

FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF STOW & ACTON

Unitarian Universalist



November 23, 2025
Harvest Welcome Sunday

**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.

November 23, 2025: 10:00 a.m.

Gathering

Prelude	"Air" Samuel Wesley	Trevor Berens Accompanist
Welcome & Announcements	June McKnight, Worship Committee	
Opening Words	Yaakov Trek Reef, Intern Minister	
Chalice Lighting	Chris Hossfeld, Music Director	
* Hymn #38	"Morning Has Broken" <i>Singing the Living Tradition</i>	

Centering

* Covenant #473 and Affirmation #375	<i>Singing the Living Tradition</i>	
Love is the spirit of this church	As saffron trees now capture fire	
and service is its law.	And memories our hopes inspire;	
This is our great covenant:	We'll praise imagination's grace —	
To dwell together in peace,	The human heart's best resting place.	
To seek the truth in love,		
And to help one another.		

Land Acknowledgement	Chris Hossfeld	
Radical Welcome	Part 1	Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum
* Hymn #1010	"We Give Thanks" <i>Singing the Journey</i>	

Exploring

Radical Welcome	Part 2	Rayla D. Baldwin-Mattson Director of Religious Education
------------------------	---------------	---

Sharing Our Gifts

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

Anthem	"Grace" Elizabeth Alexander	FPC Choir Chris Hossfeld
---------------	--------------------------------	-----------------------------

** Please rise in body or in spirit*

It's how I hold my head up after I have
missed the mark,
It's how I know I'm loved when things
are dark,
It's how I stand when I am feeling small,
How I stand again after a fall –
It's how I'm even standing here at all:
Some people call it Grace.

Falling down like rain on everyone,
So warm, like greetings from the sun,
Like a gentle snow it's making every
surface glow.
And I know I didn't earn it:
That's how I know it's Grace.

It's how two people keep their love alive
through thick and thin,
It's how a broken people sing again,
It's how the wounded set aside their
blame,
How the down-and-out cast off their
shame –
It's how I know that holy is my name.
We're all the same to Grace.

Falling down like rain on everyone,
So warm, like greetings from the sun,
Like a gentle snow it's making every
surface glow.
And I didn't have to earn it.
No, I didn't have to earn it.
I didn't have to earn it through a word
or through a deed,
Or through a trial or a creed,
Or by denying what I need.
I only had to reach out my hand and it
was there.
But still it cannot take away the truths I
have to face.
Oh no, that's not how it works with
Grace.

Falling down like rain on everyone,
So warm, like greetings from the sun,
Like a gentle snow it's making every
surface glow.
And I know I didn't earn it.
No, I didn't have to earn it.
I didn't have to earn it.
That's how I know it's Grace.

Radical Welcome

Part 3

Yaakov Trek Reef

Joys and Sorrows

Ann Sadler, 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

“All that We Share Is Sacred”
Andrée Mol

In Silence

In Music

“We Shall Be Known”
MaMuse

Returning

* **Benediction**

Rayla D. Baldwin-Mattson

Postlude

“Lieder ohne Worte, Op. 53, No. 2”
Felix Mendelssohn

Trevor Berens

Greet Your Neighbor

* * *

Thank you to:

Sharon Brownfield, Zoom Host
Rick Lent, Lisa Rydin, Ushers
Kirsten Chetwynd, Coffee 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:
 - **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

≧ **Religious Education** ≦

Today's service is intergenerational; no RE classes, but senior youth group will meet in the youth group room during the morning worship service.

11:30am-3:00pm Gr. 4-6 OWL (Our Whole Lives) Program orientation for parents and children - Meet in the Vestry.

** Please rise in body or in spirit*

≥ Today at FPC ≤

- 11:00 am **Coffee Hour** - Fellowship Hall
Stewardship Table, Southeast India Project, RJTF postcards
- 11:15ish **The UU Journey at FPC is now a Newcomer Coffee Q&A**
It was necessary to postpone today's class while Rev. Cindy's husband, Peter, is still in the hospital, healing from his heart transplant surgery. Please help yourself to a coffee or tea downstairs in Fellowship Hall and join Rev. Cindy back up in the Parlor, directly across from the Sanctuary, to ask questions about UU and First Parish Church and get to know others in the congregation. You do not need to be new to FPC to participate; current friends and members are all welcome!
- 11:30 am **Gr. 4-6 OWL (Our Whole Lives) Program orientation**
For parents and children - Meet in the Vestry. Ends at 3:00 pm.

≥ Announcements ≤

Straw Vote on Merger with UCMH Sun. Dec 7, Sanctuary & online
Please plan to attend this hybrid congregational meeting on Sunday, December 7 at 11:30 am. There are two motions on the agenda and one of them is the non-binding straw vote to consider whether our congregation will merge with the members of the Unitarian Church of Marlborough and Hudson. For the Zoom link and more context from the warrant's language, please see our email in FPC Announce.

The Racial Justice Task Force will have postcards available at coffee hour this Sunday and next for anyone who is concerned about the attempt to turn back the clock with respect to voting rights and the overt racist rhetoric coming from the current administration.

We will provide the postcards and addresses of legislators. There will also be templates available with suggested text, or if preferred, you can provide your own. We hope you will join us!

Stewardship Campaign

Moving Forward in Community with Our Time, Talent, and Treasure

A Thanksgiving for Our Community - As we prepare to share a holiday with family and friends, we can be thankful to this community that has rallied to support those in need through plate sharing, Guest Table, food donations, immigrant support, and more. At this time of giving thanks for all we have, please consider pledging to FPC to help us continue our work. Thank you for your generosity!

- The FPC Stewardship Team: Andy Derr, Sharon Brownfield, Russ Hart, Peter Fiske, Ruth Lull

Here's how to pledge:

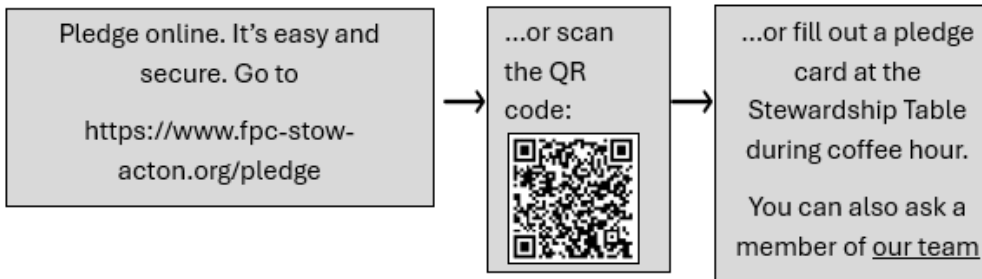


Plate Sharing for November



The Pink Haven Coalition assists transgender people and families escape states that are unsafe for transgender people to states that are safer. Pink Haven offers monetary support in the relocation as well as a network of volunteers to assist with the transition to a new home. This includes assistance in getting gender affirming care, finding housing, obtaining legal assistance and assistance in navigating a new area. Pink Haven is a grass roots partnership within the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

The Southeast India Project is Now Collecting Family Photos and Donations of Vitamins and Toothpaste



Twenty years ago, a tsunami hit the southeast coast of India, resulting in the loss of entire coastal fishing villages and thousands of lives, many of them children. FPC congregant Bob Tabor had just retired and immediately went to India and worked with several non-governmental organizations to lend aid in this humanitarian crisis. His wife Vicky joined him later.



Having made several trips to the area myself, I've witnessed how Bob and Vicky have saved lives and provided hope by helping to build roads that reach remote villages, delivering rice to starving families, financing school building projects, and supplying micro loans to Dalit women - formerly Untouchables - who are now able to support themselves through organic farming, new computer skills, or purchasing cows. Bob also made contact with orphanages of Dalit children (*Mercy Home* and *WIDE Children's Home*) which resulted in an overseas connection with FPC families. We sent "friendship kits" of toys, art supplies, vitamins, and photos of our families and the orphanage sent back photos of their children. This has been enormously popular on both sides, and I have numerous pictures of these kids on my refrigerator.

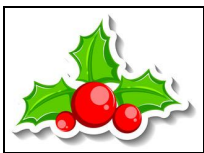
Unfortunately, it's become difficult, expensive, and arduous to transport and travel to the orphanage with the four 50-pound friendship kits. We would like to make this easier by collecting the usual photos of families plus a year's worth of vitamins and toothpaste for each child. Bob will attempt to pick up other items once he is in India. We would also like it if you - children and adults - would include letters in which you tell a little about yourselves in order to get back a letter and photo from a child in India.

When I was teaching RE to my daughter's class many years ago, we did a unit on the old time UU Heroes, but we have present-day heroes right here in our FPC congregation. Bob and Vicky Tabor are among them.

-Russell Hart, on behalf of Bob and Vicky Tabor

We will collect items each Sunday at coffee hour until January 5th.

The Holiday Gift Drive Needs You! Thanks so much to those of you who have already claimed gifts for the Holiday Gift Giving Drive. You are making the holidays happy and special for the guests of Renewal House and Voices Against Violence. These people are trying to build new lives in the face of incredible odds, and your generosity will surely help them along that path.



There are still more than 50 gifts left to be claimed, including winter clothing and many gift cards. Go to the FPC website at www.fpc-stow-acton.org or use the QR code here to peruse the list of gift requests for a person in need. Thank you for your generosity!
 ✨ Your Holiday Elves

≧ This Week at FPC ≦

Jazz Band Rehearsal Monday, November 24, 7-9:00 pm, Sanctuary
 Please contact Michael Paladini mwpaladini@gmail.com for more information.

Youth Group and Young Adult Hang Saturday, November 29, 5:00-10:00pm Meet in the Vestry. Friends are welcome!

Next Sunday's Service Sunday, November 30, 10 am, Sanctuary/online/phone
 "Cultivating Joy in Turbulent Times" - Lisa Fagerstrom, Lay Leader - This service will invite and encourage those gathered to consider the possibilities for and benefits of cultivating internal joy regardless of external circumstances. Through music, spoken word, and time for personal reflection, this service will offer ideas and practices to open ourselves to moments of joy in everyday living--to cultivate joy in our lives.

≧ Every Week at FPC ≦

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