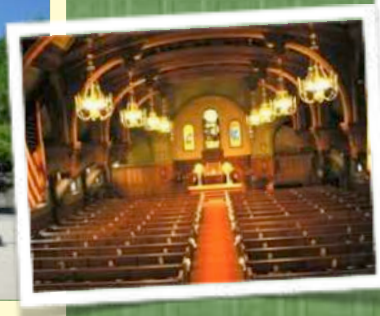


Top of the Square

APRIL, 2016 NEWSLETTER



First Parish Plymouth Unitarian Universalist National Memorial Pilgrim Church

19 Town Square, Plymouth, MA 02360

www.firstparishplymouthuu.org 508-747-1606 office@firstparishplymouthuu.org

Minister: Reverend Ed Hardy

Director of Religious Education: Kim Caple

Director of Music: Niles Brandon

Director of Music Emerita: Lynne Wilkinson



Rev. Ed Hardy, "Just Mercy"



Chris Lennon, "Be the Good" First Parish T-Shirts

A Pilgrim's Journey

By Rev. Ed Hardy

Learning American history in grade school, junior high, high school, and college I always thought, “we the people” meant everyone, but I was wrong. My teachers said, “We the People” only applied to white, male, land owners.” The others didn’t matter. I thought, in America, every politician was good. All decisions made by the United States Congress were fair and just. Some of those childhood fantasies I still hold near and dear to my heart. I thought America was the best country in the world. Didn’t people come from all over the world just to be in America; to be free and to be equal. To be able to rise on the ladder of life through natural talent and human effort. I thought everyone, every American, would have equal access to justice, to law, to education, to police protection, to medical care, and everyone would be treated fairly.

As the Bible says, “as a child I thought childish things.” As I grew up in high school, I began to learn other aspects of American history. I learned about slavery and how the American economy was brought to full blossom by slavery. I learned about lynching- vigilante justice and terrorism of African-Americans. I learned of the forcible internment of the American Japanese during World War II. I learned that after World War II, one of the largest increases in middle-class wealth occurred through the G.I. Bill of Rights that allowed returning soldiers to buy homes and start businesses with loans through the United States government. All of which were denied to soldiers of color---veterans of the war. Where were the equal rights? Didn’t the soldiers of color deserve the gratitude and largess of their government?

I was stunned by the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. I began to see my country and the government in a different light. I saw clearly that African-Americans were denied voting rights and full participation in local, state, and national elections. Six years ago, almost by a fluke, I became acquainted with Rev. Michael Walker and Messiah Baptist Church. Together we read *The New Jim Crow*, by Michelle Alexander. Gradually I became more aware and much more sensitive to the dis-equal rights of America.

Recently, I told the congregation during Sunday service about two pictures I received on my Facebook. One was of a black lab and the other was of a yellow lab. The black lab had a sign that said, “Black Labs Matter.” The yellow lab had a sign that said, “All Labs Matter.” I had a good laugh. As many of you did when I told about the pictures in church. Then I wondered out loud if the pictures were racist. Several people moaned as if I had gone too far with my sensitivity on racial matters and a couple people mentioned after church that I had gone too far.

Several weeks later, I had the opportunity to ask 30 or so members of Messiah Baptist Church about the pictures. They didn’t laugh. I asked for their reaction. One person said, “it’s demeaning.” Very quickly everyone agreed.

Our country, our America, is not perfect. In fact, slavery, oppression, and the lack of equal human rights is one of America’s deepest and most persistent wounds. We cannot afford to avoid, deny, or go about as if it never happened, safe in our white and gated communities. Our belief in America, in what America can and should be, calls for us to do more, to witness, to understand, to communicate not just amongst ourselves but with the black communities also. To hear their voices, to continue to make America the country we all think it should be; with equal rights for everyone.

Continued on Next Page

A Pilgrim's Journey - Continued

The Unitarian Universalist Association this past June at the General Assembly voted to make "Black Lives Matter" an Action of Immediate Witness. See below.

I know this is difficult, arduous and sometimes painful work – to witness that which we'd rather not visit. I know these difficult conversations are something we'd rather avoid. I know some of us have an immediate reaction to the negative and some to the positive. I invite everyone to be their best self. A self of understanding, acceptance, and compassion while keeping our judgmental self at bay. Everyone is at different levels of knowledge, acceptance, and understanding, yet everyone belongs here—regardless of where we stand. "We do not need to think alike to love alike." Our open minds and our open hearts call us to witness. Let us do that work for a better America.

2015 Action of Immediate Witness

WHEREAS, Unitarian Universalists strive for justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

WHEREAS, Unitarian Universalists have a goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

WHEREAS, allowing injustice to go unchallenged violates our principles;

WHEREAS, the Black Lives Matter movement has gained powerful traction in conjunction with recent tragic events involving, in particular, police brutality and institutionalized racism that target the black community;

WHEREAS, Tanisha Anderson, Rekia Boyd, Michael Brown, Miriam Carey, Michelle Cusseaux, Shelly Frey, Eric Garner, Freddie Gray, Trayvon Martin, Kayla Moore, Tamir Rice, and Tony Robinson are just a few names of people who were recently killed by the racism that exists in the United States today;

WHEREAS, people of all ages and races are killed by law enforcement, yet black people ages 20-24 are seven times more likely to be killed by law enforcement;

WHEREAS, mass incarceration fueled by for-profit prisons and racially biased police practices drive the disproportionate imprisonment of black and brown Americans;

WHEREAS, the school-to-prison pipeline is an urgent concern because 40% of students expelled from U.S. public schools are black and one out of three black men is incarcerated during his lifetime; and^[1]

WHEREAS, we must continue to support the Black Lives Matter movement and Black-led racial justice organizations;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2015 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association calls member congregations to action, to become closer to a just world community, and to prevent future incidents of this nature;

Continued on Next Page

2015 Action of Immediate Witness - Continued

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2015 General Assembly encourages member congregations and all Unitarian Universalists to work toward police reform and prison abolition (which seeks to replace the current prison system with a system that is more just and equitable); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2015 General Assembly recognizes that the fight for civil rights and equality is as real today as it was decades ago and urges member congregations to take initiative in collaboration with local and national organizations fighting for racial justice against the harsh racist practices to which many black people are exposed.

No matter who you are, black lives matter, and a system of fair, transformative, and restorative justice that is accountable to communities is something to which each of us has a right. Unitarian Universalists and our greater society have the power to make this happen. Let's do it!

April Worship

April 3 **Was There Anything Before The Big Bang?** **Rev. Ed Hardy**

Recently, for the first time, we heard the universe. An electronic beep that measures the gravitational pull of the universe. Sometimes it seems some small bit of information turns the scientific world up-side-down and what we really learn is how ignorant we are. I guess we will never learn it all. There will always be a new question about some unknown. What are we to do with such profound mystery? How might we react?

This sermon and next Sunday's sermon are auction sermons for Ron and Sharon Clark who are preparing for these sermons by taking a vacation somewhere sunny and warm. When Ron won the bid to determine the sermon, I asked what the topic might be? His first response was, "Maybe The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost. Sharon, his wife, rolled her eyes to the heavens causing Rod to purchase two sermon titles—one for each of them. Ron changed to a sermon the "Big Bang." Sharon said whatever Ron takes, I'll take the opposite. So the mystery and magic of the first sermon will set up the profound ministerial wisdom to be shared in the second sermon. God help us, a marriage might be riding on this. (just kidding!)

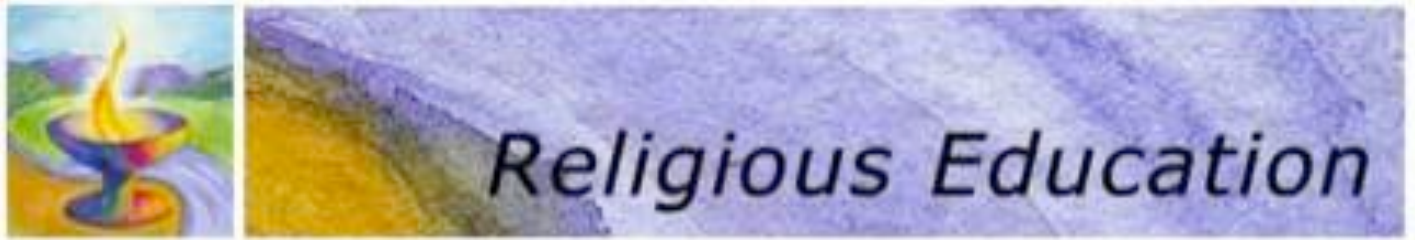
April 10 **God or Wow? How To Have a Relationship?** **Rev. Ed Hardy**

When we don't understand or are overwhelmed by the size of imagination or science or miracles what do we say—God or Wow!? Be careful—arguments have ensued from here, clashes of faith and belief, wars of fact and ideology, lives have been taken like flicking dust off your shirt for want of the "right" answer. What's a minister to do?

April 17 **Worship Committee**

April 24 **Who Will Offer You a Cup of Clean Water?** **Rev. Ed Hardy**

This Earth Day Celebration will take place at Church of the Pilgrimage across the street. Both congregations will participate, both Time for Children. The theme will be water driven by the question above: Who Will Offer You a Cup of Clean Water?



Help us support Heifer International by making a donation. We're trying to turn \$250 into \$1000. How you ask? The First Parish RE program received a \$250 grant for a service project. We are asking for the congregation, friends, and family to match our \$250 grant to make \$500. By participating in the Read to Feed Spring Match program our \$500 will be matched to make \$1000 to donate to Heifer. Not too shabby!! Will you help us meet our goal?



Make a donation on our [fundraising page](#) fundraising webpage, at coffee hour, or take a collection box at our Heifer table to gather your coins over the Month of April.

If you can't make a donation at this point, help us reach our goal by sharing our [fundraising page](#) on Facebook and Twitter! Or, even better, send an e-mail to friends you think might be interested in contributing and include a link to our page!

Parents/Kids Night Out

Friday, April 8, 7:00-9:00



Parents will have an hour to chat with Reverend Ed and then get to go out on the town for an hour. Kids will have a game night and snacks.

Please bring your favorite game to share.

RSVP to fpplmouthdre@gmail.com

April Happenings

Men's Breakfast

*Saturday, April 2 & 16, 9:00 am
T-Bones, Plymouth Center*

Annual Service Auction

*Saturday, April 2, 5:00 pm
Loring Center, Plymouth*

Scrabble After Church

Sunday, April 3 & 24, Kendall Hall

Parish Committee

*Monday, April 4, 7:00 pm
Parish House*

Restoration Committee

*Wednesday, April 6, 9:30 am
Monday, April 11, 7:00 pm
Wednesday, April 20, 27, 9:30 am
Parish House*

Buddhist Meditation

*Wednesday, April 6, 13, 20, 17
7:00 pm, Parish House*

Singing Meditation

*Wednesday, April 6, 7:00 pm
Parish House Parlor*

Parent & Kids Night

*Friday, April 8, 6:00 pm
Parish House*

Food Collection Sunday

Sunday, April 10

Hospice Choir

*Wednesday, April 13, 20, 27
Parish House Parlor*

Building & Grounds Committee

*Sunday, April 17, 8:30 am
Parish House*

Khenpo Karten Rinpoche

*TBA
Kendall Hall*

Worship & Music

*Tuesday, April 19, 7:30 pm
Parish House*

Women's Breakfast

*Saturday, April 23, 9:00 am
Kevin's Clubhouse
S. Meadow Road, Plymouth*

April Coffee Hour Hosts



April 3	Anne-Marie Harnett, Rick Sanchez, Linda Schneider
April 10	Mary Ann Hergenrother, Nancy Hinchey, Ann Marie Schulze
April 17	Jenn Kanze-Eaton, Martha Roberts, Debora Rudolf
April 24	Vaughn Keller, Chris Lennon, Julia Rose

Kerry Considine will coordinate Fellowship Hosts and will call with a reminder the week before your scheduled time. If, for any reason you cannot perform the duties on the date assigned, please call someone else on the list and work out a swap.

Thank you all for participating in the Fellowship of this Church.

Futures Committee



In May of last year, Reverend Ed, and a number of First Parish Members attended a UUA Regional workshop entitled “The Future of Small- to Mid-sized Congregations”.

The workshop energized this group who decided to continue to meet in an effort to build upon what they had learned. The mission statement that has emerged from these initial discussions is:

To objectively develop facts and knowledge about our buildings and possessions in order to prepare the congregation to make informed decisions regarding the future of First Parish.

Before members of any organization can engage in an effective dialogue designed to chart a path forward, they must know the facts associated with the various options available. To this end, the group has begun to gather data regarding the following issues.

Among the most pressing of concerns are decisions to be made regarding the meeting and parish houses. There are a number of directions the congregation could move in. In order to make informed decisions, this would include but is not limited to exploring:

- Factors associated with the feasibility of retaining the Meetinghouse including the cost of a total restoration, replacement of the heating system, and other repairs needing attention over the short and long term.
- Marketability of the Meetinghouse, should the congregation decide to sell the building with concern to the respect and preservation of its historic heritage.
- Expanding Brewster Chapel and upgrades to the Parish House as an alternative to retaining the Meetinghouse.
- Sale of both buildings in order to relocate elsewhere in Plymouth.
- Exploring the feasibility of merging with another local UU congregation.

With these options in mind, research has begun into the title and ownership of both buildings. Deeds establishing the Church’s ownership of the Parish House have been identified. However, it has also been established that the parking lot and road leading to it are town-owned with no special provisions granting use of the lot to the Church. A title examiner is exploring ownership of the Meetinghouse, which still remains difficult to establish. The examiner is currently exploring historical records in Boston that we hope will lead to more clarity.

We have also begun exploring having the Parish House assessed by an architect in order to fully grasp the possibilities and limitations associated with that property.

Continued

Futures Committee - Continued

Research has begun into the cost of replacing the heating system in the Meetinghouse, Green options, and any funding sources that might defer some of the expense.

The committee is engaging an appraiser to establish the value of the silver goblets and other items stored by the Church at the Pilgrim Hall Museum.

We are also researching the value of the green jadeite dishware that has been packed for safe keeping until a decision regarding retention or sale can be made.

The Committee wishes to be fully transparent and open in all its work. It is important to emphasize that this is an Ad Hoc committee with no decision-making authority. Our only agenda is to thoroughly explore all options without, to the best of our abilities, prejudice or bias. Once the committee believes it has done so regarding any issue, the information will be shared with the congregation as a whole. The goal is that our community can then engage in a dialogue ultimately leading to well considered decisions and votes toward action.

As the committee continues its work, we will update the congregation whenever significant new information is solidified.

Everyone is invited to contact any member of the committee with questions, concerns or recommendations for consideration:

Marion Galvin	gmariongalvin@verizon.net
Vaughn Keller	vaughnkeller@comcast.net
Anne-Marie Harnett	amh36@hotmail.com
Jan Palmer-Tarbox	ctarbox38@comcast.net
Ken Stone	kenstone50@verizon.net
Conley Pierce	c.pierce1@comcast.net
Ed Hardy	revedhardy@comcast.net (Ex Officio)

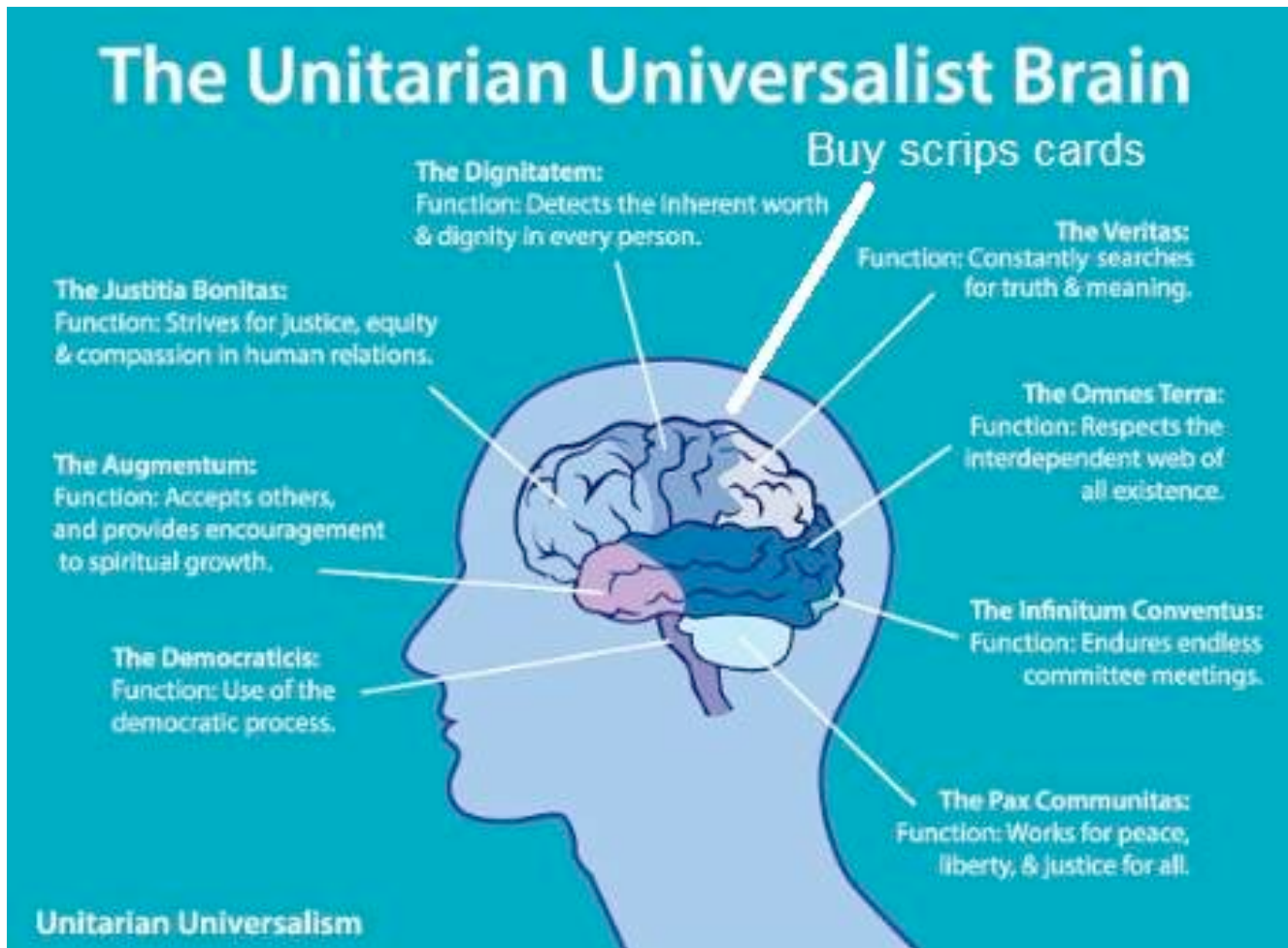
Parking Lot Update



The Town of Plymouth has installed a permanent barrier in the parking lot in back of the Parish House. Please keep that in mind when navigating the parking lot.

SCRIP Cards

The Convenient and Easy Way to Support First Parish



The SCRIP Program has been a great way to shop conveniently while supporting First Parish. Thank you to all who purchase SCRIP Cards.



ACTION ALERT

If we build it they will come. Say **NO** to new jails in Massachusetts! Tell legislators you oppose **S1297: "An Act establishing an Eastern Massachusetts women's county corrections facility."** This bill is on its way to the Senate Ways and Means Committees, and we cannot let it get any further. Please call our local Senator, Vinny deMacedo (617-722-1330) who is on the Ways and Means Committee, or call Senator Karen Spika, Chair of the Senate Ways and Means Committee and the lead sponsor of this bill (617-722-1640). The calls will take you 5 minutes. This is the message: ***"New jails are not the answer. We need a moratorium on jail building until Massachusetts invests in bail reform and alternatives to incarceration. Please vote against S1297."***

For more information, please go to: <https://endmassincarcerationtogether.wordpress.com/>

Food Pantry Update

Kerry Considine has taken over the duties of collecting food for the Greater Plymouth Food Warehouse for Amy Palmer.



Food
Pantry
Ministry

A very grateful thank you to Amy for all the time and energy she put into this important community service. And another very grateful thank to to Kerry for taking up the reins.

Kerry can be reached at 774-269-9801, khcgarden1@msn.com

Congratulations to Hannah Stillman



Hannah placed third at the Regional Science Fair. Next stop is the State Science Fair at MIT!

Friends of First Parish Meetinghouse



We now have a mailing address for the newly-formed non-profit corporation,

"Friends of First Parish Meetinghouse."

Friends will be doing the fund raising for the restoration of the meetinghouse. The Restoration Committee remains as a standing Committee of the Parish.

Please send all donations and correspondence to:

***Friends of First Parish
Meetinghouse
P. O. Box 3754
Plymouth, MA 02361***

The Directors of the new corporation are:

***Jan Palmer-Tarbox, President
Jack Barwis, Vice-President
Joyce Steward, Treasurer
Donna Petrangelo, Clerk
Bonney Dyer
Rick McDonald
Julia Rose***

Some of the world's greatest feats were accomplished by people not smart enough to know they were impossible.

THE FIRST PARISH PLYMOUTH ANNUAL SERVICE AUCTION IS ALMOST HERE !

Got your tickets? Got your outfit? Sent in your donation?

We have something for everyone. Yes, that's right. We have it all.



Looking Good? We'll make you look even better.

Feeling Good? We'll make you feel even better.

Having fun? Wait till you see how much fun you can have.



Think you already have enough stuff in your life? Wait till you see what we've got.



Like to cook? We'll make it better ... and easier.

Got kids? We've got stuff for them.

Got pets? We've got stuff for them too.

Got a car? We even have stuff for your car.

Need it? We've got it.

Need something done? We'll do it.



Like to eat? How do these sound?

Bella Piazza, Black Raspberry Pub, Blue-Eyed Crab, East Bay Grille, Full Sail Pub, Isaacs, Kkatie's Burger Bar, Lucioso's, Sam Diego's and T-Bones. **For some fine dining with a personal touch**, how about a lobster dinner on the waterfront with **Linda Harding**? Or brunch on **Dell & John's** beautiful deck? What about **Brett Creane's** famous, lip-smackingly good mac & cheese? For the sweet tooth, baker extraordinaire, **Marie Lunt** is offering mouthwatering goodies, and Edible Arrangements has donated a box of delicious chocolate dipped strawberries.

Like the Cape? Look what we have.

Weekend Condo in Provincetown, Stroll the Sandwich Boardwalk and Picnic on the Beach (where you can eat a sandwich in Sandwich), Scenic trip to Chatham ... and more.

Like the water? Look what we have.

Captain John Whalewatch, Sightseeing or Fishing on Buzzards's Bay, Trip out to Long Beach, (Plymouth's endangered Shorebird Sanctuary), Kayaking on Great Island Pond ... and more.

Like Art? Our resident artists have been very generous. **Charles Tarbox** has donated two original framed oil on canvas paintings and **Donna Petrangelo** has donated an original pastel. Award-winning photographer, **Jan Palmer-Tarbox**, has donated several beautiful, matted photographs. We even have a photo taken by **Rick McDonald** of the "Original Brewster Turkey." **Shelley-Jo Talvacchia** has donated an amazing hand-made "Shiplight" basket, and **Val Peck** has donated a marvelous hand-made art vase. And there's more!

Like Music? How about tickets to the Spring Pops Sinatra Celebration at the Plymouth Philharmonic donated by the **Ann Marie & Jim Schulze**? The musicians among us have also been generous. **John Hammond** has donated beginner harmonica lessons; **Peter Dudensing** is offering 3 piano lessons to get you started, and **Donna Petrangelo** has donated a fiddle, case and bow - you'll have to learn to play this on your own - no lessons from Donna.

And we have even more. But you'll have to come to the Auction to find out what they are!

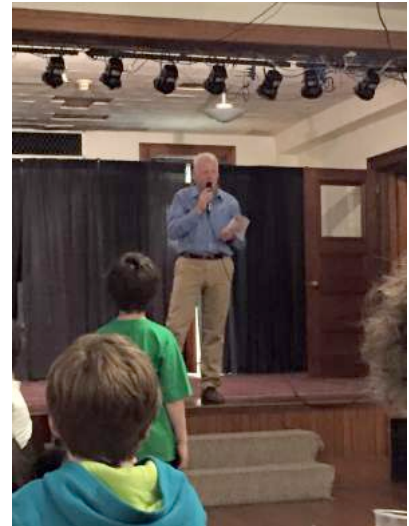
FIRST PARISH STEWARDSHIP POTLUCK DINNER



John Hammond, Chris Lennon
with Paka herding the kids



Vaughn Keller



Jokemaster, Chris Lennon



Jan Palmer-Tarbox and Charles Tarbox



Jenn Kanze-Eaton

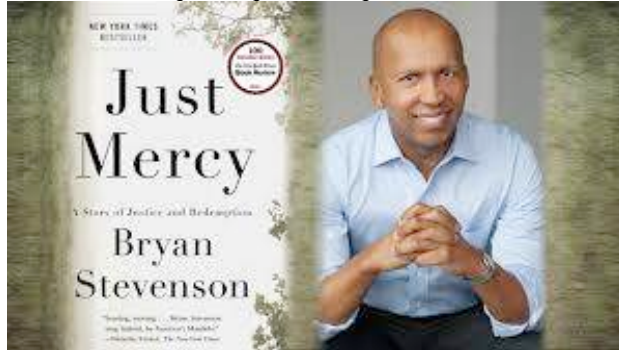


Diane Stillman



Hannah Stillman

Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson



Join us for a conversation on **JUST MERCY**, APRIL 7 2016 AT 7PM

MESSIAH BAPTIST CHURCH
80 LEGION PARK, BROCKTON

JOIN MEMBERS OF MESSIAH BAPTIST CHURCH,
FIRST PARISH IN BRIDGEWATER, FIRST PARISH IN DUXBURY,
FIRST PARISH IN KINGSTON, AND FIRST PARISH IN PLYMOUTH

If you haven't read the book, you could prepare for the conversation by reading a review of *Just Mercy* in the *New York Times* at:

www.nytimes.com/2014/10/19/books/review/just-mercy-by-bryan-stevenson.html

Or By watching on your computer a TED TALK
at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2tOp7OxyQ8>

This Event is Open to the Public

Butterfly Music Transgender Chorus

Saturday, April 16, 8:00 pm (Doors Open at 7:30 pm)
University Lutheran Church, 66 Winthrop Street, Cambridge



BUTTERFLY MUSIC
Transgender Chorus

The Butterfly Music Transgender Chorus, founded by Sandi Hammond (daughter of John and Dell), is giving their debut concert in April. There are two dates, April 9 and 16, the first of which is sold out; however, Sandi is offering 8 FREE TICKETS to members of First Parish for the second date of April 16, in Cambridge. Those who wish to attend using a free ticket can

email Sandi directly at sandiammond6@gmail.com. There are also tickets available for purchase here should all 8 get used: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2510143>

Founded on the principle that everyone has the right to love singing, we've been featured on NPR, in the Boston Globe, the New York Times, and Washington Post. First Parish in Plymouth provided the very first venue ever for the group to pilot their music in a safe place. The April concerts are their first ticketed events, their first truly public concerts, and we are grateful to First Parish for offering a discrete home for the group's first outing. Come and see us perform!

***First Parish in Plymouth
19 Town Square
Plymouth, MA 02360***



***Spring is when you feel
Like whistling even with
a shoe full of slush.***

-Doug Larson

***First Parish in Plymouth
“Love is the spirit of this congregation and service its law.”***

***Welcome to First Parish Unitarian Universalist
1606 - 2016***