

FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF STOW & ACTON

Unitarian Universalist



January 11, 2026
The War on Empathy

**The Rev. Dr. Cynthia L.
Landrum**
Minister

Yaakov Trek Reef
Intern Minister

**Rayla D.
Baldwin-Mattson**
Director of Religious
Education

Meg Rivers-Wright
Parish Administrator

Chris Hossfeld
Music Director

Trevor Berens
Accompanist

Bradshaw Mattson
Tech Assistant

Mike Silkonis
Sexton

Justin Marble
Nursery Care Coordinator

Brendon Chetwynd
President

Trisha Guditz
Vice President

Bill Froberg
Treasurer

Johanna Pyle
Clerk

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

Large print orders of service and hymnals are available from an usher.
Assisted Listening Devices are available when worship is in the Sanctuary.

FPC currently has a masks-optional policy throughout the church. In the Sanctuary, several back rows with accessible seating are "mask-required."

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

January 11, 2026: 10:00 a.m.

Gathering

Prelude

"Traumerei"
Robert Schumann

Trevor Berens
Accompanist

Welcome & Announcements

Karen Kinnear,
Small Group Ministry Coordinator

Land Acknowledgement

Introit

"We'll Be Known By Our Love"

FPC Choir
Chris Hossfeld
Music Director

When the winds around you blow, take my hand.
When the raging waters flow, I'll help you to land,
and we'll go together into the great unknown.
Shelter for each other, compassion as our home
and we'll be known by our love.

When you're fearful when you're blue, don't despair.
When the world gives up on you, I'll be there,
and we'll go together into the great unknown.
Shelter for each other, compassion as our home
and we'll be known by our love.

Opening Words

"The Longing for Something More"
by Gretchen Haley Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

Chalice Lighting

"Searching for Justice and Hope"
by Summer Albayati

*** Hymn**

"We Shall Be Known"
MaMuse

Centering

*** Covenant and Affirmation**

Greet Your Neighbor

A Time for All Ages

Rayla D. Baldwin-Mattson
Director of Religious Education

** Please rise in body or in spirit*

Going Forth With the Light “Our Love Surrounds You”
Chris Hossfeld

Sing Out Love

Joys and Sorrows

Ingrid Holcomb, Lay Minister

Joys and Sorrows is a time for the things on our hearts and minds to be heard by the gathered community. If you would like a follow-up call by a lay minister or the minister, email caring@fpc-stow-acton.org.

Prayer or Meditation

Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

In Words

“For Renee Nicole Good
Killed by I.C.E. on January 7, 2026”
by Amanda Gorman

In Silence

In Song

“Carry Me”

Sing Out Love

Exploring

Reading

“Empathy Is a Choice We Make”
by Leslie Jamison

Sharing Our Gifts

This month we share our weekly offering with **Bridges to Malawi**.
You may donate by check made out to First Parish Church,
online at fpc-stow-acton.org/donate, or text (978) 310-3309.

Anthem

“I Choose Love”
Mark A. Miller

FPC Choir

In the midst of pain, I choose love.
In the midst of pain,
sorrow falling down like rain,
I await the sun again, I choose love.

When my world falls down, I will rise.
When my world falls down,
explanations can't be found,
I will climb to holy ground, I will rise.

In the midst of war, I choose peace.
In the midst of war, hate and anger
keeping score, I will seek the good once
more, I choose peace.

In the midst of pain, I choose love.
In the midst of pain,
sorrow falling down like rain,
I await the sun again, I choose love.

Sermon

“The War on Empathy”

Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

Returning

*** Hymn #1021**

“Lean on Me”

Singing the Journey

* **Benediction** "Each of Us Ministers to a Weary World"
by Darcy Roake Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

* **Closing Song**

Postlude

"Choral"
Somei Satoh

Trevor Berens

* * *

Thank you to:

Kim Kinnear, Zoom Host
Rebecca and John MacNeill, Ushers
Our Coffee Hour Host
Our staff and leadership

To our visitors, thank you for coming! ♥

We hope you found what you're looking for and that you'll return. Here's how to keep connecting with our people and programs:

- Fill out a Visitor Card in your pew or online (QR code)
- Watch these pages for newcomer events:
 - o **Newcomer Coffees** - Meet the minister and other newcomers
 - o **UU Journey classes** - Learn about UU history, spirituality, mission, and traditions
- Check out our website, www.fpc-stow-acton.org
There is so much happening at FPC! Our homepage and "Church Life" tab detail our events and programs.
- Subscribe to our e-newsletters & email groups (QR code)



Visitor Card



E-Newsletters

FPC Plate Sharing for January



Bridges to Malawi (bridgestomalawi.org) is a nonprofit organization partnering American health care professionals and extraordinary Malawians, making a difference in one of the poorest countries of the world, and is dedicated to bettering the lives of the people of Malawi through multiple service projects, such as medical, agricultural and livestock, and electricity projects. FPC's liaison to Bridges to Malawi, Annadelia Ruminski, traveled to Malawi during high school with founder Dr. Brian Lisse and other doctors on the annual medical mission trip. Annadelia hopes to provide an opportunity for FPC members and friends to donate supplies that BTM will bring to Malawi in April 2026.

** Please rise in body or in spirit*

⇒ After the Service ⇐

Coffee Hour - Fellowship Hall

Stewardship Table, Southeast India Project, Small Group Ministry Registration

Elder/Memory Care Peer Support Group, Parlor

Are you or your family approaching, dealing with, or recovering from an elder/memory care crisis? It's exhausting and draining. There are all kinds of legal, financial, and caregiving or care-finding challenges. It can be overwhelming and lonely. And that's not to mention the grief. Join us for the FPC Peer-to-Peer Support Group for anyone dealing with elder/memory care issues for a loved one. We're here to support each other on this difficult journey and share resources.

Newcomer Tea, Stewardship Committee, Community Room

As newcomers or new members to FPC, it is natural to have some questions about FPC and how it works. Questions such as:

- Who runs FPC?
- How do I find out what's happening here?
- How can I find people's phone numbers?
- What is this Stewardship thing?
- How can I get to know people at FPC?
- What does the merger mean?
- What does it mean to become a Member?

...And many others.

The Stewardship Committee would like to invite you to a Newcomer's Tea, right after service in the Community Room. We will be there to answer all your questions, have some tea or coffee and snacks, and get to know you.

OWL Gr. 4-6 Session 3, 12 – 2pm, Classroom 5, lower level

A Ritual for Resisting Well, 5pm, Sanctuary & Online



In this time of death and violence at home and abroad, particularly the deaths at the hands of ICE, we gather together in resistance and resilience. This will be a time for sharing our grief and our gratitude, with a ritual curated by Intern Minister Yaakov Trek Reef, rooted in Matthew Fox's Creation Spirituality & Joanna Macy's The Work That Reconnects.

➤ Announcements ➤

Small Group Ministry (SGM) Registration 2026 is now open!

Do something for yourself this year. Get to know yourself and a small circle of 8-10 people from FPC and UCMH better through our SGM program. The groups meet monthly for two hours for a year. Trained facilitators lead discussions on topics designed to strengthen our awareness of ourselves and our connections to each other. There is deliberately no preparation; just come as you are.

We are forming new groups for the 2026 session which starts in February.

- **Please register by January 18** at fpc-stow-acton.org/sgm or at our SGM coffee hour table where SGM Facilitators can answer questions or help you to register.
- **We are looking for a couple more SGM co-facilitators.** Please let Karen Kinnear know if you are interested, want to know more, or want to recommend someone.
- **Questions?** Stop by our SGM coffee hour table or contact Karen Kinnear, SGM facilitator - sgm@fpc-stow-acton.org



Register SGM

Update from Stewardship Campaign

First, a big thank you to all who have pledged by the end of December. Pledges help us develop our budget and enable us to move forward to strengthen and build our community. To date, over 60% of our members and friends have pledged.

The next phase of our campaign is to reach out to those we haven't heard from about their hopes for this community. We will include the members and friends of UCMH who will be an integral part of forming our merged community.



As we go into this new year, let's take comfort and strength in the support of this community as we meet both the challenges and opportunities facing us.

Here's how to pledge:

- ☐ Online: At <https://tinyurl.com/pledgeFPC> or the QR code
- ☐ At coffee hour: Fill out a card at the Stewardship Table.
- ☐ Ask any member of our team to discuss your pledge with you.



Thank you for your generosity! – The FPC Stewardship Team: Andy Derr, Sharon Brownfield, Russ Hart, Peter Fiske, Ruth Lull

⇒ This Week ⇐

Resilience Practices for Social Justice Organizers -Thursday, January 15, 6-7 pm



A 6-week interactive class exploring resilience tools for social justice organizers using embodiment practices from the Alexander Technique, Somatic Experiencing, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, and tai chi. Suggested donation: \$80 to \$120 for six sessions: Jan 15, 22, 29, Feb 5, 12, 26. Use the QR code to read more about the course, its instructor, Hannah Greene, and to register.

Game Night

Friday, January 16, 7 – 9pm, Vestry

Led by Chip Beauvais. All are welcome. Feel free to bring a game or join in and play one of ours! Fun, community, and snacks.

⇒ Every Week at FPC ⇐				
Tue. 10 AM <u>Coffee and Chat</u> Town Center Park Gazebo 	Wed. 6:40 PM <u>Meditation & Reading</u> Fellowship Hall & Online 	Thu. 5 PM <u>Peace Vigil</u> Town Common in front of FPC 	Thu. 7:15 PM <u>Choir Rehearsal</u> Fellowship Hall - Join the choir! music@fpc-stow-acton.org	Fri. 1 PM <u>Bridge Playing</u> Community Room 

➤ Upcoming ➤

Line Dancing Evening - Saturday, January 24, 7 pm

Join us for a chill-busting Arts Committee-sponsored evening of line dancing led by the incomparable Paul Hughes! This will be a family-friendly event, open to all ability levels and friends from the community. Suggested donation: \$5 per person.

New Revival Coffeehouse: Kathleen Parks -

Saturday, January 31, Doors open 7:00 pm, concert at 7:30 pm



Tickets:
Kathleen Parks

Kathleen Parks is a fiddler, singer, and songwriter whose virtuosic fiddle blends and reimagines traditional and modern musical styles with boundless groove, and a playful improvisational spirit. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 on the day of the concert.



Carnival Games - Winter Games Fest at FPC

Saturday, February 28, 12-4 pm. An afternoon of indoor fun for the whole family!

🎉 Over three dozen carnival games, including...

- a life-size "whack-a-mole"
- pop bottle standup
- Plinko
- life size Tetris
- an "impossible" giant slidey puzzle
- Face painting
- stuffed animal prizes (every child goes home with at least 1 prize)
- game difficulty levels ranging from age 2 to adults young at heart
- many life size wooden games built by FPC members and youth!

🎉 Popcorn, cookies, lemonade, and more will be available for purchase.

Admission is free and carnival game tickets are \$1 each.

1 ticket per game • 2 tickets for face painting

Parent/guardian supervision is required during the carnival games.

Email dre@fpc-stow-acton.org with any questions about the event.