

# TOP OF THE SQUARE FEBRUARY, 2017 NEWSLETTER

First Parish Plymouth Unitarian Universalist

National Memorial Pilgrim Church

19 Town Square, Plymouth, MA 02360

[www.firstparishplymouthuu.org](http://www.firstparishplymouthuu.org) 508-747-1606 [office@firstparishplymouthuu.org](mailto:office@firstparishplymouthuu.org).

## First Parish Marches in Boston



**Boston Women's March for America**

**On January 21, 2017, more than 200,000 people in Boston marched in solidarity with 700+ women's marches around the world.**

**In Peace. Without partisanship. For equality, dignity and justice.**

There were many people from First Parish Plymouth that marched in the Boston march, from the minister to our youngest member.



**Rev. Ed Hardy**



**Jane Melville with Dad, Paul**

**Facts:** 200,000 Boston Marchers; Zero, Zilch, Nada Police Incidents; 8 times the normal MBTA Saturday Ridership; 86 Registered Buses; 700+ Sister Marches Worldwide with 5 Million Marchers.

**More pictures on Page 7**



### **Minister**

Reverend Ed Hardy

### **Director of Religious Education**

Kim Caple

### **Director of Music**

Sandi Hammond

### **Director of Music Emerita**

Lynne Wilkinson



### **Parish Committee:**

#### **President**

Anne-Marie Harnett

#### **Treasurer**

Conley Pierce

#### **Clerk**

Deborah Rudolf

#### **Member at Large**

Chris Lennon



# A PILGRIM'S JOURNEY

BY REVEREND ED HARDY

## PETE SEEGER, the BOSTON COMMON and MARCHING

Pete Seeger was used to marches. Pete sang and played his banjo before thousands. Pete marched here in Boston and across the country. Seeger sang on the Washington Mall, but not on that famous day with Martin. He sang with Bruce Springsteen, *"This Land Is My Land,"* at the inauguration of President Obama. Seeger was used to crowds, used to the limelight, used to being held up as a symbol for freedom, for human rights, and Peace. When Seeger was tired of travelling, tired of the crowds, he would go to his home on the Hudson River and chop wood. The first time I ever heard Pete Seeger sing, was at the Boston Art Festival back in the early sixties when I heard for the first time—*"We Shall Overcome."* It is said that when Pete Seeger got older and would stay home longer; sometimes when he would hear the news, or some friend would tell him of trouble somewhere on the face of the earth, or he would just plain get the itch; he would walk down to the end of his street to a New York highway and stand there for a couple of hours holding up his sign, **"NO MORE WAR"** and when he felt he had done what his soul needed, he walked back home contented he had done, however small, his part.

*"We Shall Overcome"* was pretty heady music for a seventeen-year-old. It was to become a song of hope and encouragement for a country trying to right the injustices of slavery. It wasn't long before I had five or six Pete Seeger albums on the Folkways label and an old beat-up banjo I bought at an auction, and a red book by Pete Seeger, *"How to Play the Banjo."*

That first Seeger concert on the Common helped direct me to the left—toward marching for Civil Rights, to marching against the Vietnam war, to going to the State House with other UU ministers as Allies for Black Rights in Public Education. It has been over fifty years since that Pete Seeger concert. There has been a lot of marching; some of it with crowds of twenty thousand and some as little as fifteen or twenty—like our **Black Lives Matters** march after church last year.




Now I stand on the Boston Common with 175,000 other people. It is packed. If I fainted, I would not hit the ground. I am in a sea of people. I feel alive. Amazingly, I feel safe. I feel free. They sing Ella's Song—*"We who believe in Freedom cannot rest . . ."* I feel the energy lifting us up. There is a form of spirituality found in a crowd. Usually, I experience it at General Assembly on Sunday when five or six thousand will sing a hymn like—*"We are an Gentle, Angry People."*

Then, with our energy and joy, we are headed home in a MBTA Subway car so packed that the first stop there is no more room. At the next stop we say, ***"No more room. No more room."*** A young women who looks about in her late twenties or early thirties and could possibly play middle linebacker for the Patriots in response to our "no more room" folds her arms, places them in the middle of my back and pushes me and the four or five people in front of me back two or three feet and gets on the subway. She says, ***"I'm sorry I have to get to work."***

Finally, safely back in the car and headed home, I try to think of the things we can do—the small things—the consistent things to influence our government that we don't want to give up the rights we have earned and the rights we still desire. This is when I am glad we have each other—each other's wisdom and strength—and each other's desire to keep on keeping on.





# Religious Education

January was a short month for us with New Year's Day and the snow day, but we were still able to get in some great activities. We celebrated **Martin Luther King, Jr. and his Day of Service** by collaborating with Church of the Pilgrimage by making meals for the homeless. It was a great success. The kids did a phenomenal job in and out of the kitchen.



## Friday night re



Friday Night RE went on a field trip to the movies! Adults and children explored the 6<sup>th</sup> Principle: THE GOAL OF WORLD COMMUNITY WITH PEACE, LIBERTY, AND JUSTICE FOR ALL in a unique way by viewing *Hidden Figures*. The film is based on a true story about a team of African-American women that provide NASA with important mathematical data needed to launch the program's first successful space missions. A great time was had by all!



Sunday, February 5	Children's Chapel / Social Action Sunday
Sunday, February 12	Family Service
Friday, February 17	Friday Night RE
Sunday, February 19	Family Service
Sunday, February 26	One Room Schoolhouse – Coffee Hour

# February Worship

**Members and Friends:** this is the first month of a four-month experiment. Each month the sermons will have a general theme, and all the sermons will be on that theme (Seshat, the Egyptian goddess of writing willing.) The first month's theme is Unitarian Universalists and activism.

We, the Worship and Music Committee and minister, would appreciate your comments and suggestions. The next three month's themes are Integrity, Being an Ally, and Unitarian Universalism. Worship and Music Committee members are Linda Harding, Jenn Kanze-Eaton, Patricia Devine, Sibel Karchner and Ad Hoc member, Rev. Ed Hardy

## **February 5 Activists Have to Go to Church, Don't They? Rev. Ed Hardy**

At every church I have served, I have heard at one time or another, "This is a church! What's politics got to do with it?"

At First Parish in Brewster, before there was a "Welcoming Congregation" program, they hired a lesbian Assistant Minister-Rev. Kim Crawford Harvie, now Senior Minister, Arlington Street Church, Boston, Massachusetts. The church at that time was around 75 members. There was a tremendous undercurrent at the church, some of the members left, and Rev. Jim Robinson received life threatening phone calls at his office and his home. Rev. Harvie left after two years to be the minister at First Parish in Provincetown and then later at the flagship UU Church at Arlington Street in Boston.

Rev. Robinson felt that after Rev. Harvie left, the congregation should have robust conversations about the rights and place of Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual, and Transgenders as ministers and in the church. Rev. Robinson developed a Adult Education Program for the members of the church that later became the basis for the "Welcoming Congregation" Program developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association. The year after Brewster presented their adult education, they grew by 150 members, and for the next couple of years by 100 members each year. Their gay population was around five percent during which I did my two years of Student Ministry. When I left Brewster, there were 800 members and Sunday School had about 250 children.

## **February 12 Unitarians, Universalists and Slavery Rev. Ed Hardy**

The 1790 Universalist Convention, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania passed this resolution On Holding Slaves, written by Benjamin Rush, a Universalist and one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. *"We believe it is to be inconsistent with the union of the human race in a common Savior, and the obligations to mutual and universal love, which flow from that union, to hold any part of our fellow creatures in bondage. We therefore recommend a total refraining from the African trade and the adoption of prudent measures for the gradual abolition of the slavery of the negroes in our country, and for the instruction and education of their children in English literature, and in the principles of the Gospel."*

## **February 19 Elevator Theology Rev. Ed Hardy**

Has your life been changed by being a Unitarian Universalist?

If your answer is "Yes," then you are ready to answer the question "What does it mean to be a Unitarian Universalist?"

This service will provide some history of "elevator speeches," some examples, and a warning not to write a single "elevator speech" for everyone. I know I have several speeches to say, depending on who is standing in front of me: a mother, kids, someone who looks like they have slept in the leaf pile out back, or someone on crutches. Each one a different speech.

Finally, for those who would like to create their own "Elevator Theology," there will be a one-and-a-half-hour writing session next **Wednesday, February 22 at 7:30 pm**. If you don't have fun, we guarantee your money back.

# Coffee Hour Hosts for February



February 5

Marion Galvin, Sandi & Conley Pierce

February 12

Kerry Considine, Jennifer & Brett Creane

February 19

Emily Browder-Melville, Paul Melville, Conley Pierce

February 26

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION!

Coffee Hour is made possible by your donations. There will be a basket for donations during Coffee Hour.

## SUNDAY GREETERS



GREETERS ARE NEEDED TO WELCOME PEOPLE AS THEY COME INTO FIRST PARISH CHURCH.

IF YOU CAN HELP ON SUNDAYS AND BE THAT FRIENDLY FACE, PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE.

## A Message from



SCRIP Cards are available during Coffee Hour or by contacting Amy at [apdpalmer@comcast.net](mailto:apdpalmer@comcast.net)

## Food Collection Sunday is February 19



*In addition to non-perishable food items, personal hygiene products and cleaning supplies, how about a Valentine Treat?*



Please contact Sandi Hammond if you have any questions or are thinking of joining!

617-583-0309

[sandihammond6@gmail.com](mailto:sandihammond6@gmail.com)





**Friends of First Parish Meetinghouse**

Wednesday, February 1, 8, 15, 22  
9:30 am, Parish House

**Singing Meditation**

Wednesday, February 1  
7:00 pm, Parlor

**Men's Breakfast**

Saturday, February 4 & 18  
9:00 am, T-Bones, Plymouth Center

**Children's Chapel / Social Action Sunday**

Sunday, February 5  
10:00 am, Brewster Chapel

**Parish Committee**

Monday, February 6  
7:00 pm, Parish house

**Hospice Choir**

Wednesday, February 8, 15 & 22  
7:00 pm, Parlor

**Friday Night RE**

Friday, February 10, 6:00 pm  
Parish House

**Building & Grounds Committee**

Sunday, February 19, 8:30 am  
8:30 am, Parish House

**Food Collection Sunday**

Sunday, February 19  
During Worship

**Worship & Music Committee**

Tuesday, February 21  
7:30 pm, Parish House

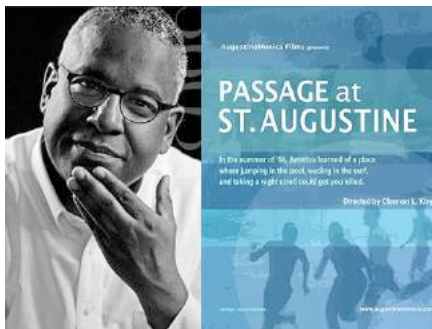
**"Elevator Theology"**

Wednesday, February 22  
7:30 pm, Parish House

**Women's Breakfast**

Saturday, February 25, 9:00 am  
Friendly's, Exit 5, Plymouth  
All Are Welcome!

**"Passage at St. Augustine"**  
Thursday, February 9, 6:00 pm  
Boston Public Library, 700 Boylston Street



**HISTORY LESSON**

President Trump might also want to learn more about the civil rights movement, for which activists such as Rep. John Lewis put their lives and freedom on the line.

To do so, he might check out Clenon L. King's documentary, **"Passage at St. Augustine,"** an account of the grueling and bloody 16-month battle against Jim Crow laws in the country's oldest city.

**"Passage at St. Augustine"** is free and open to the public and a discussion will follow with the filmmakers, Rep. Byron Rushing and Mimi Jones, an activist in the St. Augustine campaign. For more information, please go to [www.bpl.org/programs/calendar.htm#/?i=47](http://www.bpl.org/programs/calendar.htm#/?i=47).

*-From the Boston Sunday Globe, January 22, 2017*

# First Parish Marches in Boston

Many people of First Parish Plymouth joined the marches both in Boston and Washington, D.C.  
If you were there, please let us know.  
And if you have any pictures, please send those too!





# Your generosity at work



On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Plymouth Taskforce to End Homelessness, I thank you for your very generous donation of \$516 which was collected at the Thanksgiving service.

Your donation will be used to support our program which include the Overnights of Hospitality and our affordable housing initiatives.

Again, thanks!

Gratefully,  
Connie Melahoures  
President

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## South Shore Women's Resource Center

Dear Members of the Congregation:

On behalf of South Shore Women's Resource Center, I want to thank you most sincerely for your generous donation of \$903.30. Our gratitude to the members of the congregation for voting to donate a portion of your plate contributions to our agency. Our sincere thanks for your support toward the Community Support Services Program provided here at SSWRC.

Your support makes a huge difference to families who are struggling with the aftermath of domestic violence and homicide bereavement. Your donation helps us to achieve our basic overall mission, which is to end violence against women and children.

South Shore Women's Resource Center's programs focus directly upon counseling, group support, court advocacy, child & adolescent counseling, 24-hour hotline services, emergency safe home services, and community outreach.

*Continued*

Additionally, we provide a small food pantry at our offices where families in need can access items they cannot afford.

South Shore Women's Resource Center provides a broad range of services that includes:

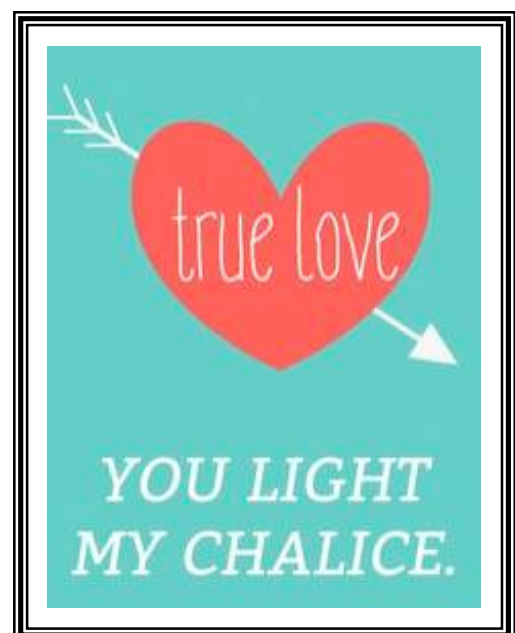
- Individual Support and Advocacy
- Child and Adolescent Services
- County-wide Court Advocacy Service
- Community Education and Training
- Safe Home Services for women/families in danger
- Community and Legislative Advocacy
- Support Groups
- Older Women's Services
- Information & Referral Services
- 24-Hour Hotline
- SSWRC Advocates in Police Departments
- Advocacy at Bet Israel Deaconess Hospital E.R.

Please accept our thanks and appreciation, and on behalf of those who will be helped by your generosity, thank you for caring!

Warmest regards.

Sincerely,  
Sandra Blatchford  
Program Director

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# COMMUNITY & OTHER UU EVENTS

**MUSIC THROUGH THE AGES**  
First Parish Kingston Unitarian Universalist Church




300 years

*Love Beyond Belief*

Come hear and sing music  
as it was sung right here in Kingston 300 years ago.  
This special service will take you through the church  
and town's history on an entertaining, informative  
journey... stories, fun facts, jazz history, and music  
sung by soloist Andrew Garland and First Parish  
choir (directed by Dr. Rosaly McLean).



Sunday February 12, 2017 10:30 AM  
223 Main Street Kingston, MA



**LGBTQ**


**TRANS 101: Transgender Identities and Experience**

February 24 @ 7:30 pm. Free admission. All welcome.

Panel of speakers will share personal stories, provide information, and speak to the relevance of transgender issues for our community. Presented with support from South Shore PFLAG.

First Parish Church, 842 Tremont St, Duxbury • [www.uudux.org](http://www.uudux.org)

Part of the Open Minds Speaker Series at First Parish Church.




## We're in a Marathon Folks, Not a Sprint....

By Laura Wagner, Executive Director



I know many of you are feeling overwhelmed by the numerous events that are happening and the multiple calls to action. Please know that justice organizations are talking to one another and coordinating actions but the fast pace needed right now means that our coordination isn't perfect. Grassroots action can be messy at times - and that's actually good!

Grassroots people power is the foundation in all that we do and it energizes our shared work. Each organization works together as best they can. At UU Mass Action we participate in multiple coalition efforts and are in frequent communication with other leaders.

In the house metaphor pictured above, the organizations work to give structure to our shared movement and strengthen our collective work. The roof in this example holds us all together by creating a shared vision we are all working towards. You are called to engage in the issue you care most passionately about and know that others are doing the same. Then, there are times when we are called to come together for one action or event.

At those times, you simply need to trust in our leaders and take the action that is called for. Make sure that you are engaged in the daily practices that both energize and calm you. We are all in this for the long haul and everyone is needed. It does not matter if you think your contribution is small, what's most important now is working together and taking collective action. It is not a time to give into despair or feel defeated. Let's care for ourselves, one another and not lose sight of our vision.

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



*The Eskimo has fifty-two names  
for snow because it is important  
to them; there ought to be as  
many for love.”*

*-Margaret Atwood*

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

*Welcome to First Parish Unitarian Universalist  
1606 - 2017*