

Land Acknowledgement

- ✦ We would like to acknowledge that this service is being held by a community that gathers on the stolen traditional lands of the Massachusetts, Nipmuc, Pawtucket, and Wampanoag People.
- ✦ We pay respect to those Indigenous Peoples who lost their lives in the colonization of this land and recognize that these Indigenous tribes are still today facing violations of sovereignty, territory, and water.
- ✦ We also give thanks for the Earth we walk upon, the waters, the lifegiving plants, and all the Earth's creatures, as well as the winds, sun, moon, and stars.
- ✦ We recognize that this is just a first step in moving toward right relationship with Native peoples and healing of the Earth.



How to Connect with First Parish Church:

Sign our visitor log at tinyurl.com/visitfpc or scan the QR code:
We'll send you information on request.



Come to Sunday's 10 am service and 11 am social hour, in person or online.

Subscribe to our publications...

The Chronicle - monthly e-newsletter

This Week at FPC - weekly e-newsletter

FPCAnnounce & FPCForum - e-mail groups

...all at <https://www.fpc-stow-acton.org/subscribe-newsletters>.

FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF STOW & ACTON

Unitarian Universalist



Sunday, December 31, 2023

The Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum
Minister

Meg Rivers-Wright
Administration and Membership

Rayla D. Baldwin-Mattson
Director of Religious Education

Chris Hossfeld
Music Director

Trevor Berens
Accompanist

Justin Marble
Nursery Care Coordinator

Mike Silkonis
Sexton

Janet Beatrice
External Publicity

Felix Freeman
Tech Assistant

Jenni Edgerton
President

Brendon Chetwynd
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.*

To help everyone be a part of worship in the fullest way possible,
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.
Several rows in the back of the Sanctuary are designated "mask-required."
They are a greater distance from unmasked speakers and include accessible seating.

FPC is on the web at [fpc-stow-acton.org](https://www.fpc-stow-acton.org) and on Facebook.

December 31, 2023: 10 am

Gathering

Prelude "The Skye Boat Song" Trish Woods, piano
William Ross Susan Avery, vocal

Welcome & Announcements Neil Saunders, Worship Committee Chair

Greet Your Neighbor

Opening Words "Coming Together at Year's End" Neil Saunders
by Paul Vachon

Chalice Lighting "On the Brink of a New Year" Neil Saunders
by Lois Van Leer

* **Hymn #346** *Come, Sing a Song with Me*

Centering

* **Covenant and Affirmation**
Love is the spirit of this church, From all that dwell below the skies
and service its law. let words of love and peace arise.
This is our great covenant: Let joyful songs of praise be sung.
To dwell together in peace, through every land, by every tongue.
to seek the truth in love,
and to help one another.

Time for All Ages "Celebrating Hogmanay as a" June McKnight
Child Growing up in Scotland

Joys and Sorrows Ingrid Holcomb, Lay Minister

Prayer/Meditation "Winter Blessing" Susan Avery
by Rebecca Parker Worship Committee

Exploring

Reading "The Passing of the Year" June McKnight
by Robert Service

Sharing Our Gifts

This month we share our weekly offering with **FPC Guest Table**.
You may donate with a check made out to First Parish Church,
online at <https://fpc-stow-acton.org/donate>, or text (978) 310-3309.

Offertory "Greensleeves" Trish Woods, piano
Traditional

Burning Bowl Ceremony Neil Saunders

Returning

* **Hymn #95** *There is More Love Somewhere*

* **Benediction** by Kathy McGowan Susan Avery

* **Closing Song**

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 *Auld Lang Syne* Trish Woods, piano
Robert Burns



Thank you to:
Sharon Brownfield, Zoom Host
Felix Freeman, Tech Assistant
Marcia Allison, Marion Scott, Ushers
Coffee Hour Hosts
Our staff and leadership

December Plate Sharing



FPC Guest Table started serving a free monthly community dinner in Fellowship Hall in November 2015. It is a sit-down meal consisting of salad, entree, and dessert. We have served anything and everything from pizza to salmon. Volunteers plan, shop, set up, clean up, prepare, and serve the meal. After dinner is served, the leftovers are put in to-go containers and given to guests to take home.

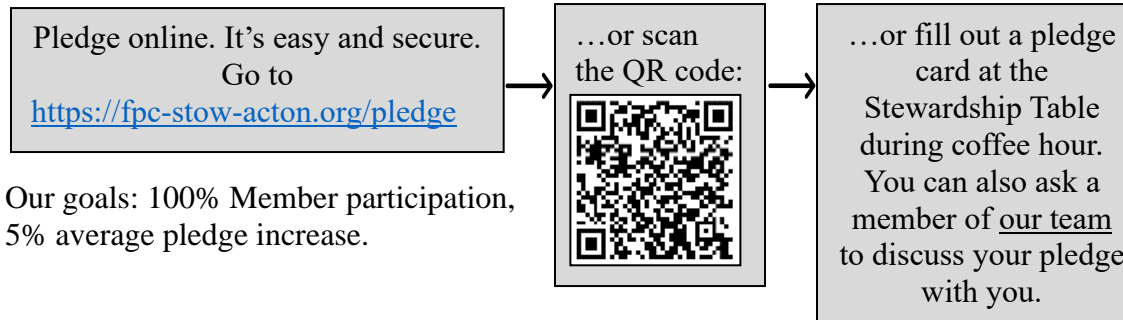
It costs about \$250 a month to put on a meal, and the largest portion of that expense is food. Our primary sources of

funding are the Stow Community Chest and the plate-share from this congregation. In addition to being a resource for those with food insecurity, we are also a resource for those who want a night off from planning and cooking a meal, and/or for those who typically dine alone in their homes. Guest Table is a welcoming community for ALL, and we invite you to come dine with us on the second Friday of every month in Fellowship Hall.

Stewardship Campaign

FPC's Stewardship campaign for our next fiscal year is underway.

Thank you so much to our members and friends who have already made pledges! In the spirit of love and thanksgiving, please join us in reaffirming your financial commitment to FPC with a stewardship pledge. Here's how:



Our goals: 100% Member participation, 5% average pledge increase.

Thank you for your generosity!

- The FPC Stewardship Team: Jenni Edgerton, Carole Feldhusen, Andy Derr, Sharon Brownfield, Russ Hart, and Rick Gentilman

Today at FPC

10 am.....**Service**, Sanctuary/online

11 am.....**Coffee Hour**, Fellowship Hall

South East India Project is collecting donations of vitamins, toothpaste, and photos on Sundays at coffee hour until Jan 5. Please see *This Week at FPC* for details.

Religious Education Update

Today, 12/31 - The DRE is off, so no RE. There will be activity packets in the back of the sanctuary for any prek-5th grade children in attendance.

Next Sunday at FPC

Jan 7, 2024, 10 AM in the Sanctuary and online

“Eckhart Tolle, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and the American Ego: How a More Conscious Activism Might Save Us”

- Kris Comment, Guest Speaker

Wisdom for approaching the growing political tensions in our country can be found in the words of New Age philosopher, Eckhart Tolle, and his predecessor, nineteenth-century Transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson. Both men shed light on the destructive nature of ego and its role in fueling societal division. Learn how their ideas might help us to envision a path toward unity and justice in our democracy through empowered, mindful action.

Kris Comment (she/her/hers) has been a member of UCMH since 2016 and serves as Vice President of their current Executive Board. She lives in Marlborough with her partner, Cindy, their three cats, and two 9-month-old mini goldendoodle puppies. Kris earned a Ph.D. in American Literature and LGBTQ+ studies at the University of Maryland in 2002 and currently teaches part-time at Framingham State University. She fell in love with the Transcendentalists as an undergraduate and continues to find her greatest spiritual inspiration in literature.

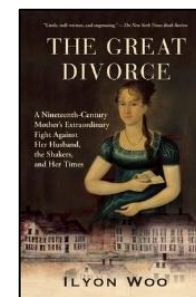


This Week at FPC: Jan. 1-6, 2024

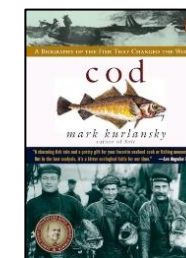
1	JAN, MON	● All day	New Year's Day
2	JAN, TUE	● 10 – 11am	Coffee & Chat (Gazebo)
		● 7 – 8pm	Book Group (online)
3	JAN, WED	● 8am – 1pm	AssabetFoodCoop (Vestry)
		● 6:40 – 8:45pm	Meditation (Fellowship Hall & online)
		● 7 – 9pm	SGM Facilitators Meeting (Community Room)
4	JAN, THU	● 5 – 6pm	Peace Vigil (outside)
		● 6 – 7pm	Social Justice Group meeting (Community Room)
		● 7:15 – 9pm	Choir Practice (Hall)
5	JAN, FRI	● 1 – 3:30pm	Bridge Group (Community Rm)

FPC Upcoming Events

Tue 1/2 **FPC Book Group** 7 pm, online
 The New Year is fast approaching and so is the first FPC Book Club of 2024. We are starting the year off discussing one of two books (depending on who has read which):



The Great Divorce
A Nineteenth-Century Mother's
Extraordinary Fight Against her
Husband, the Shakers,
and Her Times
 by Ilyon Woo



Cod: A
Biography of
the Fish that
Changed the
World by
 Mark Kurlansky

Contact Sharon Brownfield for the Zoom link: sharonbrownfield@gmail.com

Wed 1/3 **Reading and Meditation** 7-9 pm, Fellowship Hall and online
 6:40 - 7:20 pm Read & discuss *A Path with Heart*, by Jack Kornfield
 7:20 - 7:30 pm Transition break
 7:30 - 8:45 pm Meditation

Sat 1/20 **Hudson Valley Duo Mike & Ruthy return to New Revival Coffeehouse**



Mike Merenda + Ruth Ungar have recorded and performed their exquisite, original folk music together for two decades as the duo *Mike + Ruthy* and with their seminal folk-rock quintet *The Mammals*.

“Some of the best songwriting of their generation.”
High Times
“In the vanguard of today’s vibrant folk revival.”
Pop Matters

Doors open at 7:00 pm; concert begins 7:30.
 Tickets \$20 in advance (scan QR code)
 and \$25 at the door.

Tickets at the advance price will also be available at coffee hour on
1/7 and 1/14.



ONLINE SUPPLEMENT PAGE:
Information for folks joining us online

1. Closed captioning is available for FPC's online services. If you don't see captions on your screen, you can use the button at the bottom of your screen to request that the host turn them on.
2. Today's Zoom Host: **Sharon Brownfield**
3. Hymn lyrics will be in a slide presentation today.



Sharing Our Gifts

If you are mailing a pledge or a donation, here is the information:

Pledges:

Attn: Pledge Secretary
PO Box 215
Stow, MA 01775

Donations:

Attn: Treasurer
353 Great Rd
Stow, MA 01775