone on this important question. We think voting YES on Question 1 aligns with several UU principles. Given the number of loopholes the ultra-wealthy have at their disposal, we strongly feel that those fortunate individuals who make over \$1 million in a year should be held accountable to pay their fair share in that year. The number of individuals that this additional tax impacts across Massachusetts is less than 1 percent, but the revenue it will generate is huge.

The Defending Democracy Working Group will have an information table after services every Sunday until the November 8 election. November 6 is Democracy Sunday; Marta's sermon will focus on democracy, and Linda Hanson will be in the Parlor after services to answer any questions about this ballot question.

— Maggie Carey, Clarissa Rodriguez,  
Bill Gardiner, Joyce Thompson,  
Mary Cummings

## How Many Pumpkins?

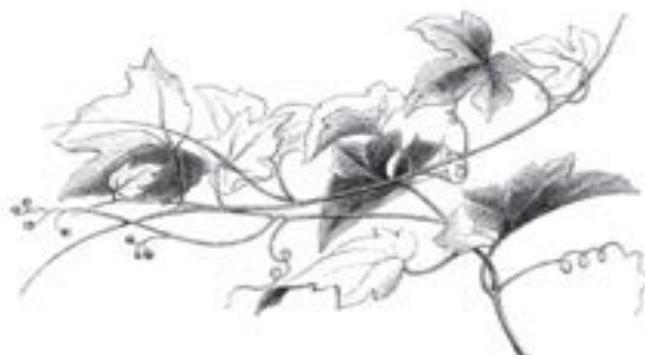
Many thanks go out to the dozens of stalwart folks who watered our church gardens over the summer in the hottest, driest season on record, to volunteer crews who spread mulch and dug out invasive swallow wort last spring, and to the dozen or so people who came to plant out 58 native plugs in our new mini-meadow, where others also labored to plant commemorative sunflowers for Ukraine and a Three Sisters native garden of corn, squash, and beans. The squirrels enjoyed both of the last two a bit too much, but the sunflowers, at least, have demonstrated remarkable resilience to their onslaughts and put forth sunny new blooms after being beheaded.

Thanks to all who helped. Please let us know your ideas and availability to keep the gardens vibrant. Our beloved Pat Magee, who did so much to keep our Mass. Ave gardens bountiful, has moved to assisted living and left behind a need for diligent tending of showplace spaces on the front side of the Church.

The mini-meadow is a work in progress with many possibilities. Our RE classes have been regular visitors and love counting the white "ghost pumpkins" that have erupted in that space. (What's the count? Hint: More than a dozen.) They grow alongside a sprawling husk cherry, also known as a ground cherry or husk tomato, with intriguing tart fruits in papery husks. These have sprung up in among a cover crop of rye. Birds have begun making forays to two newly donated birdbaths.

Plans are afoot for a Work Day in October when parishioners will be asked to volunteer to spread out the native plants grown to full size over the summer from the small plugs planted last spring, and to weed and tend other garden spaces. The date will be set before long.

Send questions and suggestions to [gardens@firstparish.info](mailto:gardens@firstparish.info).



## Social Justice Heroines Walking Tour

On Sunday, October 9, Maureen Dolan will lead a second visit to the Mount Auburn Cemetery graves of some remarkable women who fought for social justice. The tour covers about two miles of mostly flat terrain from 2 to 4 pm.

Wear comfortable shoes and a hat, and bring water. Meet in front of Story Chapel at the entrance to the cemetery. You can park on any street that does *not* have a green line down the center. To register, contact [star@firstparish.info](mailto:star@firstparish.info).

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## Drumming Workshop

On Saturday, October 15, join in a fun, relaxed exploration of the sounds and rhythms of West Africa. We will learn to play the djembe, or hand drum, and see how it is used to form rhythms that are essential to village life. The workshop will be led by Dean Fisher, a multi-instrumentalist who learned djembe in Arlington and in Conakry, Guinea, in West Africa.



Plan to gather in the Courtyard from 1 to 2:30 pm. If the weather is inclement, we'll be in the Bailey Room.

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## Reflections

### I'm Hip

After years of arthritic deterioration, last month I had my left hip replaced. If all goes well the right hip will also become bionic in mid-December. The surgeons are getting very good at minimizing collateral damage, and physical therapy begins pretty much immediately, but it is still major surgery. I won't be in my usual spot in the back row of the choir for awhile.

I am so fortunate to have lots of help from my husband, John. Along with adapting the house to make things easier, he has kept me fed and clothed and medicated. He valiantly organized a gazillion tablets to be taken two or three or four times a day.

## Forum on Net Zero Carbon

On Sunday, October 23, you can attend a forum on how members of our congregation can move to net zero carbon use in their homes and transportation. Panel members will describe practical steps to take to achieve this important step for the future of our planet. New initiatives at the national, state, and local level provide incentives for change.

Meet in the Parlor from 11:30 am to 2:30 pm.

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## A Psychedelic Alliance Program

On Friday, October 14, come to the Women's Alliance monthly meeting to socialize and experience a fascinating program:

MDMA and Psychedelic-Assisted Therapy:  
The Healing Potential of Non-Ordinary States

The presenters, Angela Winslow and Francis Guerriero, will cover the history of MDMA, known as Ecstasy, as a therapeutic medicine and focus on the current state of research on the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder. They will include a few case examples and briefly touch on the therapeutic potential of other psychedelics, such as ketamine, psilocybin, ibogaine, and LSD.

The meeting lasts from 7:30 to 9 pm. Contact [alliance@firstparish.info](mailto:alliance@firstparish.info) for more information.

My physical therapist is wonderful and friends have stepped in to give John a break. He now has a first-hand understanding of what mothering a toddler single-handed is like. The tasks are not hard but they are incessant. At least I have not done as much whining as your average toddler.

I should be able to do the Harvest Moon Fair but will need more help than usual. If you have a yen to wallow in holiday hoo-hahs, plan on sorting and pricing at the Holly Shop the day before and selling the day of the fair, November 19.

— Diane Taraz Shriver



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## The Spire

Diane Shriver, Editor

Next issue: Sunday, November 6  
Submissions due by Sunday, October 30  
*Items may be edited for space and clarity.*

E-mail to *spire@firstparish.info*.  
If you do not have e-mail, contact the office.

*The Spire* generally deals with the big picture.  
Time-sensitive details belong in the Weekly E-mail  
Bulletin – send to *weekly@firstparish.info*  
by Wednesday at noon.

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