

FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF STOW & ACTON

Unitarian Universalist



October 26, 2025
Compost Theology

**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 Guditiz
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.

October 26, 2025: 10:00 a.m.

Gathering

Prelude	“Feuilles Mortes” (“Dead Leaves”)	Trevor Berens
	Claude Debussy	Accompanist

Welcome & Announcements	Shana Garr, Worship Committee
------------------------------------	--------------------------------------

This week we have borrowed “pew chimes” from the Unitarian Church of Marlborough & Hudson. These chimes represent an additional way to show appreciation, joy or other emotions during our service.

People say that in musicals, when the emotion becomes too strong to speak, the characters sing, and when it's too strong to sing, they dance. Think about worship as a place where sometimes the emotion makes you burst into applause, and sometimes ring a chime, but you decide which and when.

Introit	“Put Your Roots Down”	FPC Choir
	Molly Hartwell, arr. Heather Houston	Chris Hossfeld
		Music Director

Put your roots down, put your feet on the ground, can you hear what she says when you listen? 'Cause the sound of the river as it moves across the stones is the same sound as the blood in your body as it moves across your bones. Are you listening?

Opening Words & Chalice Lighting	Yaakov Trek Reef, Intern Minister	
* Hymn #51	“Lady of the Seasons’ Laughter”	<i>Singing the Living Tradition</i>

Centering

*** Covenant and Affirmation**

Greet Your Neighbor	Susan Perry
----------------------------	--------------------

A Time for All Ages	Trek Reef, Intern Minister
----------------------------	-----------------------------------

Going Forth With the Light	“Our Love Surrounds You”	<i>Sing Out Love</i>
	Chris Hossfeld	

Land Acknowledgement	Yaakov Trek Reef, Intern Minister
-----------------------------	--

Stewardship Testimonial

** Please rise in body or in spirit*

Joys and Sorrows

Ann Wickham, 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

Yaakov Trek Reef, Intern Minister

* Hymn

"Alleluia"
Ken Langer

Sing Out Love

Exploring

Reading

Probably Mary Oliver, of Course

Sharing Our Gifts

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

Anthem

"Great Trees"

FPC Choir

Music: Mary Alice and Peter Amidon
Lyrics: Wendell Berry

Slowly, slowly, they return
To the small woodland let alone:
Great trees, outspreading and upright,
apostles of the living light.
Patient as stars, they build in air
Tier after tier a timbered choir,
Stout beams upholding weightless grace
of song, a blessing on this place.
They stand in waiting all around,
Uprisings of their native ground,

Downcomings of the distant light
They are the advent they await.

Receiving sun and giving shade,
Their life's a benefaction made,
And is a benediction said
Over the living and the dead.

In fall their brightened leaves, released,
Fly down the wind and we are pleased
To walk on radiance, amazed.
Oh light come down to earth,
be praised!

Sermon

"Compost as a Spiritual Practice"

Yaakov Trek Reef

Compost Communion

Returning

* Hymn #163

"For the Earth Forever Turning"

Singing the Living Tradition

* Benediction

Yaakov Trek Reef, Intern Minister

* Closing Song

Postlude

“Les Feuilles mortes” (“The Dead Leaves”)
Joseph Kosma

* * *

Thank you to:

Kim Kinnear, Zoom Host
Lisa Rydin & Marcia Allison, Ushers
Kirsten Chetwynd, Coffee Host
Our staff and leadership

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:
 - **Newcomer Coffees** - Meet the minister and other newcomers
 - **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

≧ Today at FPC ≦

11:00 am **Coffee Hour** - Fellowship Hall

11:00 am **RJTF drop-in session** - Community Room - ends at 1 pm

11:30 am **Nominating & Membership Committees** - Parlor - ends at 1 pm

** Please rise in body or in spirit*

⇒ Plate Sharing for October ⇐

FPC Supporting Asylum Seekers helps those seeking asylum or refuge who hope to build their lives locally. We have directly supported families from the countries of Afghanistan, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Myanmar, Uganda, and Venezuela.

We help asylum seekers to learn English • write resumes • find jobs • navigate the medical system • learn to ride a bike or the bus • obtain a driver's license, housing, and health insurance

We provide asylum seekers with rides to medical appointments & job interviews • legal fees for asylum cases • political advocacy • temporary food & housing in a hotel if they are waiting for support from MA Emergency Family System



FPC is proud to have a task force working directly with immigrants during this time of threats of mass deportations. We have lobbied for the successful passage of the driver's license law and worked with a seven-church partnership and a family in Lowell MA, and with the Acton Boxborough United Way. Please support this important work in the weekly plate share and stop by our table during coffee hour to learn more about our families and the work we do. We greatly appreciate the Congregation's ongoing support!

- Ann Wickham, Member and Liaison

Stewardship Campaign Opening Soon

In difficult times when our values are under attack daily, our FPC community can be a source of support and hope for a better day: We borrow strength from our friends and fellow parishioners. We take pride in the social justice and RE programs. We take inspiration from the music and words from the pulpit, and we take comfort from the company of others who share our values.

How apt that the theme of this year's stewardship campaign is "Looking Forward in Community - Time, Talent, and Treasure." This is the time every church year when we reflect on the impact this church has on our lives, and assess how we can best support it. It's a time to



consider how we can increase the financial contribution we make, and we may well consider how we can best contribute our skills and our time to advance our shared values.

On Sunday, Nov. 9, we will kick off our campaign to support FPC in the coming financial year. In the coming weeks we'll hear church members share their feelings and thoughts about FPC, and we'll have ample opportunity to make a financial pledge for fiscal year 2027.

Please try to attend the kick-off service on Nov. 9, and look for more communication from the Stewardship Committee and others about this important topic.

≧ This Week at FPC ≦

Mon, Oct. 27, 7-9 pm - Jazz Band Rehearsal - Sanctuary

Thu, Oct. 30, 7-9 pm - Writing Program - Community Room

**Sat, Nov. 1 - CPO's Holiday Gift Bag Project - 9:30 am-12 pm & 12:30-3 pm
Fellowship Hall**

FPC is once again hosting Concord Prison Outreach's Holiday Gift Bag Project. As some of you already know, this is a very powerful way to experience and spread a little holiday cheer to incarcerated individuals throughout Massachusetts. It is a very large project (this year CPO is assembling 3600 gift bags!) and we need 8 people for each of 2 shifts to do our part. If you would like to participate in this incredibly meaningful event, please use the QR code to sign up. For more information or questions, please contact members of the Racial Justice Task Force.



Holiday Gift Bag
Project

Sat, Nov. 1, 7-10 pm - Annual Open Mic Night - Fellowship Hall

Can you sing, dance, recite poetry, tell us a story, make us laugh..? The FPC Arts Committee would love to cheer you on in a welcoming environment! This is an evening where we entertain each other: no competition, just folks having a good time. Families are absolutely welcome!



You do NOT need to perform; in fact, we can really use a supportive audience! Feel free to invite your friends to come. Our hope is to keep this simple, just us folks. We are asking people who can to bring a snack, dessert, or beverage, but it's not necessary.

***** The Arts Committee is thrilled to announce that we have a full roster of**

fabulous acts for Open Mic night! Thanks to all who volunteered their talents! This means that we have enough material for about 1.5 hours with setup and breaks. (We will have a short intermission.) We'll send out an announcement with all the details next week!



- Dave Kay for the Arts Committee

Next Sunday: Nov. 2, 10 am - "All Souls and Samhain" - Sanctuary and online
Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum - As the fall turns to winter, we will remember the losses of our community this year and learn how the traditions of All Souls and All Saints are tied to the Pagan Samhain.

≧ **Every Week at FPC** ≦

Tue. 10 AM
Coffee and Chat
Town Center
Park Gazebo



Wed. 6:40 PM
Meditation & Reading
Fellowship Hall
& Online



Thu. 5 PM
Peace Vigil
Town Common
in front of FPC



Thu. 7:15 PM
Choir Rehearsal
Fellowship Hall -
Join the choir!
music@fpc-stow-acton.org

Fri. 1 PM
Bridge Playing
Community
Room

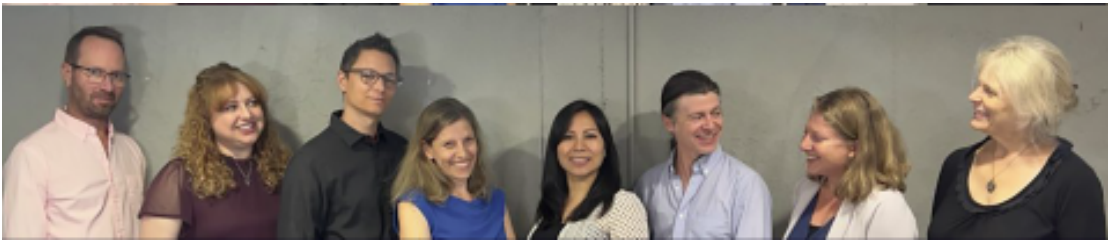


≧ Upcoming ≦

➤ **Sonic Liberation Players** - Sat. 11/8, 7:30 pm

Sonic Liberation Players open their 8th season with Raven Chacon's "Voiceless Mass," winner of the 2022 Pulitzer Prize for Music. FPC Accompanist Trevor Berens will join the ensemble from our historic Hutchings pipe organ. The concert will also feature John Cage's rarely-performed "Apartment House, 1776", which celebrates the various musics of this country in 1776, and a new commission from composer Eddie Davis.

Suggested donation: \$20. Donations collected at the door or in advance at [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com).



The Sonic Liberation Players explore new ways of encountering sound. To offer this experience to a broad range of listeners, we play uncommonly heard works and commission new works that investigate the area between “academic/intellectual” and “pop influenced” classical.

The founding members of SLP met and performed together at California Institute of the Arts in the early 20s. A decade later, having migrated independently to the East Coast (Boston and New York), they reconnected and began this new musical journey together, launching as SLP in 2016. The CalArts “sound” is varied, yet finds roots in the music of John Cage and Morton Feldman. Likewise, the Sonic Liberation Players approach a prismatic variety of composers and music in search of new languages and adventurous musical possibilities.