

FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF STOW & ACTON

Unitarian Universalist



November 30, 2025
Cultivating Joy in Turbulent Times

**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

Brendon Chetwynd
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.

November 30, 2025 ~ 10:00 a.m.

Gathering

Prelude	“Sunshine on My Shoulders” John Denver	Trevor Berens Accompanist
Welcome & Announcements	Ann Wickham, Lay Minister	
Opening Words	“Let There be Joy” Carl Seaburg	Lisa Fagerstrom, Worship Leader
Chalice and Advent Candle Lighting	“Deep Calls Unto Deep” [Adapted] Gordon B. McKeeman	Lisa Fagerstrom
* Hymn #346	“Come, Sing a Song with Me”	<i>Singing the Living Tradition</i>

Centering

* Covenant and Affirmation	
Land Acknowledgement	Ann Wickham
Time for All Ages	Lisa Fagerstrom
Going Forth With the Light	<i>Sing Out Love</i>
“Our Love Surrounds You”	
Chris Hossfeld	
Joys and Sorrows	Ann Wickham
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	Lisa Fagerstrom

** Please rise in body or in spirit*

*** Hymn**

"I Need You to Survive"

I need you, you need me
We're all a part of one family
Stand with me, agree with me
We're all a part of one family.
It is our work that every need be supplied
You are important to me, I need you to survive
You are important to me, I need you to survive

I pray for you
You pray for me
I love you
I need you to survive
I won't harm you with words from my mouth
I love you
I need you to survive
[Repeat]

It is our work that every need be supplied
You are important to me, I need you to survive
You are important to me, I need you to survive

I need you, you need me
We're all a part of one family
Stand with me, agree with me
We're all a part of one family.
It is our work that every need be supplied
You are important to me, I need you to survive
You are important to me, I need you to survive
[Repeat]

Exploring

Sharing Our Gifts

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

Offertory	Improvisation Trevor Berens	Trevor Berens
Reading	"The Truth About Morning" Mark Nepo	Ann Wickham
Sermon	"Cultivating Joy in Turbulent Times"	Lisa Fagerstrom

Returning

* Hymn #170	"We Are a Gentle, Angry People"	<i>Singing the Living Tradition</i>
* Benediction	"Be a Branch of the Tree of Life" [Adapted] Norman Naylor	Lisa Fagerstrom
Postlude	"Ode to Joyful" (music by Ludwig van Beethoven and Jon Batiste)	Trevor Berens

Greet Your Neighbor

* * *

Thank you to:
Sharon Brownfield, Zoom Host
Jamison House, Marcia Allison, Ushers
Mark Koenig, Troy Liston, Coffee Host
Our staff and leadership

* *Please rise in body or in spirit*

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

≧ Today at FPC ≦

- 11:00 am **Coffee Hour** - Fellowship Hall
Stewardship Table, Southeast India Project, RJTF postcards
- 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

Meaning of Community To sustain our community, we need the support of our members and friends in terms of their *time, talent, and treasure*. Pledging is key during this very busy and troubling time. Please take the few minutes needed to let us know what your pledge is.

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

Here's how to pledge:

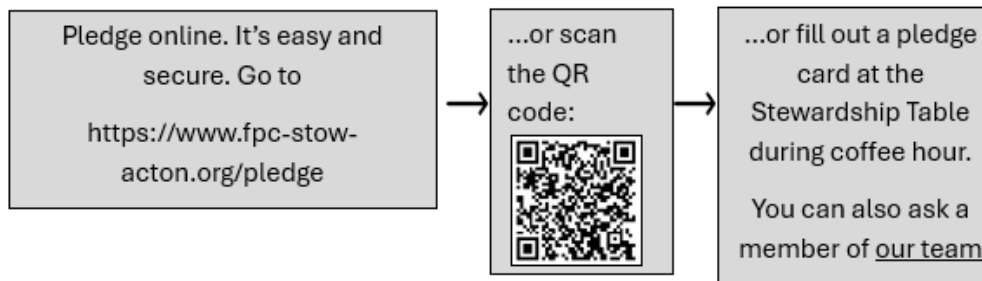


Plate Sharing for November



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

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.

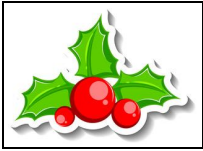
Unfortunately, it's become difficult, expensive, and arduous to transport and travel to the orphanage with the four 50-pound friendship kits. We would like to make this easier by collecting the usual photos of families plus a year's worth of vitamins and toothpaste for each child. Bob will attempt to 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!



of you who have already claimed gifts for the Holiday Gift Giving Drive. We are getting close to the end of the drive! All of the items left to claim are toward the end of the SignUp Genius list, so scroll down to find them. In this week of giving thanks for all the good things in our lives, let's make the final push to give the guests of Renewal House and Voices Against Violence a happy holiday season.



≧ This Week and Upcoming at FPC ≦

Book Group Tuesday, December 2, 7-8 pm, online

Bill Bryson's book *At Home*. Email sharonbrownfield@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

7-9th Grade OWL Parent Orientation Thursday, December 4, 7-9 pm - Sanctuary

This is the first of two offerings for the mandatory parent/guardian orientation. Only one of the two offerings needs to be attended. If a family consists of more than one guardian, all guardians must be present. (2nd offering is Sunday, December 7 at 2 pm.)

Holiday Gift Drive Drop-Offs Friday, Dec. 5, 3-6 pm, Saturday, Dec. 6, 1-3 pm, Vestry

Saturday Morning Breakfast December 6, 6:30-10 am, Fellowship Hall

Elizabeth Bleuer, Deputy Director of Democracy International's program, Democracy Journeys (democracyjourneys.com), which connects Americans to democratic stories around the world through small group travel, will speak about Kosovo, Europe's youngest nation. Coffee at 7:30 am, breakfast 8:00, speaker 8:20, end by 9:00. Please RSVP to jab.jeffbrown@gmail.com. \$8 donation to cover food costs. If this is a hardship for you, please come and enjoy a free breakfast!

Next Sunday's Service Sunday, December 7, 10 am, Sanctuary/online/phone

"A Unitarian Wibbly-Wobbly Christmas Carol" - Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum - Join us as we take a whirl through time with the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future, exploring the Unitarian impact on the Christmas season.

Annual Holiday Cookie Swap Tuesday, December 10, 6:30 pm, Community Room

A light reception, storytelling, sharing, and the fan favorite, the cookie swap. In addition to bringing cookies to swap (optional), we invite you to bring your favorite sweet or savory snacks. We'll be offering hot mulled cider, wine and seltzer. To participate in the Cookie Swap, please bake 3 dozen of your favorite homemade **nut-free cookies**. Those who don't want to bake, please come and enjoy holiday decorations, conversation, and listen to or share in the readings of poems or stories. So that we can plan, please RSVP to Lynda Layer at ldlayer89@comcast.net.