

Next issue deadline
Sunday, September 25

The Spire

SEPTEMBER 11, 2022

THE FIRST SUNDAY RECORD

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

Gathering In

Today, September 11, is Ingathering Sunday, when we greet old friends and meet new people who will grace our lives in the days to come. After the service there will be a gala event called Artapalooza, with food, music, face painting, lawn games, and more.

Pie and Chili, Chili and Pie!

The Pie Palace returns to Town Day on Saturday, September 17. As we have for many years, we will sell slices of homemade pie to happy customers. Proceeds benefit our Social Justice Committee. We need bakers and volunteers to be pie servers or cashiers.

For newer members, this is a fun event where you get to socialize with fellow congregants while helping raise funds for social justice. Please note that whole pies will not be for sale this year; donated pies will be sliced and sold for \$4 a slice (\$5 *a la mode*).

Please drop your pies off on Friday, September 16, between 5:30 and 7 pm, or anytime on Saturday morning before 11 am.

And what would Town Day be without First Parish's own man-made chili? We need volunteers on Friday evening, September 16, to whip up the chili, and the next day, to serve the chili to eager throngs.

To volunteer or ask questions, chili-related or otherwise, please e-mail manmadechili@firstparish.info.

Toward Land Acknowledgment

This year First Parish will be developing a land acknowledgement, a statement that recognizes that the land where our congregation is located was stolen from the Indigenous people who first inhabited this area, and our commitment to work for reparations, right relationship, and justice in regard to Indigenous people. This is part of an ongoing process informed by



the work of our Indigenous Justice Working Group (IJWG).

The IJWG is planning sessions to inform the congregation about this topic – defining a land acknowledgment, explaining why it is important, and working on what we want ours to say. We invite the First Parish community to participate in these discussions.

Here are two sample statements. The first was crafted by Elizabeth Hunter, a member of the ILWG. She shared it in a summer service. The second was written by Rev. Erica.

Sample A: The meetinghouse of First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Arlington resides on the ancestral land of the Massachusetts People, whose name was appropriated by this Commonwealth. We pay respect to the Massachusetts elders past and present. We recognize the Massachusetts People as traditional stewards of this land and we acknowledge the enduring relationship that exists between them and their traditional territories. We admit the truth of

violence perpetrated against Indigenous Peoples and make a commitment to uncovering that truth. We make this acknowledgment as part of building a culture of respect, truth, and accountability in our congregation, our community, and our nation.

Sample B: We, the First Parish Unitarian Universalist congregation of Arlington, acknowledge that we are on the unceded lands of the Massachusett Tribe. Our congregation's historical ancestors, white European settlers, seized these lands from indigenous people. We honor the bloodline of the Massachusett people and commit to ongoing conversations of repair and reparations.

As we begin this work, these samples and other information will be shared with our worship associates, ministers, and guest preachers. Folks will be asked to start incorporating a land acknowledgement in the opening words of our services.

By the end of this program year the IJWG will propose a final version for the First Parish community to endorse and adopt. Please contact the group with any questions, at ilwg@firstparish.info.

Congratulations to Jonathan!

Jonathan Colby, formerly Jonathan Brennand, was married on July 3 to his partner, Seth Colby, in Woodstock, Vermont. They live in Shrewsbury, Mass. Jonathan begins his ninth year at First Parish as Music Director. How very glad we are for the happy couple!

New Beginnings with Rev. Erica

September is a time of new beginnings – for students and teachers, in the Jewish calendar, for First Parish, and for gardens needing renewal after the summer heat and drought.

If you are looking for a new spiritual beginning, please join Rev. Erica for a three-session STAR program devoted to exploring spiritual practices. STAR is our adult-education program and stands for spirit, transformation, adventure, and reflection.

Participants will meet with Rev. Erica on three Thursday evenings – September 15, 22, and 29 – in the Parlor from 7 to 9 pm. Participants will explore a variety of exercises related to prayer, meditation, and gratitude, adapted from *Seeking Wisdom: A Spiritual Path to Creative Connection*, by Julia Cameron, author of the much-loved *The Artist's Way*.

Seeking Wisdom will be provided at no cost, so we would greatly appreciate (but not require) that you pre-register, as that helps us order an appropriate number of books. Please do so here:

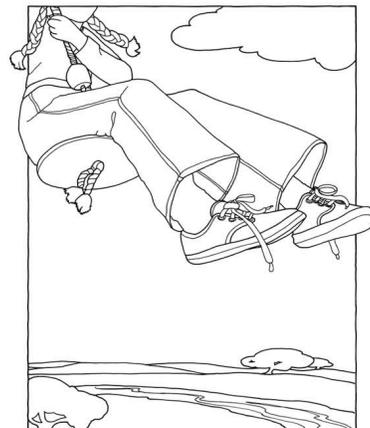
<https://firstparish.info/events/discovering-our-spiritual-strengths-going-deeper-with-prayer-meditation-and-reflection/>

We hope participants can pick up their copy of the book at First Parish by September 15 and dip their toes into the waters before the first gathering. We realize that may not work out logistically, due to the extra week before Ingathering, but we can hope.

There will be an air filter in the Parlor. Masks will be optional, but people are highly encouraged to wear one if they want to. Please email STAR@firstparish.info with any questions.

Welcome Back to RE

Whether you have been attending First Parish for years or are brand new, please know that you are most welcome! Our Religious Education team, led by RE Director Tina Schultz, is connecting with volunteer teachers,



reviewing interesting lessons, and collaborating with our new Nursery School tenant, the Montessori Children's House of Arlington.

At this time we ask that children over the age of three stay masked inside the church campus. Masks can be removed outdoors. Our safety protocols will continue to be reviewed as we move forward.

Our Nursery will be open for babies and toddlers through the age of three. More information about the location of the nursery and staffing will be finalized after some minor building renovations.

OWL (Our Whole Lives of Sexuality) will resume tonight in a new location, the Parlor, at 7 pm. The current class is full. Those interested in having seventh-grade children attend this wonderful program should contact tina@firstparish.info for the next session, which starts in March of 2023.

Rose Sawyer Marsh returns as our Youth Group coordinator, and she will be reaching out to teens and families with the latest updates for our high-school students.

If you are new please swing by the Membership Table at coffee hour to pick up a folder with important information about our program, including registration forms for your child. Be sure to register so you will receive our weekly e-mails with news about upcoming events and church happenings. You can also contact Tina at tina@firstparish.info to learn more about our curriculum, protocols, and ways to get connected.

Reading for Our Times

This fall Rev. Marta Flanagan will offer a STAR program called Reading for Our Times. It will meet via Zoom on three Tuesday evenings: September 27, October 25, and November 22.

The program's central question is, "How can we deal spiritually with the complex, pressing issues of our time?" The group will read and discuss three books, all available in paperback, that focus on action, meaning, and hope. Please pre-register at <https://firstparish.info/events/reading-for-our-times/>

You Can't be Neutral on a Moving Train by Howard Zinn

Is change possible? If so, where will it come from? Can we actually make a difference? How do we remain hopeful?

Howard Zinn, activist, historian, and author of *A People's History of the United States*, was a participant in and chronicler of some of the landmark struggles for racial and economic justice in the United States. In his memoir, *You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train*, Zinn reflects on more than 30 years fighting for social change, from his teenage years as a laborer in Brooklyn to teaching at Spelman College, where he emerged in the civil rights movement as a powerful voice for justice.

A bombardier in World War II, Zinn became an outspoken antiwar activist, spirited protestor, and champion of civil disobedience. Throughout his life, he was unwavering in his belief that "small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world." With a foreword by activist and scholar Keeanga-Yamahatta Taylor, this revised edition will

inspire a new generation of readers to believe that change is possible.

<https://bookshop.org/books/you-cant-be-neutral-on-a-moving-train-a-personal-history/9780807043844>

Man's Search for Meaning by Viktor Frankl

A book for finding purpose and strength in times of great despair, this has been called "one of the outstanding contributions to psychological thought" by Carl Rogers and "one of the great books of our time" by Harold Kushner.

"An enduring work of survival literature," according to the *New York Times*, Frankl's riveting account of his time in Nazi concentration camps and his insightful exploration of the human will to find meaning despite the worst adversity has offered solace and guidance to generations of readers since it was first published in 1946. As we confront an ever more complex and uncertain world, this classic work continues to inspire us to find significance in the very act of living, despite obstacles.

<https://bookshop.org/books/man-s-search-for-meaning-9780807014271>

Hope in the Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities by Rebecca Solnit

"No writer has better understood the mix of fear and possibility, peril and exuberance that's marked this new millennium," says Bill McKibben of historian and activist Rebecca Solnit, author of 18 books on feminism, history, popular power, and social change.

Hope in the Dark was written to counter the despair of radicals at a moment when they were focused on their losses and had turned their back to the victories behind them — and the unimaginable changes soon to come. Solnit makes a case for hope as a commitment to act in a world whose future remains uncertain and unknowable.

Drawing on her decades of activism and a wide reading of environmental, cultural, and political history, Solnit argues that radicals have a long, neglected history of transformative victories; that the positive consequences of our acts are not always immediately seen, directly knowable, or even measurable; and that pessimism and despair rest on an unwarranted confidence about what is going to happen next. She illuminates the darkness of 2016 in an unforgettable new edition of this classic book.

<https://bookshop.org/books/hope-in-the-dark-untold-histories-wild-possibilities-updated/9781608465767>



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The Spire

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Items may be edited for space and clarity.

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