

The Link

December 3, 2015

***We welcome all to grow deep
faith and take bold action.***



This Week in Worship

Sunday, December 6
Worship
10:30 am in Meetinghouse

The Worship Theme for December is Peace

The great Universalist minister and theologian Hosea Ballou preached that the God of love calls us to “*happify*” our lives. (He would also use terms like *happification* and *religious pleasure*.) Ballou wrote in his opus *A Treatise on Atonement*:

“Humanity’s main object in all we do is happiness; and were it not for that, we never could have any other particular object. What would induce people to form societies, to be at the expense of supporting government, to acquire knowledge, to learn science, or till the earth, if they believed they could be as happy without as with?” -*edited*

When we worry too much, we drain our energy, our hopes even our passion for life. Our ability to take care of ourselves and others is impeded because we have focused our attention not on our passion, but on the exact opposite of passion, on apathy and indifference. Focusing our attention on indifference saps our desire to do the work that needs to be done. We need to pay attention to what drains us. We must also be aware of what bubbles forth joyfully from our strengths, what gets us excited, what moves us to do because doing makes us happy.

At this Christmas time it is easy for all us to get so frustrated with the commercialism

and the hustle and bustle that we throw up our hands and either go along or bury our heads in the sand. It is so important to do neither and instead to embrace those things about the holidays that excite you. The joy of being with family, the pleasure of giving to others, celebrating the return of longer daylight, it is these things that makes us happy, they please our souls, or as Ballou said they give us *religious pleasure*.

I hope that you find those things which *happify* you. I wish you and yours the joy of this season.

Peace,

Rev. Hank

Religious Exploration



Sunday, December 6

Children's Church

- Children grades pre-k through 8th attend Children's Church
- Junior Youth Group service trip to the Outdoor Church
- Youth chat will meet at 10:30am
- The **Nursery** is available for children ages 4 and younger

Youth Group Happenings...

This year the youth group will be holding our annual gift wrapping fundraiser! The next two Sundays before Christmas, the youth group will be available to accept gifts to be wrapped starting at 9:45 am and wrapped gifts will be ready after church service. Wrapping is done in exchange for your donations. Not sure what to pay? We're happy to give you a suggestion. Hope to see all of you and your unwrapped presents soon!

This year the youth group will be holding a first time service project for the Christmas season. We are organizing the collection of homemade or store bought holiday cookies and

snacks to pack up and deliver to local fire stations, police stations, and hospital emergency rooms on Christmas Eve. We hope to thank our community's first responders for their invaluable work - especially at the holidays. Baking a batch of Christmas cookies? Make an extra dozen or two for us. Looking for a fun family activity on your way home from Christmas Eve church service? Sign up to deliver a basket to your local police department! It's a simple and fun way to say thank you at Christmas time. Youth will be in the parish hall at fellowship hour to answer all of your questions about this great project. Thanks!

News and Announcements

Holiday Gift Project

**Pick up gift tags in the Parish Hall during social hour
Bring your gifts back on Sunday, December 13**

This is our opportunity to help the children of Milton through the *Milton Residence Fund Holiday Gifts Program*

Help, Help, Help!

This week we signed up people to buy presents for 57 children. There are 190 on the list. It's really easy. Sheets with names, are at Social Hour. You check out the list. See what ages and sex are available and pick.

We give you an instruction sheet and numbered tags to make it as easy as possible. If you have questions feel free to e-mail me (Beth Gray-Nix) at bgraynix@comcast.net. Gift certificates are fine for the older kids. The unwrapped presents aren't due until Dec. 13th.



Please note that we can't take any presents until then. Help make the Holidays merry for the children of Milton.



Come one and all!

Friday night December 4, from 6:30 to 8:30

Please join us for First Parish Craft Night

Kick off the Holidays with an evening of fellowship and fun! Craft activities for young and the young at heart, you can learn a new skill, share one you love or just sit and enjoy the company. We will have a light supper available of chili, corn bread and salad. Come reconnect with old friends and make some new ones.

**Saturday, December 5th World
Market Holiday Sale and Brunch
9 am - 1 pm Parish Hall**

This newly-expanded event will begin at 9 am in the Parish Hall with a delicious free

breakfast. Tables of crafts, jewelry, scarves, ornaments and items made all over the world will be for sale. Also featured will be Equal Exchange coffee, chocolate, cocoa and other items. Santa will be paying a visit and will pose for pictures with kids of all ages.

Pick up your Frasier fir Christmas trees -- remember to bring your check if you haven't prepaid.

The fair will run from 9-1. Stop by, hear some holiday music, sit by a fire in the fireplace and get started on your holiday shopping. Come join us at the World Market Holiday Fair!

Gift items will also be available for sale on Sunday, December 6 after the worship service. New leadership for this event - Leslie MacPherson Artinian, Membership Committee chaired by Richard and Deb Larson Venable and Social Action Committee chaired by Dave Egan.

(Cash and checks accepted)

Community Events



*Small Works Show
Holiday Sale & Party
Pat Neves Sings!*

Opening Reception: Friday, December 11, 6-8pm

Wine, light refreshments, and entertainment by Milton vocalist (and First Parish member) Pat Neves.

Beautiful art work in a variety of media by emerging and established artists.

All work is priced to sell, and will be sold "off the wall" so you can take it with you.

Gallery Hours: Friday 3-5, Saturday 12-4 December 8 - 20th.

Support Art in Milton!

Don't miss this chance to shop locally for unique and beautiful gifts!

The Search Continues News from the Ministerial Search Committee

Our Congregational record goes live this week! The Congregational Packet is under development and we are working hard so it is ready for January.

We mentioned last week that the Ministerial Search Committee will be operating in confidential mode starting next month. Confidentiality is a commitment that requires the participation of our entire congregation. If you should happen to find out information about a candidate we are considering, please keep that information to yourself. The following is information from the UUA on why confidentiality is so critical during this phase of the Search process.

UUA's guiding points regarding confidentiality during the Ministerial Search process. (Excerpted from the UUA Settlement Handbook for Ministers and Congregations)

- The committee must publicize the process it is following and how far along it is at every point. At the same time, the committee must keep confidential both the names and the locations of the ministers under consideration and the details of committee business.
- There are several reasons for the rule of confidentiality:
- Ministers settled in a congregation may not have told their present parishioners that they are contemplating a move. These parishioners are entitled to hear the news from their own minister at the appropriate time. To “leak” a minister’s name can undermine his or her ability to serve the present congregation, and will almost certainly damage a committee’s chances of attracting that potential candidate.
- When the identities of unsuccessful applicants are known, it heightens the competitive aspect of the search process. This hurts collegial feeling among ministers and (when neighboring congregations compete for the same minister) also can create hard feelings among congregations.
- It is harder to resolve differences among the members of a search committee when factions of the congregation are looking over its shoulders. It is better to resolve differences in private.

Please feel free to contact the members of the Ministerial Search Committee anytime.

Your Ministerial Search Committee:

Debbie Alsebai, Charlie Franich, Franc Graham, Elise Henricks, Jim May, Brigitte Miller, and Tracey Robinson.

Social Action Committee Needs You!

Want to Save the World?

“Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.”
-Mother Teresa

The First Parish Social Action Committee is currently involved in the following projects through The U.U. Urban Ministries in Roxbury and Father Bill’s & Mainspring in Quincy. Stay tuned for additional projects.



Renewal House

Father Bill's & Mindspring: First Parish volunteers will help prepare and serve a meal to our neighbors in need. Date: TBD

Renewal House: The First Parish Social Action Committee will be organizing a toiletries drive to collect items to give to the Residents of Renewal House.

Fair Food Inc: First Parish members will meet one Saturday a month, from 10 am - 1 pm, to help distribute food.

Jericho Road Roxbury: Individual First Parish Members will be teamed up with a non-profit, who is need of your unique talents.

If you are interested in joining us for one of these fun and transforming events, please contact: David Egan, Social Action Chair at: davidegan@comcast.net or after church during Coffee Hour.

Details are available on our website at <http://fpmilton.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Save-the-World.pdf>

Kiki's Corner



Ho, Ho, Ho it's December and it is busy at First Parish Milton. The outdoor wreaths were hung this week by Kevin Harnden on the new ladder. Miriam Saavedra is working on the final details on the Junior Youth Group visit to the Outdoor Church on Sunday. Myrtle Flight has been getting the meetinghouse decorated for the holiday season. David Egan is getting folks involved in projects with UU Urban Ministry and Father Bill's. The annual Milton Residents' gift program is underway and soon our meetinghouse will be full of gifts for Milton families from our church and many other Milton churches, schools and other organizations. Leslie MacPherson Artinian and the Venables among others have worked very hard to produce our new World Markets Fair and Brunch on Saturday.

We now are anticipating the furnace conversion from oil to gas will begin December 21st with the gas company setting up things and Williams Oil and Gas converting the systems the week of December 28. The building will be without heat probably from December 28 - 30 (3 days). This was scheduled when the building has lighter usage (no nursery school or toddler music program). But the campus is not closed that week. We still have 3 evening groups, our church staff, the Martin, Swith and Milton Fund coordinator and one day program scheduled to use the building that week. We will be happy when it is all done and our long-time oil furnace system is retired. Stay tuned for updates on this work and our schedule for the week between Christmas and New Year's.

If there are any special requests lurking, please let me or Miriam know by email. We will do our best to accommodate you but no promises. We are sticking to the Tuesday deadline for the Link and other announcements. There are already lots of extra items on our plate preparing for the two Christmas Eve services.

STAY CONNECTED

*Follow First Parish on Facebook! "Like" our page
www.facebook.com/FirstParishMiltonUu
and get updates, poems, announcements and more. You'll be glad you did!*

We can also be found on Twitter at @FPMilton

REMINDER THE LINK DEADLINE IS TUESDAYS AT 2:30 PM
"Brevity Matters" - Peter Bowden, Social Media Guru and wise UU

Deadline for submissions is Tuesdays at 2:30 pm. You need to address email to both office@fpmilton.org and director@fpmilton.org to assure your announcement will be included in the weekly Link. Written announcements for the Sunday Order of Worship are derived from the announcements for The Link. We, from time to time, will also publish non-church events with a connection to member of the church. Your submission may be edited due to space requirements. We recommend that you submit no more than 1 - 2 paragraphs.

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday - Thursday 10:00 am - 3 pm
Other times by appointment

EVERY SUNDAY

Worship, 10:30am in the Meetinghouse
Silent Prayer & Meditation, 9:00am in the Children's Church
Choir Rehearsal (most Sundays) at 8:45 am

SIGN UP GENIUS (formerly known as the Planner)

The link to SignUp Genius is:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090d44aca728a02-church1>



A Welcoming Congregation

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