

**FIRST PARISH
CHURCH
OF STOW & ACTON**
Unitarian Universalist



May 17, 2026
The Challenge and Promise of Change

**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 Gudit
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.

May 17, 2026: 10:00 a.m.

Gathering

Prelude "Changes" Trevor Berens
David Bowie Accompanist

Welcome & Announcements Ruth Lull

Opening Words "Invocation" Lisa Fagerstrom, Latika Joshi,
Lyn Cox Roy Miller, Johanna Pyle

Chalice Lighting "Open to Possibility" Ann Wickham
Irene Glasse

* **Hymn #1046** "Shall We Gather at the River" *Singing the Journey*

Centering

* **Covenant and Affirmation** Ann Wickham

Land Acknowledgement Lisa Fagerstrom

Greet Your Neighbor

A Time for All Ages Rayla D. Baldwin-Mattson
Director of Religious Education

Going Forth With the Light "Our Love Surrounds You" *Sing Out Love*
Chris Hossfeld

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 Lisa Fagerstrom

In Words "Blessed, Just by Being"
Cara Fortner

In Silence

In Song "Loosen" *Sing Out Love*
Aly Halpert

* Please rise in body or in spirit

Exploring

Reading

“Prayer, after Saint Francis”
Christopher Buice

Lisa Fagerstrom

Sharing Our Gifts

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



Make a Donation
Online

Anthem

“A Path to Each Other”
Jocelyn Hagen and Timothy C. Takach

FPC Choir

Each word a stone
We can build a wall
Or a
path
to
each
other.

— Julia Klatt Singer

Sermon

“The Challenge and Promise of Change”

Lisa Fagerstrom

Returning

* **Hymn**

“Change Is Coming”

Sing Out Love

* **Benediction** “Changes Abound/Be a Branch of the Tree of Life”

Michelle Collins/Norman Naylor

* **Closing Song**

Postlude

“Metmorphosis One”
Philip Glass

Trevor Berens

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Thank you to:

Zoom Host

Jamison House, Marion Scott, Ushers
Kirsten and Brendon Chetwynd, Coffee Hosts
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

≧ Today at FPC ≦

➤ **Religious Education - Children's Chapel:** Children and youth head straight to the Vestry at 10:00 am. This will also be the final class and celebration for our 4-6th grade OWL class.

➤ **Coffee Hour** - After the service in Fellowship Hall

Recruitment Drive for the Assabet Craft Beer & Food Truck Festival

We've opened sign-ups to volunteer at this summer's festival that takes place on Saturday, September 5, 12-4 pm). Lots of volunteers are needed to help with what will be another really fun family event for both FPC and our wider community.



Beer & Food Truck Fest

Please sign up at our special table at coffee hour where you can learn more about all the different opportunities available. You can also register online at SignUpGenius. Scan the QR code or go to <https://tinyurl.com/beerandfoodtruck>.

≧ Announcements ≦

➤ **Plate Share for May: Concord Prison Outreach** is a non-profit organization of individuals and faith communities committed to helping people who are incarcerated build better lives for themselves and their families. Since its formation in 1968, it has grown into the largest organization of its kind in Massachusetts, serving the prison population in eight facilities in this part of the state. It offers programs in Vocational and Socio-Emotional Skills, Arts and Humanities, and Families and Children. It also offers opportunities for people on the outside to participate in. Last year we assembled CPO Holiday Gift Bags in Fellowship Hall for the first time!

Liaisons June McKnight and Johanna Pyle are both active volunteers with CPO, currently participating in eight-week Restorative Justice reading classes and “Read to Me Dad,” a 3-4 week program which culminates in fathers being filmed reading to their children. They are also both members of the CPO Advisory Council.

Funding is crucial for CPO to continue offering their programs and expanding their mission. They hope you will consider CPO for a plate sharing month. You may donate by check made out to First Parish Church, text to (978) 310-3309, or online using the QR code or fpc-stow-acton.org/donate.



➤ **Introduction to UCMH’s Spiritual Growth & Community Center (SGCC)**
After the service on May 31 at FPC, join Cynthia Menard for an overview of UCMH’s outreach arm for adult programming:

“[The SGCC] provides high-quality, inspirational programs, classes, and events to awaken peace, joy, love, compassion, personal growth, and creativity. All programs are open to the community – people of all faiths, including atheists, can participate.”
[\(www.ucmh.org/spiritual-growth-center/\)](http://www.ucmh.org/spiritual-growth-center/)

Programs include Meditation, Pub Theology, SoulCollage®, Spirituality and Internal Family Systems (IFS), and more. You can read about this year’s offerings using the QR code or URL.



≧ Announcements, cont'd ≦

➤ **Giving Rides to/for Our Newest SAS Family** - Many thanks to those of you who have already volunteered to give rides to Anita, Andrew, and Arthur. They are delightful people and full of gratitude for all you are doing for them. We are re-sending this in the hopes of filling some more slots, and have added taking Andrew to the RMV in Lowell on 5/19. (I am able to take Arthur on 5/18.) We



are hoping they can get their drivers licenses and then a car fairly soon so that they can be more independent. You can sign up here: <https://tinyurl.com/SAS-provide-a-ride> or use the QR code.

We very much appreciate your consideration!

Provide a Ride

- Mark Koenig, for the Supporting Asylum Seekers Task Force

➤ **The LGBTQ+ Task Force** will be at three local Pride events: Nashoba Valley (5/30), Maynard (6/7), and Acton (6/27). We give out ribbons and buttons and have lots of fun, so stop by! If you want to join us, you can sign up to help at <https://tinyurl.com/help-at-Pride> or use the QR code.



Help at Pride
FPC table





≧ This Week at FPC ≦

➤ **Wed, 5/20 - Ukulele Meetup** - 7-9 pm, Community Room

Pat Sorn and Sue Stewart, Coordinators

FPC hosts monthly ukulele gatherings for ukulele players wanting to practice with other players. Uke lovers of all levels (including beginners!) are welcome to come and play, sing, and share music with the group. We have extra ukes for anyone who'd like to try them out. If not, you can just come and sing along!

≧ Every Week at FPC ≦

<p>Tue. 10 AM <u>Coffee and Chat</u> Town Center Park Gazebo*</p> 	<p>Wed. 6:40 PM <u>Meditation & Reading</u> Fellowship Hall & Online</p> 	<p>Thu. 5 PM <u>Peace Vigil</u> Town Common in front of FPC</p> 	<p>Thu. 7:15 PM <u>Choir Rehearsal</u> Fellowship Hall - Join the choir! music@fpc-stow-acton.org</p>	<p>Fri. 1 PM <u>Bridge Playing</u> 34 Meeting House Ln, Main Entrance, Stow</p> 
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* In inclement weather, we meet at The Boston Bean House in Maynard, 102 Main Street

≧ Upcoming ≦

➤ **Next Sunday's Service - May 24, 10 am - "Keeping My Celestial Relations Fresh: Belonging and Becoming with Thoreau"** - Shana Garr, Lay Leader



Henry David Thoreau's spectral presence inspires this reflection on how we might merge the seen and unseen in the twenty-first century. The awe and appreciation of living near Walden Pond and other sites related to the New England Transcendentalists is never far from how Shana Dumont Garr perceives the world. She served as curator of Fruitlands Museum, which was once the site of a short-lived Transcendentalist commune in 1843, from 2016 to 2022. Her work there included exhibiting objects

related to Thoreau, such as handwritten pages of his essays on nature. Drawing from contemporary philosophers including Jane Bennett, Ivan Gaskell, and David Abram, Shana will discuss how the material – such as pencils made by Thoreau in Fruitland's collection – and the ephemeral – such as memories and the experiences of reading and writing – inform each other. The seen and unseen are not opposites, but part of a cycle of belonging and becoming.

≧ Upcoming, cont'd ≦

- **Indigenous Justice Task Force** Tuesday, 5/26, 7-8 pm, Zoom
- **FPC Annual Meeting** Friday, 5/29, 7-9 pm, Sanctuary and online
- **"A Celebration of Days to Come"** Sunday Service on 5/31, 10 am
- Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum, with Intern Minister Yaakov Trek Reef and Minister Emeritus Rev. Tom Rosiello
The Unitarian Church of Marlborough and Hudson joins us for the last time this year in a joint worship service celebrating our days to come.

- **5th Annual Assabet Craft Beer & Food Truck Festival** Sat, 9/5, 12-4 pm
Our festival promotes craft beer and food trucks in our local community. This is a family-friendly event and the entire community is invited. We have a little something for everyone – craft beer, food trucks, games for all ages, and live music!

This event is the brainchild of four craft beer enthusiasts and FPC members who wanted to create a fun event for the local community. Any profits will go back to the community through a diverse variety of social justice causes that FPC Stow & Acton is involved with.

CRAFT BEER + Cider
Soft drinks and bottled water
FOOD TRUCKS
FPC Baked Goods
GAMES the whole family can enjoy
LIVE MUSIC

