



“WORKINGS”
A GUIDE TO FIRST PARISH
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
OF ARLINGTON
2022-2023

www.firstparish.info
630 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476
781-648-3799
office@firstparish.info

WELCOME TO FIRST PARISH!

Unitarian Universalism is a liberal religion. We believe personal experience, conscience and reason are final authorities in religion. We put religious insights to the test of our hearts and minds. We uphold the free and responsible search for truth and meaning and are not bound to any statement of belief or creed. This is a free faith bound by our aspiration to act in love.

To learn more about First Parish, visit our website at www.firstparish.info.

First Parish is a welcoming congregation, warmly and openly welcoming to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.

First Parish is a proud voluntary member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, www.uua.org.



*Please send updates to clerk@firstparish.info
or office@firstparish.info.*

Dancing chalice by Kendall Dudley.

Last Edited October 6, 2022

CONTENTS

Important Dates 2022-2023	5
Ministers & Staff	6
Getting Connected	7
The Ordained Ministry Team	8
Ministerial Contact List	9
Religious Education at First Parish	10
Infants and Toddlers	10
Pre-K to Grade 7	10
Our Whole Lives of Sexuality (OWL) and Coming of Age (Grades 7-8)	10
Youth Group (Grades 9-12)	11
For more information	11
Adults	11
Committees & Groups	12
Officers & Standing Committees	12
Officers	12
Parish Committee (governing board)	13
Denominational Affairs Committee	14
Finance Committee	14
Human Resources Committee	14
Leadership Development Committee	15
Membership Committee	15
Music Committee	16
Property Committee	17
Religious Education Committee	17
Social Justice Committee	18
Stewardship Committee	18
Trustees of Trust Funds	19
Ministry-Related Committees	20
Lay Ministry	20
Prayer Shawl Ministry	20
Wider Network of Care	20
Worship Associates	21
Committee on Shared Ministry	22
Committee on Ministry	22
VIP-C (Very Important Program Council)	22
Spiritual Growth & Mutual Support	23
Aging Well In Our Community	23
The Alliance	23

Covenant Groups	24
Jewish Connections	24
Lectio Divina	24
Meditation Group	25
Men's Group	25
Thursday Lunch Older Men's Group	25
Partnership Church Committee	26
STAR (Adult Religious Education)	26
Women's Book Group	26
Music	27
Adult Choir	27
Family Choir	27
Instrumentalists	27
Grace Notes	28
Bell Choir	28
Religious Education (a.k.a. RE)	29
Religious Education Program	29
Youth Group	29
Social Justice Working Groups	30
ArCS Cluster of Refugee Immigration Ministry	30
Blood Drives	30
Climate Action Working Group	31
Indigenous Justice Working Group (IJWG)	31
Man-Made Chili	31
UU Urban Ministry	32
Turning Outward Committees	32
Action Sunday Coordinating Committee	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Racial Justice Coordinating Committee	32
Emergent Issues Task Group	32
Practical Groups	32
Art Wall Committee	32
Ferry Beach Retreat Planners	33
Garden Tenders	33
Harvest Moon Fair Committee	34
Memorial Garden Committee	34
Property Helper Bees	34
Room Captains	34
Safer Congregations Committee	35
Safety Committee	35
Ushers	35
Zoom Tech Helpers	35

IMPORTANT DATES 2022-2023

In-Gathering Intergenerational Service, 10 a.m. (bring water from a place that was important to you this summer)	Sunday, Sept. 11
Religious Education Classes Begin, 10 a.m.	Sunday, Sept. 11
Town Day	Saturday, Sept. 17
Ferry Beach Retreat Weekend	Sept. 23-25
Music Sunday Service, 10 a.m.	November 13
Harvest Moon Fair (everybody pitches in!)	Saturday, Nov. 19
Thanksgiving Sunday Intergenerational Service, 10 a.m.	Sunday, Nov. 20
“Embracing the Darkness” Worship, 7 p.m.	Friday, Dec. 9
Candlelight Christmas Eve Services, 4pm + 6pm	Saturday, Dec. 24
Shinn Service, 10 a.m. (social justice guest speaker)	Sunday, Feb. 12
Music Sunday Service, 10 a.m.	Sunday March 12
Youth Group Service, 10 a.m.	Sunday, March 26
Easter Services. 10 a.m.	Sunday, April 9
Music Sunday Service, 10 a.m.	Sunday, May 14
Annual Meeting, noon	Sunday, May 21
Flower Communion Service, 10 a.m.	Sunday, June 11
Lay-Led Summer Services	June 18 – Sept. 4

Note: When worship is inside our meetinghouse, children stay in the sanctuary for the intergenerational services, rather than going to their religious education classes, and everyone worships together.

MINISTERS & STAFF

Rev. Marta Morris Flanagan, Lead Minister

leadminister@firstparish.info

Rev. Erica Richmond, Parish Minister

parishminister@firstparish.info

Tina Schultz, Director of Religious Education (DRE)

dre@firstparish.info

Rose Sawyer Marsh, Youth Group Coordinator

youthadvisor@firstparish.info

Rowan Wheeler, RE Assistant

Jonathan Colby, Music Director

musicdirector@firstparish.info

Kenneth Seitz, Organist/Pianist

and Director of Music, Emeritus

Sara Hidalgo, Office Manager

officemanager@firstparish.info

Rob Beatty, Administrative/Communications Associate

weekly@firstparish.info

Jose Ferraz, Sexton

To make an appointment to see one of the ministers,

Rev. Marta Flanagan, contact her at
leadminister@firstparish.info or 781-648-3799 ext. 202

Rev. Erica Richmond, contact her at
parishminister@firstparish.info or 781-648-3799 ext. 206

**The ministers are available by appointment on
Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.**

Saturdays and Sundays both ministers
prepare for and lead worship and other programing.

Mondays and Fridays they write or observe a sabbath day.

General First Parish business is handled by the office
staff. Email *office@firstparish.info*, or call 781-648-3799
during **office hours**

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm,
Thursday 12:00 pm - 7:00 pm, & Friday 10 am - 3 pm

GETTING CONNECTED

What are easy ways to connect with people here?

(1) Sign up for the **weekly e-Bulletin** that is emailed to members and friends each Thursday.

www.firstparish.info/ebulletin

Browse the “News” and “Events” sections on our website www.firstparish.info to learn about what’s happening, and **show up for anything!**

(2) Help out at the **Harvest Moon Fair**. A fun all-hands-on-deck community-building project!

(3) Come to **Alliance gatherings**, which combine a variety of programs with time to talk and eat and get to know each other, usually on one Friday evening each month.

(4) Look through the **Committees & Groups section** of this guide. Newcomers might be especially interested in the musical opportunities and the groups for spiritual growth and mutual support. If you want to go deeper, consider joining a **Covenant Group** in January.

(5) When worship is inside the meeting house, stop by the **Welcoming Table** and talk with a volunteer about your interests and what you’re looking for. Or talk with anyone who indicates they are a long-time member – most of us are happy to answer questions! Alternatively stop by the Newcomer’s page on our web site and explore.
www.firstparish.info/newcomers

How can I become an official member of First Parish?

People interested in membership are encouraged to first join a “New UU” class that is usually offered twice a year. Participants learn more about UUism, First Parish, and what membership means, as they get to know each other and explore their own spiritual paths. You don’t have to be new to UUism and you don’t have to join First Parish afterwards, though you will have that option.

One becomes an official member by “signing the book.” New members are invited to participate in an optional membership ceremony during a worship service.

To learn more, email NewUU@firstparish.info.

THE ORDAINED MINISTRY TEAM

First Parish is served by the elected leaders, volunteers, and staff. First Parish is also served by two full time ordained ministers. Both ministers preach and participate in worship services and are available for pastoral care, weddings, and memorial services.

Rev. Marta Flanagan is the Lead Minister called by a vote of the congregation in 2009 and is generally called “Marta.”

Rev. Erica Richmond is the Parish Minister hired by the Parish Committee in August 2020 and is generally called “Rev. Erica.”

They say their ministry together is grounded in “a sense of a Spirit moving within and among us, service to First Parish, and a call to work for justice, both within and beyond the walls of the meetinghouse.”

How do I reach a minister?

Both ministers are available by appointment. For personal, spiritual, and pastoral care, you may choose whichever minister with whom you would like to meet. Pastoral conversations are confidential, but the content of conversations shared with one minister may be shared with the other. You can email Marta@firstparish.info or Erica@firstparish.info. In case of emergency, please phone the church office: 781-648-3799

Who does what?

Each minister serves as the ministerial contact for various groups and committees at First Parish as well as supervisor to other staff members. Each year, the ministry team divides among themselves the responsibilities for ministry at First Parish. View the Ministerial Contact List in this booklet to view this year’s ministerial committee contacts.

What About the Committee on Ministry?

A Committee on Ministry serves as ambassador between the ministers and the congregation. The Committee on Ministry evaluates and supports the ministry working with the two ordained ministers as a team. You are welcome to give feedback and suggestions to the members of the Committee on Ministry: COM@firstparish.info

MINISTERIAL CONTACT LIST

Committees and staff have individual ministerial contacts.

Rev. Marta Flanagan (leadminister@firstparish.info):

Religious Education (RE):

Director of Religious Education (DRE)

Youth Program Coordinator

RE Committee

Youth-Adult Committee (YAC)

Music:

Director

Accompanist

Music Committee

Parish Committee:

Parish Executive Committee

Finance Committee

Trustees of Permanent Funds

Worship Associates

Ushers

Very Important Program Council (VIP-C)

Adult Programming:

STAR

Covenant Groups

Ferry Beach

Shared Ministry Committee

Human Resources

Rev. Erica Richmond (parishminister@firstparish.info):

Lay Ministry:

Leadership Development Committee (LDC)

Prayer Shawl

Wider Network of Care

Office and Building:

Office Administrator

Office Associate

Property Committees

Social Justice:

Climate Action Working Group (CAWG)

Defending Democracy

Emergent Issues

Indigenous Justice Working Group (IJWG)

Racial Justice Coordinating Committee (RJCC)

Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry

Stewardship Committee

Membership Committee

All other committees and groups may contact either minister.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT FIRST PARISH

Our religious education program (a.k.a. “RE”) supports the spiritual growth and community life of children and youth, while a separate program known as STAR provides adult religious education programs.

Infants and Toddlers

We love the sounds of babies and welcome them in our worship services. If you would prefer to worship without your small ones, we have a nursery with caring and experienced staff. People of all ages are also welcome to take advantage of the video screen in the vestry (where we have coffee hour) if they want more space to move around.

Pre-K to Grade 7

Children are encouraged to attend the first 10-15 minutes of worship services and to come to the front of the sanctuary during the Time for All Ages. Children pre-K to grade 7 then go to other parts of the building to attend a variety of RE classes led by trained volunteer teachers. Children grade 3 and younger must be delivered to their classroom and picked up at 11:30 a.m. by an adult.

Our RE program is a place where children learn and discuss liberal religious values to help them navigate life’s challenges. Adults and children together discuss the big questions of life and ponder spiritual issues. Children make friends of all ages for life, learn to care about others, and grow spiritually and emotionally. They are encouraged to take the values they learn on Sunday mornings back to their homes, schools, and playgrounds. Our hope is to raise children to act beyond the church doors with open eyes and loving hearts.

Our Whole Lives of Sexuality (OWL) and Coming of Age (Grades 7-8)

These programs help our middle-grades youth deepen their faith, put their values into practice, and think deeply about their place in the world and their aspirations for themselves and our society. OWL is led by a team of trained teachers,

while Coming of Age is a rite-of-passage course in which young people work closely with adult mentors. Both programs meet on Sunday evenings.

We do not charge for participation in most of our programs, but there is a fee for OWL and Coming of Age due to additional costs for these special programs. We also ask that families commit to consistent weekly attendance.

Youth Group (Grades 9-12)

Our large and active Youth Group helps high school youth build leadership, form supportive friendships, and serve their wider congregation and community.

Guided by our Youth Group Coordinator, Rose Sawyer-Marsh, the Youth Group is largely youth-led and youth-directed. Youth are elected to a broad range of leadership positions by their peers.

The Youth Group meets on Sunday evenings, 6:45–8:45 p.m. Each year the youth choose a social action project, alternating between local service projects and a service project to another part of the USA every two years. The Youth Group is open to youth in grades 9–12. Youth must attend a newcomers' orientation to become participants.

For more information

Talk with Director of Religious Education Tina Schultz (dre@firstparish.info) or a member of the Religious Education Committee or explore the extensive “education” section of the First Parish website at www.firstparish.info.

Adults

STAR programs enable people within and outside the First Parish community to come together to teach, explore, and share their passions with one another. Please contact STAR at star@firstparish.info if you have an idea for a program you would like to consider offering.

COMMITTEES & GROUPS

OFFICERS & STANDING COMMITTEES

The officers and standing committees, in close cooperation with the staff, conduct the basic work of the congregation.

If you might be interested in any of these positions, contact the Leadership Development Committee (LDC) at leadership@firstparish.info and/or talk with the committee's chair(s).

These positions are specified in First Parish's bylaws. Officers and members of standing committees are nominated and elected for three-year terms at the congregation's Annual Meeting each May. The LDC offers a slate of nominees. Nominations, including self-nominations, may also be made from the floor, but people are encouraged to talk with the LDC about their interests. Terms begin and end at Annual Meeting.

At other times of year, the Parish Committee may appoint an individual to a standing committee until the following Annual Meeting at the request of that committee's chair or co-chairs.

The bylaws limit individuals to two consecutive three-year terms on a standing committee unless they receive the approval of the Parish Committee for a third term. Officers and members of the Parish Committee may not serve more than two consecutive three-year terms; they become eligible for re-election at the Annual Meeting a year after their second term ends.

Officers

CLERK: Joanna Pushee (first term ends 2025)

TREASURER: Carolyn Hodges (first term ends 2024)

ASSISTANT TREASURER: Shaileen (Shay) Pokress (first term ends 2024)

AUDITOR: Pamela Linov (first term ends 2024)

MODERATOR: Woody Kay (finishing current term, ends 2023)

Parish Committee (governing board)

Meets the third Tuesday of each month, year-round with additional meetings as needed. Meetings are open to any First Parish member. The Parish Committee is also known as ParCom.

PURPOSE: To serve as the governing body of First Parish: to create parish-wide policy, hold a long-term vision, oversee and empower committees, foster new initiatives and discern priorities among them, prepare and oversee the annual budget, conduct an annual evaluation of the Ministers and overall ministry of the parish, approve non-called program staff, monitor the overall condition of the physical plant, and speak for the congregation on matters of public concern.

MEMBERSHIP: Clerk, Treasurer, and seven other individuals, all of whom must be First Parish members.

CHAIR: Sara Galantowicz (second term ends 2024)

VICE-CHAIR: Anne Quaadgras (second term ends 2025)

TREASURER: Carolyn Hodges (first 3-year term ends 2024)

CLERK: Joanna Pushee (first term ends 2025)

Celia Wcislo (first term ends 2025)

Marie Meter (second term ends 2023)

Allan Tosti (first term ends 2024)

Tom Estabrook (second term ends 2023)

Jeff Keffer (first term ends 2023)

CONTACT: Chair and Vice-Chair – ParishExec@firstparish.info

NOTE: The Executive Committee of the Parish Committee consists of the Chair, the Vice-Chair, and the Ministers as a non-voting *ex officio* members. The Executive Committee is empowered to make a variety of small and/or urgent decisions and brings larger issues to the full Parish Committee.

Denominational Affairs Committee

PURPOSE: To keep the congregation informed of UUA projects and affairs, connect with the larger UU world, connect with like-minded and like-hearted groups and individuals beyond UU, conduct an annual poll related to UUA resolutions, and nominate prospective delegates to represent First Parish at the regional and continental levels.

MEMBERSHIP: Open to all. Currently inactive.

Finance Committee

(Meets at least every other month, and more often as needed)

PURPOSE: To monitor and oversee the church's financial condition and to prepare a draft of the annual budget for approval by the Parish Committee and the church membership.

MEMBERSHIP: Must be a First Parish member; a numbers background is helpful but not essential.

Lissa McBurney (first term ends 2024)

Eric Segal (first term ends 2024)

EX OFFICIO MEMBER: Carolyn Hodges, Treasurer (first 3-year term ends 2024)

CONTACT: finance@firstparish.info

Human Resources Committee

(Meets monthly or as needed)

PURPOSE: To support the congregation and its Parish Committee in the arena of human resources, including creating and maintaining employee procedures and policies, job descriptions, clear organizational reporting lines, and hiring and termination practices (e.g., offer letters, exit interviews, and grievance process); to assist the congregation in adhering to fair compensation guidelines and providing competitive benefits in line with our budget; to assist the staff in its process to set annual goals as well as conducting annual performance reviews and feedback; and to serve as counsel to the staff and Parish Committee on the above topics.

MEMBERSHIP: Open to all; human resources experience is helpful but not essential.

Maggie Carey (third term ends 2024)

Kay Snowden (second term ends 2024)

Diane Barry (second term ends 2025)

Lauren Newton (second term ends 2025)

CONTACT: *humanresources@firstparish.info*

Leadership Development Committee

(Meets monthly, September–June)

PURPOSE: To encourage and facilitate participation in First Parish committees, support our lay leaders by promoting leadership development throughout our congregation, and nominate individuals to fill vacancies on standing committees and as parish officers prior to the Annual Meeting.

MEMBERSHIP: Open to all; past participation in one or more First Parish committees is ideal.

CHAIR: Helene Newberg (second term ends 2024)

Georgia Critsley (second term ends 2024)

Amy Fardella (second term ends 2024)

Kiki Giatis (first term ends 2024)

Julius Pereli (second term ends 2024)

CONTACT: *leadership@firstparish.info*

Membership Committee

PURPOSE: To greet and welcome newcomers to First Parish, to help them learn about our community, and to increase the congregation's awareness of the importance of welcoming newcomers and including them in the life of First Parish. To inspire those who wish to become active and involved members of First Parish and to guide them on the path to membership.

MEMBERSHIP: Open to all.

CO-CHAIRS: Susan Moore (second term ends 2023) and Jennifer Davis-Kay (first term ends 2024)

Amy Anderson (first term ends 2025)

Bonnie Zimmer (third term ends 2024)

Christian Collins (first term ends 2025)

Dianne Schaefer (first term ends 2024)

Gail Page (first term ends 2025)

Mary Cummings (first term ends 2024)

Maryanne Kirkbride (second term ends 2025)

Mary McCartney (second term ends 2024)

Rachel Lewellen (second term ends 2024)

CONTACT: *membership@firstparish.info*

Music Committee

(Meets the first Thursday of each month, September–June)

PURPOSE: To work closely with the music director and organist in creating a music program serving the mission of First Parish, to serve as a congregational liaison for music staff and a sounding board for ideas and projects, to be actively involved with equipment and instruments relating to the music program, and to coordinate music events at First Parish.

MEMBERSHIP: Open to all; a musical background is helpful but not essential.

Co-CHAIR: Alice Austin (second term ends 2024)

Co-CHAIR: Mary Lou Solliday (second term ends 2024)

James Fleming (second term ends 2024)

Amy Pohl (third term ends 2025)

ASSOCIATED STAFF: Jonathan Colby, Music Director

CONTACT: Chairs and Music Director - *music@firstparish.info*

Property Committee

(Meets the third Thursday of each month, year-round)

PURPOSE: To maintain and enhance the First Parish buildings and grounds, making the First Parish property an inviting and safe environment with minimal environmental footprint.

MEMBERSHIP: Open to all; new participants welcome.

CHAIR: John Galantowicz (first term ends 2024)

David Dreyfus (first term ends 2024)

Aaron Kitzmiller (first term ends 2024)

Kurt Vanderpile (second term ends 2024)

Greg Ruccio (first term ends 2024)

John Kloss (first term ends 2024)

Stephen M McMullin (first term ends 2025)

CONTACT: *property@firstparish.info*

Religious Education Task Force

PURPOSE: To provide oversight of and support to the RE program at First Parish.

MEMBERSHIP: Open to all.

CHAIR: Ellen Robie (third term ends 2025)

Anthony Fernandez (second term ends 2024)

Julie Garry (second term ends 2023)

Melina Vanderpile (second term ends 2024)

Sharon Jacobson (first term ends 2024)

ASSOCIATED STAFF: Tina Schultz, Director of Religious Education (DRE), and Rose Sawyer, Youth Group Coordinator, Rowan Wheeler, RE Assistant

CONTACT: Co-chairs – *re@firstparish.info*

Full committee and DRE – *recommittee@firstparish.info*

Social Justice Committee

(Meets the first Thursday of each month, September–June)

PURPOSE: To support opportunities to live our faith, both within First Parish and in the larger world; to raise funds at the annual Pie Palace, support the social justice working groups (see pages 20-21), plan the annual Shinn and Living Our Faith Services, oversee the Giving First program, and serve as a clearinghouse for social justice initiatives emerging from within and external to our congregation.

MEMBERSHIP: Open to all.

CHAIR: Alan Linov (second term ends 2025)

Linda Brown (second term ends 2025)

Mara Worle (first term ends 2024)

Ellen Leigh (first term ends 2025)

Joanne Pohl (first term ends 2025)

CONTACT: *socialjustice@firstparish.info*

Stewardship Committee

(Meets as needed)

PURPOSE: To foster a culture of stewardship at First Parish, ensure financial support of First Parish by members and friends via year-long education regarding its financial needs, and oversee the annual pledge campaign.

MEMBERSHIP: Open to all.

Rev. Erica Richmond (Ministerial Member)

Heidi Swarts (first term ends 2024)

John Anderson (first term ends 2024)

Kiki Giatis (first term ends 2024)

Sue Sheffler (second term ends 2024)

CONTACT: *stewardship@firstparish.info*

Trustees of Trust Funds

PURPOSE: The purpose of the Trust Funds is to ensure the long-term survival of First Parish. The Trustees are fiduciaries for the congregation who are guided by that purpose to manage, invest and distribute the Trust Funds, including both restricted and unrestricted monies. The primary goal for distribution of unrestricted funds is to support the capital needs of First Parish's infrastructure.

MEMBERSHIP: Trustees must be members of First Parish.

CHAIR: Annette Sawyer (first term ends 2024)

Martha Pereli (first term ends 2024)

Sue Sheffler (second term ends 2024)

Alan Schweitzer (first term ends 2024)

Phil Speare (second term ends 2024)

CONTACT: *trustees@firstparish.info*

MINISTRY-RELATED COMMITTEES

These committees share with our Ministers, Rev. Marta Flanagan and Rev. Erica Richmond, the ministries of pastoral care, worship, and discernment.

Lay Ministry

(Meets the 1st Wednesday of each month, 7 p.m.)

PURPOSE: To offer care and pastoral support to those in our congregation in a timely and effective manner, working closely with our Minister.

MEMBERSHIP: Lay Ministers are interviewed and selected by the Committee on Shared Ministry (see below). Any First Parish member who has regularly attended services for at least two years and will commit to a two-year term may apply. If you might be interested in becoming a Lay Minister, contact *sharedministry@firstparish.info*. Lay Ministers may serve three consecutive two-year terms, and must then take at least two years off before reapplying.

CHAIRS: Jerry Silberman (Second term ends 2024)

Rainer Dressler (Second term ends 2024)

Greg Ruccio (First term ends 2024)

Christa Kelleher (First term ends 2024)

Steve McMullin (First term ends 2024)

Carolyn Carlson (First terms ends 2023)

ASSOCIATED STAFF: Rev. Erica Richmond, Parish Minister

CONTACT: *layministry@firstparish.info*

Prayer Shawl Ministry

PURPOSE: To knit or crochet simple, warm shawls that are distributed by the Lay Ministers as needed.

MEMBERSHIP: New participants welcome.

CONTACT: Barbara Tosti, *prayershawl@firstparish.info*

Wider Network of Care

PURPOSE: To offer support to individuals and families in times of need, including food, rides to medical appointments, and other small gifts and services.

MEMBERSHIP: Coordinated by the Lay Ministers. All are welcome to join the network, and will be contacted if/when help is needed.

CONTACT: layministry@firstparish.info or sign up on the First Parish website at firstparish.info/lay-ministry/wider-network-of-care/

Worship Associates

(Meets on the 2nd Wednesday each month, September–June)

PURPOSE: Worship Associates help shape worship services that serve the spiritual needs of the congregation and run smoothly on a practical level, both during the program year (September–June) and during the summer (when lay people lead services). The Worship Associates work closely with the Minister and coordinate with other church staff and volunteers as needed.

MEMBERSHIP: Worship Associates are interviewed and selected by the Committee on Shared Ministry. Any First Parish member who has regularly attended services for at least two years and will commit to a two-year term may apply. If you might be interested in becoming a Worship Associate, contact sharedministry@firstparish.info. Worship Associates may serve three consecutive two-year terms and must then take at least two years off before reapplying.

CHAIR: Elizabeth Hunter (Second term ends 2024)

Loren Gomez (First term ends 2024)

Bill Licea-Kane (First term ends 2024)

David Whitford (First term ends 2023)

Ruben Hopwood (First term ends 2024)

ASSOC. STAFF: Rev. Marta Morris Flanagan, Lead Minister

CONTACT: worshipassociates@firstparish.info

Committee on Shared Ministry

PURPOSE: To oversee and support the work of the Lay Ministry and Worship Associates (see above two entries) and to conduct the application process for those wishing to become Lay Ministers or Worship Associates.

MEMBERSHIP: Members are invited and appointed by the Parish Committee. They may serve for a maximum of three two-year terms.

Cathy Modica (first term ends 2024)

ASSOCIATED STAFF: Rev. Marta Morris Flanagan, Lead Minister

CONTACT: *sharedministry@firstparish.info*

Committee on Ministry

(Meets the third Wednesday of each month, September–June)

PURPOSE: To help interpret the scope of the ministry to the congregation and interpret the scope of the congregation to the Minister, and to conduct an annual evaluation of the ministry with the Parish Committee and make recommendations regarding the ministry.

MEMBERSHIP: Members are invited and appointed by the Parish Committee for a three-year term. They may serve for no more than two consecutive terms.

CHAIR: Tina Silberman (First term ends 2024)

Elizabeth Hunter (Second term ends 2023)

Marc Jacobson (First term ends 2025)

Julius Pereli (Second term ends 2025)

Ebonié Smith-Cooper (First term ends 2024)

Andrea Winslow (First term ends 2025)

ASSOCIATED STAFF: Rev. Marta Morris Flanagan, Lead Minister & Rev. Erica Richmond, Parish Minister

CONTACT: *com@firstparish.info*

VIP-C (Very Important Program Council)

PURPOSE: To support program committee chairs/co-chairs in church knowledge, and creation of opportunities to be with one another.

MEMBERSHIP: First Parish committee chairs/co-chairs

CONTACT: VIP-C@firstparish.info

SPIRITUAL GROWTH & MUTUAL SUPPORT

These groups help adults deepen their spiritual journeys and their relationships with others. All of them welcome new participants who share their interests.

Aging Well In Our Community

(Meets online the 4th Thurs. of each month, 10 a.m.–noon, September–June)

Purpose: To foster engagement and build community among women over fifty who wish to explore themes related to planning and consciously living out our later years. Some meetings have guest speakers; others include small-group or large-group conversations.

MEMBERSHIP: Open to all women over fifty; new participants welcome.

CONTACT: agingwell@firstparish.info

The Alliance

(Alliance events are typically on Friday evenings while Alliance business meetings are typically on Sunday mornings before the service)

PURPOSE: To provide occasions for First Parish women to meet for fellowship, deepen their spiritual lives, and engage in common service. We support the programs of the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation, the Unitarian Universalist Association, and other organizations devoted to helping women and families through difficult transitions.

MEMBERSHIP: Open to all women at First Parish; new participants welcome. Alliance events are open to all, men as well as women.

CONTACT: Nina Duncan (President), Lisa Heisterkamp Davis (Vice-president), Robbie Rinearson (Secretary), Kay Snowden (Treasurer), Sharen Leonard (Communications), alliance@firstparish.info

Covenant Groups

(Meet monthly throughout the year)

Purpose: To provide an opportunity to get to know other people at a deeper level, in a consistent small group, while discussing topics that explore our spiritual paths as informed by life experience.

MEMBERSHIP: Recruitment of new members occurs each fall, with groups beginning in January. Groups are limited to nine members, who are expected to commit to attend for a year. Each covenant group has a convener and the conveners meet with each other monthly.

CONTACT: covenantgroups@firstparish.info

Jewish Connections

PURPOSE: To bring opportunities for Jewish learning, ritual, celebration, gatherings, and perspectives to our community through worship, study, and conversation. We host a potluck Seder for Passover, a Latke Party for Hanukkah, and Tashlich for Rosh Hashanah most years.

MEMBERSHIP: New participants welcome.

CONTACT: jewishconnections@firstparish.info

Lectio Divina

(Meets online Tuesdays, 7–8 a.m. and Wednesdays 9-10 a.m. and Thursdays, 8–9 a.m.)

PURPOSE: To engage in a spiritual practice of reading and listening, lingering with, and sharing personal responses to selected biblical texts. Diverse responses to the text provide new insights and help participants develop their spiritual lives and set intentions for their daily lives.

MEMBERSHIP: Sign up to participate Tuesday or Wednesday online at firstparish.info/adult-education/lectio-divina Or stop by the parlor to participate Thursdays

CONTACT: Rev. Marta Flanagan, minister@firstparish.info

Meditation Group

(Drop-in group meets online Sundays 9-9:30 a.m., and online and in-person Mondays, 6-6:30 p.m. for silent meditation)

PURPOSE: To provide opportunities for Buddhist meditation, support, and discussion.

MEMBERSHIP: Use the email below to receive a participation link on Zoom

CONTACT: Monique Chaplain, meditation@firstparish.info

Men's Group

(This group meets online every other Sunday at 7pm)

PURPOSE: To offer a place of fellowship, encouragement, and creative connection for First Parish men of all ages and backgrounds.

MEMBERSHIP: Open to all interested men; new participants welcome.

CONTACT: David Dreyfus, mensgroup@firstparish.info

Thursday Lunch Older Men's Group

PURPOSE: To offer a monthly fellowship gathering for older men, aimed at reinforcing camaraderie and discussing topics of general interest. Meetings are at noon every Thursday online during the pandemic and on the first Thursday of each month, with a brown-bag lunch when meeting in person is deemed safe once more.

MEMBERSHIP: Open to all older men; new participants welcome. Email the address below for the link to participate

CONTACT: oldermen@firstparish.info

Partnership Church Committee

PURPOSE: To nurture and strengthen the ongoing relationship between First Parish and the Unitarian church in Gagy, Transylvania, Romania, via frequent communication, cultural exchanges, and visits.

MEMBERSHIP: New participants welcome.

CONTACT: Maureen Dolan and Michael Friedman,
partnerchurch@firstparish.info

STAR (Adult Religious Education)

PURPOSE: To offer adult education programs that help people within and outside the First Parish community come together to teach, explore, and share their passions with one another.

MEMBERSHIP: New program leaders and STAR organizers are welcome. Please contact STAR if you have an idea for a program you would like to consider offering.

CONTACT: Steph Miserlis (Chair), *star@firstparish.info*

Women's Book Group

(Meets the First Thursday of each month, 7:15–9 p.m.)

PURPOSE: To read and discuss interesting books with other First Parish women.

MEMBERSHIP: Open to all women; new participants welcome.

CONTACT: Jean Nagle (Coordinator),
womensbookgroup@firstparish.info

MUSIC

Singers and instrumentalists – members of our congregation – provide music at most Sunday worship services under the direction of our Music Director, Jonathan Colby.

New singers and instrumentalists are welcome!

Adult Choir

(Rehearses Thursdays, 7-8 p.m., and many Sundays, 9 a.m., September–June)

PURPOSE: The Adult Choir, our church's most active musical ensemble, sings during most Sunday services during the program year.

MEMBERSHIP: New choir members, grade 8 through adult, are welcome throughout the year. Please also contact Jonathan if you would like to sing occasionally for special services.

ASSOCIATED STAFF: Jonathan Colby, Music Director, and Kenneth Seitz, Organist/Pianist and Music Director Emeritus

CONTACT: Jonathan Colby, Music Director,
jonathan@firstparish.info

Family Choir

PURPOSE: To provide musical opportunities for parents, children and relatives with group singing and to provide music at a few worship services a year.

MEMBERSHIP: Parents/Guardians, Children & Relatives

CONTACT: Jonathan Colby, Music Director,
jonathan@firstparish.info

Instrumentalists

PURPOSE: To provide instrumental music during worship services, and to give instrumentalists in our congregation an opportunity to share their talents with the First Parish

community. Instrumentalists play in a variety of large and small groups, depending on their interests.

MEMBERSHIP: New instrumentalists, grade 8 through adult, are welcome throughout the year. Please contact Jonathan if you are interested in contributing to a service with instrumental music.

CONTACT: Jonathan Colby, Music Director,
jonathan@firstparish.info

Grace Notes

(Rehearses on the fourth Wednesday of each month, 7:30-8:30 p.m.)

PURPOSE: To bring the gift of music to people who are ill, recuperating, or confined at home, an assisted living facility, or hospice care. An *a cappella* group working in conjunction with Lay Ministry, Grace Notes sings for First Parish members who are unable to attend services and occasionally for their relatives or friends.

MEMBERSHIP: Grace Notes periodically accepts new members, who must be able to blend their voices with others and sing one part while others are singing another part.

CONTACT: To request a visit from Grace Notes or inquire about joining, email its director, Cheri Minton, at gracenotes@firstparish.info

Bell Choir

(Rehearses Thursdays, 8pm-9pm)

PURPOSE: To provide musical opportunities for members interested in hand chime ringing. The ensemble performs at 2-3 services a year. Open to all interested in learning about bell ringing. Some musical experience is suggested.

CONTACT: ringers@firstparish.info

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (A.K.A. RE)

Volunteers (adults and youth) support spiritual growth and community life with the guidance of our Director of Religious Education, Tina Schultz.

Religious Education Program

Our RE program welcomes children in grades Pre-K through 7 for Sunday morning sessions, while Our Whole Lives of Sexuality (OWL) (grades 7–8) and Coming of Age (grade 8) meet on Sunday evenings.

Our year is divided into three semesters during the program year, with each class led by at least two adults or youth. New teachers are paired with veterans, and all teachers receive ongoing support through orientation sessions and workshops.

Since we are a collaborative program, run primarily by volunteers, we encourage adults in our congregation to contribute their time and energy to support and enhance our Sunday morning and evening programs. Here are some ways you can help:

- Assist with a One-Room Sunday School
- Co-teach a grade during one of our three teaching terms
- Offer to be a substitute teacher
- Share your skills as a musician, artist, baker, storyteller, or field trip driver, as often as you can
- Become a mentor for our Coming of Age program
- Lead an intergenerational story in worship
- Volunteer to help in the RE Office with administrative needs

CONTACT: Tina Schultz, Director of Religious Education, dre@firstparish.info

Youth Group

(Meets Sunday evenings, 6:45–8:45 p.m.)

Adults assist the Youth Group as advisors (work regularly with the youth), friends (participate in more occasional events), and members of the Youth-Adult Committee (YAC).

Adults interested in any of these roles must apply to the Youth Program Coordinator.

CONTACT: Rose Sawyer Marsh, Youth Program Coordinator, youthadvisor@firstparish.info

SOCIAL JUSTICE WORKING GROUPS

The Social Justice Committee (SJC) sponsors and supports a variety of working groups that help fulfill First Parish's mission of challenging the excesses and injustices of our time.

New participants are welcome to join any of these working groups.

Working groups are created by groups of people who share an interest. If you have a group of people who want to work together on another issue, contact the SJC at socialjustice@firstparish.info.

ArCS Cluster of Refugee Immigration Ministry

PURPOSE: To provide practical, helpful assistance to local asylum-seekers whom we get to know personally.

First Parish is a founder and supporting member of the ArCS Cluster, an interfaith and GLBT-friendly network of volunteers in Arlington, Cambridge, and Somerville. New participants are always welcome. See our website at www.ArCSCluster.org.

CONTACT: Eric Segal, arcscluster@firstparish.info

Blood Drives

(Held six times a year)

Purpose: To coordinate six blood drives each year and to educate the community about the importance of donation.

CONTACT: John Hodges, blooddrive@firstparish.info

Climate Action Working Group

PURPOSE: To take local actions to move the world towards a just and sustainable future in the face of climate change.

Chair: Alan Linov

Members: Bill Gardner, Peggy Gardner, Maryglenn Vincens, Anne Goodwin, John Anderrson, Anita Wolfe, Adam MacNeil

CONTACT: Alan Linov, Anne Goodwin

climateaction@firstparish.info

Indigenous Justice Working Group (IJWG)

(Meets the fourth Monday of each month at 8pm, September-June)

PURPOSE: To explore First Parish's relationship to the grave injustices experienced by the Indigenous people of Massachusetts, from being displaced from their homes centuries ago to the vast health and social inequities today. Members of this Social Justice Working Group will seek truth and raise ideas about how we at First Parish might learn about, acknowledge, and confront these injustices in order to heal and move forward together toward a more just future.

MEMBERSHIP: Ellen Leigh (Chair), Jennifer Davis-Kay, Elizabeth Hunter, Tom Estabrook, Annie Homza, and Rev. Erica Richmond

CONTACT: *IJWG@firstparish.info* with questions, ideas, or interest in joining us

Man-Made Chili

(Cooks on and before Arlington's Town Day each September)

Purpose: To raise spirits and money by making chili for Arlington's Town Day.

MEMBERSHIP: All he/him/hises welcome.

CONTACT: David Desjardins, Aaron Kitzmiller, and Greg Ruccio, *manmadechili@firstparish.info*

UU Urban Ministry

PURPOSE: To participate in volunteer projects such as offering assistance to Roxbury non-profits, academic coaching of youth, and supporting the job readiness of survivors of domestic violence.

CONTACT: Lois Fine & Maryglenn Vincens,
urbanministry@firstparish.info

TURNING OUTWARD COMMITTEES

These committees support the congregation in living our faith in the world beyond our walls.

Racial Justice Coordinating Committee

PURPOSE: To identify and support activities that promote racial justice both within the First Parish community and in the broader world.

MEMBERSHIP: Appointed by the Parish Committee: Lois Fine, Sara Whitford, Maggie Carey, Maryglynn Vincens and Tom Estabrook.

CONTACT: racialjustice@firstparish.info

Emergent Issues Task Group

PURPOSE: To provide discernment and leadership around turning outward, especially but not only with regard to First Parish's public witness banner and emergent events.

MEMBERSHIP: Adam MacNeill, Alan Linov, Tish Miller, and Kate Tranquada

CONTACT: turningoutward@firstparish.info

PRACTICAL GROUPS

These groups do useful, practical things, and most have few or no meetings. New volunteers are always welcome!

Art Exhibition Committee

PURPOSE: To coordinate art shows in the Parlor and Narthex display window, and to host receptions.

MEMBERSHIP: New participants welcome.

CONTACT: Carol Chamberlain, John Chamberlain, Debby Lewis, Peggy Gardiner, and Steph Miserlis, at artshow@firstparish.info

Ferry Beach Retreat Planners

(Meets regularly in September, intermittently the rest of the year)

PURPOSE: To plan the annual family retreat held at the Ferry Beach Retreat in Saco, Maine, and to establish policies and practices as needed.

MEMBERSHIP: New participants welcome, including Youth Group members.

CONTACT: ferrybeach@firstparish.info

Garden Tenders

(as needed – changes with the seasons, obviously!)

Purpose: To beautify First Parish's grounds by watering and tending the gardens.

MEMBERSHIP: New participants welcome, of any age.

CONTACT: gardens@firstparish.info

Harvest Moon Fair Committee

(Meets weekly in October and November, intermittently the rest of the year)

Purpose: To organize and run the annual Harvest Moon Fair, First Parish's largest fundraiser, which occurs on the Saturday before Thanksgiving.

MEMBERSHIP: New participants welcome. Dozens of volunteers are needed to prepare for, run, and clean up after the Fair, and there's a place for everyone.

CONTACT: Aaron Kitzmiller, *fair@firstparish.info*

Memorial Garden Committee

PURPOSE: To oversee the Memorial Garden and Remembrance Corner.

MEMBERSHIP: If interested contact Barbara Tosti.

CONTACT: Barbara Tosti, *memorialgarden@firstparish.info*

Property Helper Bees

PURPOSE: To assist the Property Committee with special projects, such as raking leaves or fixing sanctuary chairs, without joining the Property Committee.

MEMBERSHIP: New participants welcome. Let us know if you would like to hear about shared work days and special projects.

CONTACT: *property@firstparish.info*

Room Captains

PURPOSE: To help keep our meeting rooms organized and "share the caring" for our spiritual home. Room captains organize a room, about 15 minutes once a week.

MEMBERSHIP: New participants welcome.

CONTACT: Clarissa Rodriguez, *roomcaptain@firstparish.info*

Safer Congregations Committee

(Meets as needed)

PURPOSE: To make thoughtful decisions about the participation of an individual in First Parish activities when there is a substantive reason to consider whether that individual might pose a threat to others.

MEMBERSHIP: Appointed by the Parish Committee. Sue Costello, Dave Deakin, Jim Ptacek, and Barbara Tosti, with Rev. Marta Flanagan as an *ex officio* member.

CONTACT: *SCC@firstparish.info*

Safety Committee

(Meets the fourth Monday of the month, September–June)

PURPOSE: To develop and monitor safe practices and emergency protocols in our building.

MEMBERSHIP: New participants welcome.

CONTACT: Bill Licea-Kane, *safety@firstparish.info*

Ushers

(Sundays, 9 a.m.–noon)

PURPOSE: To warmly welcome attendees on Sunday mornings, provide information to attendees, and help the service flow in a smooth, safe, and orderly fashion.

MEMBERSHIP: Ushers are trained and work with roughly 30 assistant ushers who help with greeting twice a year. Open to all, grade 5 through adults, introverts and extroverts. If you enjoy welcoming people, please talk with or email the usher coordinator.

CONTACT: Kate Tranquada, *ushercoordinator@firstparish.info*

Zoom Tech Helpers

PURPOSE: To help the First Parish community stay connected and supported during more intensive online times. Helpers might help facilitate Zoom during Sunday Worship, or they can be available to help individuals or groups feel more comfortable using Zoom (i.e. sound, video, installing drivers, etc.)

MEMBERSHIP: New participants welcome.

CONTACT: *TechHelp@firstparish.info*

PRACTICAL TIPS ON HOW TO DO THINGS

What is the Parish Committee and how do I contact it?

The Parish Committee (a.k.a. ParCom) is First Parish's governing board. Email questions, suggestions, or requests to ParishExec@firstparish.info. Meetings are generally on the third Tuesday of each month, 7-9 p.m., and are open to all First Parish members.

How do I make an appointment with the minister?

Email her directly. Rev. Marta Morris Flanagan at leadminister@firstparish.info or Rev. Erica Richmond at parishminister@firstparish.info

What is Realm?

Realm is First Parish's on-line directory/database and a very helpful resource. Email realm@firstparish.info to request an invitation to join Realm or get help using it.

How do I contribute a listing to the weekly E-Bulletin or the Sunday Teaser?

Fill out the form at www.firstparish.info/publish submit by Wednesday noon.

How do I request a spoken announcement during the Sunday service?

Email it to announce@firstparish.info by Wednesday noon.

How do I request a table during coffee hour?

Email table@firstparish.info by Wednesday noon.

How do I book a Zoom link/space for a First Parish meeting/event and list it on the First Parish calendar?

Fill out the form at www.firstparish.info/calendar

How do I submit an article to the Spire?

Email it to spire@firstparish.info by midnight on the last Sunday of the month.

What do I do if someone's behavior seems dangerous?

If you feel unsafe while in the building, dial 911 immediately. Or you may talk with any staff member.

What if what I want to do isn't listed here?

Email office@firstparish.info, or call 781-648-3799.