

FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF STOW & ACTON

Unitarian Universalist

Sunday, March 29, 2020

10:00 AM

Gathering

Prelude

Song of Hope

B. Hakansan
Sanghee Kim, piano

Welcome & Announcements

Ann Sadler, Board of Trustees

Call to Worship

The Rev. Walter LeFlore

Chalice Lighting

Neil Saunders

Hymn #6

Just As Long As I Have Breath

Mike Pfitzer, voice

1. Just as long as I have breath, I must answer, "Yes," to life;
though with pain I made my way, still with hope I meet each day.
If they ask what I did well, tell them I said, "Yes," to life.
2. Just as long as vision lasts, I must answer, "Yes," to truth;
in my dream and in my dark, always that elusive spark.
If they ask what I did well, tell them I said, "Yes," to truth.
3. Just as long as my heart beats, I must answer, "Yes," to love;
disappointment pierced me through, still I kept on loving you.
If they ask what I did best, tell them I said, "Yes," to love.

Sharing

Covenant and Affirmation

Joleen Trotta

Love is the spirit of this church,
and service its law.
This is our great covenant:
To dwell together in peace,
to seek the truth in love,
and to help one another.

From all that dwell below the skies
let words of love and peace arise.
Let joyful songs of praise be sung,
through every land, by every tongue.

Message for All Ages

Michelle Coté,
Director of Religious Education

Joys and Sorrows

Hector Constantzos and Ingrid Holcomb,
Lay Ministers

Prayer or Meditation

The Rev. Walter LeFlore

Hymn #295

Sing Out Praises for the Journey

4. Sing out praises for the journey, pilgrims, we, who carry on,
searchers in the soul's deep yearnings, like our forebears in their time.
We seek out the spirit's wholeness in the endless human quest.
5. Look inside, your soul's the kindling of the hearth fire pilgrims knew.
Find the spirit, always restless, find it in each mind and heart.
Touch and hold that ancient yearning, kindling for a newfound truth.
6. Stand we now upon the threshold, facing futures yet unknown.
Hearth behind us, wayside hostel built by those who knew wild roads.
Guard we e'er their sacred embers carried in our minds and hearts.

Exploring

Reading #529

The Stream of Life

by Rabindranath Tagore
Susie O'Brien

Sharing Our Gifts

Mike Pfitzer, voice

The Oneness of Everything

J. Scott
Sanghee Kim, piano

Introduction to the Offering

Ann Sadler, Board of Trustees

This month we share our weekly offering with UU Mass Action

We invite you to donate by text to (978) 310-3309;
or donate online at <https://fpc-stow-acton.org/donate>

Donations and Pledge checks may also be mailed to the church at
353 Great Road, Stow, MA 01775 or placed in the church mailbox.

Sermon

The First Shall Be Last and the Last First

The Rev. Walter LeFlore

Returning

Hymn #318

We Would Be One

1. We would be one as now we join in singing
our hymn of love, to pledge ourselves anew
to that high cause of greater understanding
of who we are, and what in us is true.
We would be one in living for each other
to show to all a new community.

2. We would be one in building for tomorrow
a nobler world than we have known today.
We would be one in searching for that meaning
which bends our hearts and points us on our way.
As one, we pledge ourselves to greater service,
with love and justice, strive to make us free.

Benediction

Sung Benediction

Peace be with you 'til we meet again!
As life lays its task before you,
keep love's banner floating o'er you.
Peace be with you 'till we meet again.

Postlude

All Things Bright and Beautiful

arr. A. L. Page
Sanghee Kim, piano



Those who are on Zoom may remain
for a virtual “coffee hour” following the postlude.
If you're in the “drive-in church”, honk and wave to each other!

Thank you to all those who helped with this service,
including our Zoom helpers Kim and Karen Kinnear, Hector Constantzos, and Ingrid Holcomb,
and to our staff, board, and other leaders.



*First Parish is a Unitarian
Universalist Association Welcoming
Congregation. We warmly welcome
gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender
people into our community.*

The Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum, Minister
Michelle Cote, Director of Religious Education
Deedee Perkins, Parish Administrator
Dr. Mike Pfitzer, Director of Music
Sanghee Kim, Organist/Pianist
Joleen Trotta, Welcoming & Membership Coordinator
Whitney Granger, Sexton
Paul Spanagel, Youth Coordinator
Janet Beatrice, External Publicity

Katy Weeks, President
Sharon Brownfield, Vice President
Lee Coopridier, Treasurer
Liz Moseley, Clerk

On the web at fpc-stow-acton.org and on Facebook.

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2020
FPC EVENTS

MARCH PLATE SHARING: UU MASS ACTION

UU Mass Action is the State Action Network for UUs in Massachusetts and is the organization that will share one half of non-pledge plate donations for the month of March. UU Mass action is one of 23 national, UU State Action Networks. UU Mass Action's mission is to organize and mobilize Unitarian Universalists across the state to confront injustice in Massachusetts.

UU Mass Action is a 501c3 organization funded by congregations, individuals and grant foundations. This is our UU shared, State Action Network working for justice.

UU Mass Action serves in a leadership capacity in the Mass Power Forward Coalition (Climate Justice and Action), the Safe Communities Coalition (Immigrant Justice) and Massachusetts Against Solitary Confinement (Criminal Justice Reform).

In addition, UU Mass Action is a voting member of the Raise Up Mass Coalition (Economic Justice) and a member of the Criminal Justice Reform Coalition.

UU Mass Action works, along with coalition partners, to develop the strategy to achieve campaign goals and to engage UUs in the campaigns that fight oppression here in Massachusetts.

NO Adult Choir Rehearsal

VIRTUAL Coffee Hour

News About Our Religious Education Program

There is a family worship packet being sent out to all families today, Friday, March 27. This week the packet focuses on having fun! In addition we will offer a zoom RE session each Monday at 11 am. This session will be geared for children in grades K-5. The zoom link will be sent out each week. .

Our 6-8th graders are invited to join Paul Spanagel, our youth coordinator, for a zoom gathering each Sunday from 6:30-7. The link will be sent out soon.

Our Coming of Age program meets via zoom this Sunday, March 29, from 11-12:30. *This* is a mandatory meeting for all Coming of Age Youth and their mentors. This link will also be sent out to the COA group.

If you need to connect with Michelle Cote, our Director of Religious Education, her email is dre@fpc-stow-acton.org Paul Spanagel, our youth coordinator can be reached at youth@fpc-stow-acton.org

THE WEEK AT CHURCH~MARCH 29-APRIL 4, 2020

With the regular calendar items, below are Adult Programs available at FPC for the coming week. Most of these are available online. Please email the host to register and receive the zoom access link or further details. **A description of each Adult Program follows at the end of this calendar.**

Monday, March 30: No events scheduled

Tuesday, March 31

- FPC Happy Hour 7:00 PM Hosted by Hector Constantzos
Email: hconstantzos@gmail.com

Wednesday, April 1

- Membership Meeting, 7:00pm, Hosted by Hector Constantzos
Email: hconstantzos@gmail.com
- Meditation Group, 7:30 PM, Hosted by Joseph Stadolnik
Email: jhstadolnik@gmail.com

Thursday, April 2

- Staff Meeting Thursday 9:30am ZOOM
- Stress Mgmt Techniques for Challenging Times, Noon, Hosted by Ilene Rudman,
Email: irudman@aol.com
- Peace Vigil, 5:00 PM on the Stow Common, Hosted by Neil Saunders, Email:
neilsaund@verizon.net
- SGM Facilitators Thursday 6:00pm, ZOOM, Hosted by Karen Kinnear

Friday, April 3

- *No Bridge*
- *No Guest Table*
- Game Night, 7:00 PM, Hosted by Ken Langer, Email: klangerdude@gmail.com

Saturday, April 4

- Spiritual Conversations thru Poetry, 10:00 AM, Hosted by Ilene Rudman, Email:
irudman@aol.com

Sunday, April 5

- Hallelujah: The Bible & Handel's Messiah, 7:00 PM, Hosted by Lisa Fagerstrom,
Email: lfager@aol.com

ADULT PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

FPC Happy Hour: Bring your beer, wine, water, tea, or whatever your favorite drink is. Let's relax and chat about anything.

Meditation Group: A silent meditation of 10 min of sitting, 10 min of walking, and 30 min of sitting. A short conversation will follow.

Stress Mgmt Techniques for Challenging Times: The group will be 45 minutes, with an opportunity to briefly check-in on how things are going in general and related to a specific topic. Ilene will lead the group in various stress reduction techniques (depending on the need) such as guided visualizations, breathing exercises, affirmations and cognitive restructuring. This is NOT a therapy group.

Peace Vigil: This is still done on Stow Common, but social distancing guidelines are followed. Come witness for peace and socialize with fellow FPCers. Watch FPC Announce for more details.

Game Night: We, uh, gotchu an offa you can't refuse!!! Join Ken Langer for an online Zoom game of Mafia. Mafia is a social deduction game that is best played in large groups. The Mafia try to eliminate the Citizens of a small town before they can be caught and eliminated. We need 6-16 players. The game should not last more than an hour.

Spiritual Conversations thru Poetry: Join Ilene Rudman in a spiritual conversation using poetry as a springboard for reflection, possible insight and a connection with the divine. No experience reading poetry is required! We will be engaged with each other through the sharing of a poem –reading it, listening to it being read, letting it take us to possible new insights, and responding. Please RSVP to Ilene, who will send you the poem and the format that will be used. THIS DOES NOT REPLACE THE TWICE MONTHLY PROGRAM currently held on Sundays via Zoom at 11:30.

Hallelujah: The Bible & Handel's Messiah: Let's review the link between Handel's Messiah and the Bible with Lisa Fagerstrom.

SUNDAY APRIL 5, 2020 Worship 10AM "LIBERATING THE SPIRIT" The Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

Sanctuary closed. Virtual Service by Zoom or at 107.7 FM in the FPC parking lot.

In this time of social distancing, the words of the hymn "Die Gedanken Sind Frei" still ring true: "My thoughts are as free as wind o'er the ocean..." This service will explore spiritual practices that can help in these times of isolation.

The order of service will be posted on the website for download by the Friday evening before the service.

Zoom online video: <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/754049953>
Join by phone: 646-876-9923, Meeting ID: 754 049 953

Please note that the April 1 Saturday morning breakfast has been cancelled.
Our next planned breakfast will be May 16:
“Lost Treasures of the North High Jungle of Peru”

MEMORY GARDEN

Dear FPC Community,

Below you will find a link to a brief survey to determine the extent of our congregation's interest in creating a Memory Garden or Wall here at FPC. Since last fall a committee has been researching what would be involved and presented this information last Sunday between services. That information is also included for you below as an attachment.

Background

The idea of such a garden or wall is to have a sacred place where ashes of our congregants can be scattered or planted (or even placed in a Columbarium—a place where ashes can be sealed and stored), or even just a spot where some simple memorial might be placed. Many Unitarian-Universalist and other denominational churches have such gardens or walls. They can be as simple as having one's ashes scattered in a garden plot and a brick with the names and dates of the person placed either on a brick along a path wall or on a plaque on a wall or even in a Columbarium.

Our research to date suggests that there would be no need for a capital campaign. Instead, interested persons could reserve a brick or plaque and these funds could be used to move the project forward.

Slide Presentation Link

fpc-stow-acton.org/document/fpc-memorial-garden

Survey Link

docs.google.com/forms/d/1YKWtDefC8etHhskGnLO7iBx414CFE0k28h3UoOL7UIs

In Community,

Ilene H. Rudman,
for the Memorial Garden Committee

ANNUAL REPORTS DUE THURSDAY, APRIL 16

Annual Reports are due by Thursday April 16 this year.

Email your report to me at katy@brightleafenergy.com , with the words: "FPC Annual Report [Title of your report]" in the subject line of your email.

- Who does this? Committee Chairs, certain staff and Officers
- What is it? A report of what your committee did over the past year. Many reports are about one page long, but if your group did a lot of work, we'd be more than happy to read about it!
- How to send it? Write the report in a Word (or other text-style) document and attach the file to your email. Again, send the report to katy@brightleafenergy.com _with the report title in the subject line.

Thank you, Katy Weeks for the Board of Trustees

We Need Your Help with FPC's Summer Services

Is there something that you're particularly passionate about? Something that you think your fellow FPC members and friends would really like to learn more about at one of our summer services? Would you be interested in leading such a service? If so, the Worship Committee wants to hear from you. We have just started planning our services this summer and have settled upon the theme of Passion. If you have an idea for a summer service that focuses on something you feel strongly about and you think deserves a wider audience, please let us know. Also, is there someone in our congregation who you think has just such an idea that you believe we would all benefit from hearing? If so, we are inviting you to nominate that person, especially if you think they may be hesitant to come forward themselves.

The Worship Committee is available to help shape any of these services, so please contact one of us if you have an idea, you would like to suggest someone, or you would just like more information:

Neil Saunders, Chair (neilsaund@verizon.net)

Lisa Martino (griffmomma@gmail.com)

Kevin O'Brien (kjobrien2@verizon.net)

Rick Gentilman (rgentilman1@aol.com)

Aimee Ledwell (redshoegirl@gmail.com)

Meg Costello (margaretmcostello@gmail.com)

Trish Guditz (guditz@verizon.net)

Rev. Cindy Landrum (minister@fpc-stow-acton.org)

The Worship Committee needs your help to provide a meaningful program for this year's summer services, and we thank you, in advance, for your consideration and support. We can't do it without you!



The 2020 FPC Auction – The Roaring Twenties
Reset your calendar
In the 1920s' spirit of optimism,
the Spring Auction is rescheduled for
May 16!

The spring auction remains the biggest church fundraiser of the year. In keeping with the latest recommendations to social distance, we have moved the auction to May 16th. Let's hope that we can all gather together at that time for a fun night at FPC! In the meantime, we will continue our planning!

Donors: We will continue to accept donations through April 5th. How about using some of this down time to come up with some auction donations ideas? No matter when we hold the auction, and whether in-person or on-line, we will still need lots of donations. You can sign up at the FPC Auction Site - <https://fpc-stow-acton.org/article/fpc-auction-2020-roaring-twenties>. Need an idea? Contact the auction committee!

Food and Volunteers: For the time being, we are not asking for food donations and volunteers.

As the date draws nearer and we have a better idea of how this event will unfold, we will put out a new call for help in these areas.

And just for fun, some 1920s trivia. At the Antwerp, Belgium Olympics, Finland dominated the long distance running events. The Flying Finns led by Paavo Nurmi and Hannes Kolehmainen, won gold medals in the 10,000 meter run, marathon, individual cross-country, and team cross-country events.

We refuse to be killjoys! Plan on having a Roaring Good Time come May 16th!
The Auction Committee



ANNOUNCING A MAJOR NEW FPC FUNDRAISING EVENT...

**The Assabet Craft Beer & Food Truck Festival
at First Parish Church of Stow & Acton**

**Saturday, May 30, 2020 12 noon to 4pm
(rain or shine)**

Craft brews from Amory's Tomb Brewing (Maynard), Bull Spit Brewing (Lancaster), Ground Effect Brewing (Hudson), and Saltbox Kitchen Brewery (Concord) plus cider, wine, and soft drinks
Food from Meat@Slim's (BBQ), PRKD Pizza, and Zapata (Mexican, including gluten-free) Desserts by our very own congregation
Music provided by Polarized Guru, the Parish Jazz Band, and Snow Crows
Children's games (including cornhole) and face painting
Admission \$5 per person (free for children 12 and under) with drink tickets \$5 each

We still need lots of help with set-up, admission entry, guest relations, parking, desserts/coffee making, and cleanup. And as our way of saying thank you, we have a special gift for everyone who signs up. You can also contact any of the four organizers: Neil Saunders, Hector Constantzos, Dave Sansone, and Scott Feldhusen.
Cheers!