

**\* 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**

“Mi Y'Malel”  
Hebrew Folk Song

Trevor Berens, piano



**Thank you to:**

Kim Kinnear, Zoom Host  
Felix Freeman, Tech Assistant  
Nancy Cataldo, Judy Holmes, Ushers  
Joe and Rebecca Stadolnik, Coffee Hour Hosts  
Our staff and leadership



**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 Massachusett, 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](https://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...

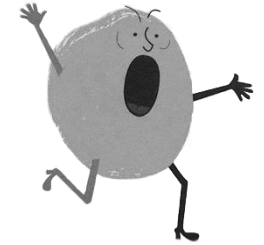
*The Chronicle* - monthly e-newsletter

*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 17, 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 17, 2023 10:00 am

**Gathering**

**Prelude** “Light One Candle” Trevor Berens, piano  
Peter Yarrow

**Welcome** Meg Rivers-Wright, Parish Administrator  
& Membership Coordinator

**Opening Words** by Ernest Sommerfield Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

**Chalice Lighting**

\* **Hymn #235** *Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly*

**Centering**

\* **Covenant and Affirmation**

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.
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**Land Acknowledgement** Meg Rivers-Wright

**Joys and Sorrows** Ann Sadler, Lay Minister

**Prayer or Meditation** From *Breathe and Be: A Book of  
Mindfulness Poems* by Kate Coombs

**Musical Meditation** Trevor Berens, piano

**Exploring**

Our story today is based on  
*The Latke Who Couldn't Stop Screaming* by Lemony Snickett

Narrator 1: Rayla Baldwin-Mattson	Pine Tree: Dante Bergeret, Roza Anthony
Narrator 2: Kennedy Mattson	Family Adult 1: Lindsay LaPointe
Narrator 3: Rev. Cynthia Landrum	Family Adult 2: Debra Freilich Reed
Latke: Tommy Garr	Family Kid 1: Harrison Reed
Lights: Eve Beauvais	Family Kid 2: Quinn LaPointe
Candy Cane: Haven Terry-Powley	

**The Story Begins: The Lights**

\* **Hymn #222** *Mi Y'Malel*

**The Story Part 2: The Candy Cane**

\* **Carol** *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*

1. We wish you a merry Christmas, (3x) and a happy new year!

Chorus: Good tidings we bring to you and your kin.  
Good tidings for Christmas and a happy new year!

2. Oh, bring us some figgy pudding, (3x) and bring it right here!

Chorus

3. We won't go until we get some, (3x) so bring it right here!

Chorus

4. For we like our figgy pudding, (3x) with all its good cheers!

Chorus

5. We wish you a merry Christmas, (3x) and a happy new year!

**The Story Part 3: The Pine Tree**

**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.

**Anthem** *Ner li* Children and Youth Choir  
Composer Trevor Berens, piano

**The Story Concludes**

**Reflection** “Latke Lessons” The Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

**Returning**

\* **Carol** *Christmas Is Coming*

Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat.  
Please do put a penny in the old man's hat.  
If you haven't got a penny, a ha-penny will do.  
If you haven't got a ha-penny then God bless you.

\* **Benediction**

## December Plate Sharing



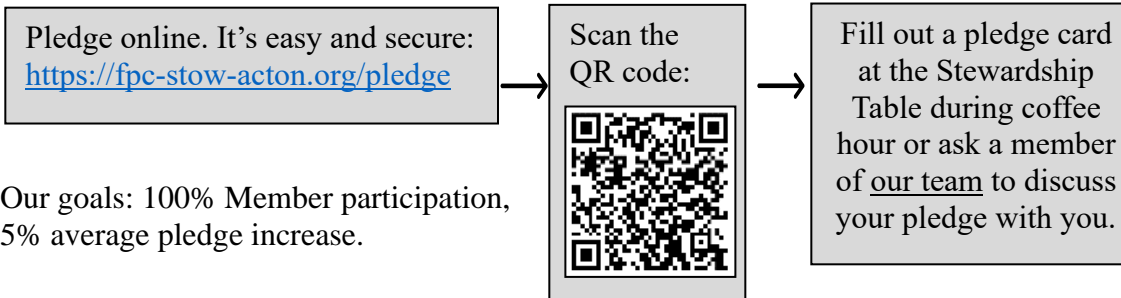
**FPC Guest Table** started serving a free monthly community dinner in Fellowship Hall in November 2015. It is a sit-down meal consisting of salad, entree, and dessert. We have served anything and everything from pizza to salmon. Volunteers plan, shop, set up, clean up, prepare, and serve the meal. After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

## First Parish Church Stewardship Campaign is Underway

FPC's Stewardship campaign for our next fiscal year is now 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:



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

Thank you for your generosity to First Parish Church!

- 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.

3-4:30pm...**Rehearsal for Christmas Vespers**, Sanctuary

### 5-6:30pm...**Christmas Vespers: In the Beginning: A Solstice Celebration**

FPC's annual musical gift to the community. All are welcome to a musical multi-faith Winter Solstice service that will include a rarely performed choral piece, The Dylan Thomas poem, "In the Beginning," set to music by composer and music professor Relly Raffman. FPC Music Director Chris Hossfeld will be joined by accompanist Trevor Berens, the FPC Choir, and a special guest, soprano Jessica Tunick Berens. In the Sanctuary.



## Religious Education Update

**Sun 12/24** - Multigenerational Christmas Eve service. We are still looking for participants for our pageant.

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

**OWL** - Please contact Rayla if your youth is planning on signing up for OWL and you have not already been in touch with Rayla about registration. Deadline is today, 12/17, and the first session will be on 1/7/24 at the congregation in Littleton.

## This Week at FPC: Dec. 18-23

19	DEC, TUE	● 10 – 11am	Coffee & Chat (Gazebo)
		● 11:30am – 1pm	Membership Committee mtg. online
		● 7 – 9pm	3rd Tuesday Group, SGM (Community Room)
		● 7 – 9pm	Board of Trustees Mtg. (Fellowship Hall)
20	DEC, WED	● 12 – 1pm	Worship Committee (online)
		● 6:40 – 8:45pm	Meditation (Fellowship Hall & online)
		● 7 – 9pm	Ukulele Meetup (Comm Rm)
		● 7:30 – 9:30pm	3rd Wednesday Group, SGM (online)
21	DEC, THU	● 1:30 – 2:30pm	Arts Committee mtg. (online)
		● 3 – 5pm	Orders of Service Folding Party (Community Room) Con
		● 5 – 6pm	Peace Vigil (outside)
		● 7:15 – 9pm	Choir Practice (Hall)
		● 7:30 – 9:30pm	3rd Thursday Group, SGM (Community Room)
22	DEC, FRI	● 1 – 3:30pm	Bridge Group (Community Rm)
		● 6 – 9pm	An Evening of Hygge (Fellowship Hall) Fellowship Hall

### Next Sunday's Services

**10 AM Christmas Eve Family Service**  
 - Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum and Rayla D. Baldwin-Mattson, Director of Religious Education  
 Our family Christmas Eve service is in the morning this year at our usual Sunday service time. We'll be telling the age-old story of Christmas with a participatory program featuring several of our religious education children and youth in a holiday pageant. We'll still end with candles and singing "Silent Night"! Come 15 minutes early to join in some kid-friendly carol singing before our service starts!

**9 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**  
 - Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum  
 Our Candlelight Service features traditional carols and anthems, paired with poetry and readings and the age-old story of the birth of Jesus. Music provided by the FPC Adult Choir, under the direction of Chris Hossfeld, accompanist Trevor Berens, and guest musicians. We will finish with our traditional candle-lighting and singing of "Silent Night." Join us at 8:45 for our extended prelude of Christmas music.

## FPC Upcoming Events

**Wed 12/20**      ► **Reading & Meditation** Fellowship Hall  
 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

► **Ukulele Meet-up** Wed 12/20, 7-9 pm, Community Room  
 Ukulele group monthly meeting. Come and play!

**Fri 12/22**      ► **Hygge Party** 6-9pm, Fellowship Hall  
 Hygge (hoo-gah) is a quality of coziness and comfortable conviviality that engenders a feeling of contentment or well-being, and it's regarded as a defining characteristic of Danish culture. Follow the Danish example and wear your pajamas and cozy socks to our Hygge Party! We'll have hot cider, cocoa, cookies, board games, books, puzzles, and mellow music & mood.  
 Movie & popcorn in the Youth Room, too.  
 Suggested donation: \$5/person



**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: **Kim Kinnear**
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