

September 1, 2024 10:00 am

Gathering

Prelude "Star Wars - Main Title" Trevor Berens,
John Williams piano

Welcome Neil Saunders

Opening Words Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum
from *Monty Python's Flying Circus*

Chalice Lighting from *East of Eden*
John Steinbeck

* **Hymn #357** "Bright Morning Stars Are Shining"

Centering

* **Covenant**

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.

* **Affirmation**

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.

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/Meditation from *The Hunger Games*
Suzanne Collins

* *Please rise in body or in spirit.*

* **Hymn #157** "Step By Step the Longest March"

Exploring

Responsive Reading (*see insert*)

Sharing Our Gifts

In September we share our weekly offering with the **Interfaith Partnership for Refugee Resettlement**. 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.

Offering "The Ghost of Tom Joad" Trevor Berens,
Bruce Springsteen piano

Sermon "Popcorn Theology"
Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

Returning

* **Hymn #1017** "Building a New Way"

* **Benediction** from *Star Wars*

* **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 "Always Look on the
Bright Side of Life" Trevor Berens,
Eric Idle piano

✚

Thank you to:

Sharon Brownfield, Zoom Host
Hector Constantzos, Tech Helper
Rick Lent and Sharon Brownfield, Ushers
Our staff and leadership

To our visitors, thank you for coming!

We hope you find what you're looking for in our service and that you'll come back. Here's how to keep connecting with our people and programs:

♥ **Fill out a Visitor Card in your pew** or scan the QR code to complete the same form online.



Visiting & Learning
about FPC

♥ **Check out our website, www.fpc-stow-acton.org**

There is so much happening at FPC! Visit our homepage and the "Church Life" tab to learn about our events & programs.



Subscribe to
E-Newsletters

♥ **Subscribe to our e-newsletters and email groups**

September Plate Sharing

The **Interfaith Partnership for Refugee Resettlement** is a group of seven local area churches that work together to help resettle refugees. FPC has been in partnership with the IPRR for almost three years. At our June 30 service, several members of the Asylum Seekers Task Force described our success with two Afghan families, allowing them to gain full independence. We are now assisting a large extended family from Rohingya (formerly Burma) who had been living in exile in Bangladesh for many years before their recent move to Lowell.

► **Next Sunday's Service 9/8/23: "Ingathering Sunday"**
(Intergenerational) - Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum

We'll bless the backpacks of our kids starting school this year and celebrate the beginning of the church year by exploring what we each bring to build community. We invite you to bring water from your home or another significant place. Service will be followed by a potluck lunch and ice cream social outside. **Bring your favorite fall dish** and join us on the lawn to play lawn games with FPC members & friends and support a local ice cream truck.

FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF STOW & ACTON

Unitarian Universalist

Sunday, September 1, 2024



The Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum, Minister
Rayla Baldwin-Mattson, Director of Religious Education
Meg Rivers-Wright, Parish Administration & Membership
Chris Hossfeld, Music Director
Trevor Berens, Accompanist
Justin Marble, Nursery Care Coordinator
Mike Silkonis, Sexton
Janet Beatrice, External Publicity
Felix Freeman, Tech Assistant
Brendon Chetwynd, President
Trisha Guditz, Vice President
Bill Froberg, Treasurer
Johanna Pyle, Clerk

First Parish is a UU Association Welcoming Congregation. We warmly welcome gay, lesbian, bisexual, & 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, back rows with accessible seating are "mask-required."

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

Responsive Reading
From Monty Python's *Life of Brian*, adapted.

Minister (Brian): Good morning!

Congregation (Crowd): A blessing! A blessing! A blessing!

Minister: Oh, please, please, please, listen! I've got one or two things to say.

Congregation: Tell us! Tell us both of them!

Minister: Look, you've got it all wrong! You don't need to follow me! You don't need to follow anybody! You've got to think for yourselves! You're all individuals!

Congregation: Yes, we're all individuals!

Minister: You're all different!

Congregation: Yes, we are all different!

Reader One (Homogenous Man): I'm not.

Minister: You all got to work it out for yourselves!

Congregation: Yes, we've got to work it out for ourselves!

Minister: Exactly!

Congregation: Tell us more!

Minister: No! That's the point! Don't let anyone tell you what to do! Otherwise...

Reader Two (Mother): That's enough! That's enough!

Always Look on the Bright Side of Life

Some things in life are bad
They can really make you mad
Other things just make you swear and curse.
When you're chewing on life's gristle
Don't grumble, give a whistle
And this'll help things turn out for the best...

CONTINUED ON THE BACK →

And...always look on the bright side of life...

Always look on the light side of life...

If life seems jolly rotten

There's something you've forgotten

And that's to laugh and smile and dance and sing.

When you're feeling in the dumps

Don't be silly chumps

Just purse your lips and whistle - that's the thing.

And...always look on the bright side of life...

Always look on the light side of life...

For life is quite absurd

And death's the final word

You must always face the curtain with a bow.

Forget about your sin - give the audience a grin

Enjoy it - it's your last chance anyhow.

So always look on the bright side of death

Just before you draw your terminal breath

Life's a piece of s---

When you look at it

Life's a laugh and death's a joke, it's true.

You'll see it's all a show

Keep 'em laughing as you go

Just remember that the last laugh is on you.

And always look on the bright side of life...

Always look on the right side of life...

(Come on guys, cheer up!)

Always look on the bright side of life...

Always look on the bright side of life...

(Worse things happen at sea, you know.)

Always look on the bright side of life...

(I mean - what have you got to lose? You know, you come from nothing - you're going back to nothing. What have you lost? Nothing!)

Always look on the right side of life...

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