

First Parish, Hingham  
**Old Ship Church**

Unitarian Universalist  
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## December 2020 Newsletter

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### Worship in December

[Click here to join worship on Zoom @ 10:25 a.m. on Sundays!](#)

#### **Sunday, December 6**

"Holy Expectations" will be Ken's message in the midst of the Christian season of Advent, and near the end of a calendar year the likes of which we would never have expected. Should we give up on expectations... or do our expectations, one way or another, help to shape the future? What does Advent teach? What do we think?

*At this service we will introduce our annual Guest at Your Table program in support of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. See details in the Social Justice section below.*

#### **Sunday, December 13**

This service will fall in the first days of Hanukkah, the festival of lights. Ken's message: "The Beauty, Power, and Miracle of Your Light"

#### **Sunday, December 20**

Yes, we will have our annual Christmas Pageant! On Zoom of course. During the service, Ken will narrate a UU version of the nativity story, and everyone of all ages will be invited to dress for the occasion – as a shepherd, angel, star, or animal in the manger. We will sing familiar carols along the way.

#### **Wednesday, December 24 – 5:00 p.m.**

Our annual Christmas Eve service will also be on Zoom – with readings and music for the occasion, including our full virtual choir for Handel's "Halleluiahs Chorus," and of course a Christmas Eve message from Ken. Please share computers if you are sharing a household, to be sure our Zoom account will accommodate everyone who wishes to attend.

#### **Sunday, December 27**

This will be our annual service of readings which we are invited to bring and share. It will be on Zoom, and led by Ken. If you have a poem or other reading you'd like to share, you can just raise your hand, be recognized, and unmute. We won't be able to share our usual New Year's breakfast or Ken's famous granola – but we can share our presence and our readings.

## **Seasonal Vespers Services**

### **Wednesdays, December 2, 9, 16, and 23**

### **6:30 p.m.**

We have offered these peaceful services of readings, music, and plenty of silence for many years. As we will once again: led on Zoom by Ken from the Old Ship Meeting House, with remote readers (*let Ken know if you'd like to be a reader or musician for one of these services*). [Here](#) is the Zoom link for all the Vespers services.

Ken will light candles, and ***we are each invited to pick up a beeswax candle*** from a basket by the Meeting House entrance on the afternoon of each service – one candle per household to be used throughout the season, so we will have enough to go around.

## **24th Annual Winter Solstice**

### **Poetry Evening**

### **Sunday, December 20, 7 p.m.**

This season's crossing time is the Winter Solstice (marking the longest night of the year before the gradual return of more light). This year, we will gather on Zoom on the eve of the Solstice. Bring a poem if you like, one about hope, or winter's gifts, or a poem that lifts your spirit, or simply come and listen. Come nourish your spirit with the steady and sturdy truths and beauties of poetry.

Rich Jensen will be vocal soloist. Christopher Nickelson-Mann, on piano, and Jeremy Harman on cello. Musical interlude begins at 6:45 p.m. Our presence together will "lighten the heart and the darkness." (*Clarissa Pinkola Estes*)

The Zoom link will be posted on Old Ship Church website and sent in the weekly email on December 15. For more info call Elizabeth Torrey at 781-749-0543.

## ***from the minister's desk***

### **Musing**

We enter the last month of (to put it neutrally and far too mildly) a most remarkable year. As we know all too well, 2020 has been filled with challenges and suffering overflowing; and as we also know, when we enter the first month

of 2021 many challenges will remain – even as we hope much of the suffering of Covid will gradually ameliorate.

With all this in mind and in our hearts, December festivals will be celebrated in ways unlike any in our lifetimes, just as so much this year has been unlike anything in our lifetimes. But the festivals – whether Hanukkah, Solstice, Christmas, or Kwanzaa – carry their age-old messages unchanged: The courage to seek freedom, the turning of the earth from darkness to light, the miracle of birth and hope, the power of community... and much else. So I would like to gently suggest that we do our best not to allow our understandable disappointment that we won't be able to gather and sing and feast together as usual to cast a shadow on the month. Instead, whatever might be going on in our lives or in the world, may we try our best to focus on the messages and inspiration that endure - just as the light that is part of each one of these winter holy days endures. It is light that can remind us of the light and love we share and that can guide us into the next year... and the next.

In this spirit, I wish you and your dear ones peace, love, and many blessings this season and always.

And as always, please feel free to call or email at any time with whatever concerns you may have, or whatever sorrow weighs you down, or just to talk – because conversation is always good.

Peace and blessings,  
Ken  
cell: 781-635-2060  
oldshipkreb@gmail.com

## **Message from Janet Asnes**

### **President, Board of Trustees**

This month we held our semi-annual committee chair meeting. It's one of my favorite meetings of the year because it is a chance to hear from the committees as they share what they are currently doing and what they hope to do this year. This month we had representatives from Social Justice, the Memorial Garden, Pastoral Care, Children's Religious Education, Buildings & Grounds, Nurturing Community Council, Flowers, Worship & Music, Technology, Finance, Parish House, Candlelight Concerts, Coffeehouse along with some members of the Board and Deacons.

Here are just a few of the topics discussed and ongoing events at Old Ship by Ministry:

- Serving Others
  - Anti-Racism Book Group; looking for programming with UU Urban Ministry.
  - Our plate collection for the Food Pantry last month was \$1900. A fantastic amount! November is Friends of the Homeless and December will be the UU Service Committee Guest at Your Table.
- Stewarding Resources

- Memorial Garden engraving up to date and preparing the garden for winter, encouraging other committees to use the space for their outside space needs.
- Buildings & Grounds continues ongoing assessment of property, working with Mark Curran to fix those things that can be fixed, preparing for annual building inspections, looking for new carpenter with historic building experience.
- Our Technology Team has assisted Finance and Chloe Briede with migrating our membership database to Breeze.
- Finance reports that incoming pledges have been on track.
- There may not be Merrie Market this year but there are wreaths. Old Ship's elves have been working in the garage for weeks and will be selling them the weekend before Thanksgiving.
- Educating Hearts & Minds
  - Children's & Youth RE: Interim DRE process, completing OWL, preparing for the Christmas tableau
- Nourishing the Spirit
  - The Flowers committee is getting long lasting arrangements while our typical program is on hold.
  - Worship & Music is supporting Ken and Christopher each Sunday. There is an ongoing need for readers and chalice lighters.
  - The last Candlelight Concert was in March but there is high hope for 2021.
- Nurturing Community
  - The Nurturing Community Council should be getting a proof of the directory shortly. Due to COVID, the company has been on reduced hours for months.
  - Pastoral Care has been very busy supporting our congregation and is looking at ways we can all share cheer during the upcoming holidays. They have been collecting fun stories from Old Ship members.

In addition to these committee chairs, members of the Board and Deacons also attended the meeting. Old Ship's Deacons support our minister and congregation in times of need and act as guidance for the Board. Working behind the scenes, their ministry supports all of the work at Old Ship. For a recent example, it was a contribution from their account that is providing the means for services to be streamed on Zoom. Our Deacons are Turner Bledsoe, Mike Dwyer, Fan Leonard, Jane Malme and Eva Marx.

All Board of Trustee meetings are open to any members, but periodically the Board will invite a specific committee to attend. Another way the Board maintains connections to our ministries is by having a liaison to committees. The liaison's responsibility is to keep the Board updated on the work being done by and to act as an advocate for that ministry. The Board liaisons for 2020-2021 are:

Nurturing - Joan Wilson  
 Worship & Music - Chris Sullivan  
 Children's & Youth RE - Maureen Butler  
 Social Justice - Dana Kintigh

## Buildings & Grounds, Flowers - Diane Morrison

There are some days when I am so focused on what my immediate task at hand is that I may forget that what I am actually doing is playing a small part in the larger arena of First Parish, Old Ship Church. Having the opportunity to hear from other players about their roles not only reminds me of the larger stage but reinvigorates me to my part. As Thanksgiving arrives, one of the things I continue to be grateful for is being a part of this community. Thank you.

Blessings,  
Janet Asnes for the Board of Trustees

## Among Us

Last month we welcomed Louise Smith as a member of Old Ship Church. She says "I'm so lucky! Thanks to all of you and many others for your welcome over the past two years." We are so happy to have her!

## Pastoral Care Leadership Team

We are all on the pastoral care team, but our "Pastoral Care Leadership Team" meets each month to share any concerns about parishioners who are ill, in the hospital, or facing other significant challenges, and to coordinate responses. If you have a pastoral concern to share with our Team, please feel free to contact any member of the group:

[Ralph Brown](#)

[Liz Flint](#)

[Elaine Gomez](#)

[Alicia Harkness](#)

[Fan Leonard](#)

[Carol Valentine](#)

[Joan Wilson](#)

[Ken Read-Brown](#)

## Music Notes

Dear Old Ship,

I'm writing this article only a few days before Thanksgiving. For many people, the holiday season brings memories to the forefront of their minds. I find myself reminiscing about my family, our traditions, and of course all the delicious food we have over the holidays. If your family is like mine, your holiday traditions will

look a little different this year. It's important to remember that no matter the distance, we are still capable of feeling connected in some way. We can still feel the love of our family (both biological and chosen), even if they are far away, even if we can't embrace them physically.

I am sharing a song with you called "Most of All" by Brandi Carlile. It touches on family and the things we learn from our loved ones. For me, one of the most beautiful phrases in this song speaks to the power of love: "Remember what comes back when you give away your love." This is a good mantra for life in general, but I think it is especially important this year during the holiday season. No matter the distance between you and your loved ones, send them love and it will come back to you.

Wishing you and your loved ones a holiday season filled with love, no matter the distance.

Warmly,  
Christopher



## Educating Hearts and Minds

Greetings from the Children's Religious Education Program! Happy Holidays!

November was a great month! We started with our annual Día de Muertos (Day of the Dead) celebration. We set up an ofrenda, an altar, in the Old Ship Memorial Garden. The ofrenda featured pictures of and items from loved ones lost. The Memorial Garden was a fitting location to honor our own departed and our Old Ship community members. We also talked about our loved ones and made a craft. It was lovely to celebrate this Old Ship CRE tradition even in the midst of the pandemic.

This month, we finished Our Whole Lives. The program had been on hold because of COVID-19, and we were able to finish it over the last two months.

**Congratulations to our OWL Graduates!** Also a special thank you to our OWL teachers Debbie Squires-Lee, Corey Fitz-Marquez, and Mason Wiley. We appreciate your dedication to our youth!

Finally, the Interim Religious Education Team is hard at work. We are currently looking at the history of RE at Old Ship church. **We welcome your comments and memories!** If you had children go through the RE program at Old Ship, please email [Chloë](#) and tell us about your time in RE.

I have heard from a couple of people that you would like to read to your grandchildren over Zoom. For the Time for All Ages, I often use digital book services like Overdrive and Hoopla from the public library. The Hingham Public Library has both services! You can also use Kindle from Amazon. Once you have the book, you can use Hoopla via your browser or the Kindle program on your computer to share your screen and read to the children in your life. I hope this tip will help you connect virtually!

Sending love and good cheer,  
Chloë

Our ofrenda in the memorial garden for Día de Muertos.

Each of our OWL graduates received a stuffed owl and a book as graduation gifts.

## Children's Religious Education

### Storytime with Debbie

Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. join Debbie Squires-Lee for storytime and discussion on Zoom. This is open to children and youth of all ages, and content is geared towards grades K–4. For the Zoom link, please email [Debbie Squires-Lee](#).

### RE @ Coffee Hour

Children and youth are invited to join Chloë in an RE specific breakout room on Sundays after service. We will check in and talk about the worship topic. This will be in the [regular church Zoom service](#) around 11:15 a.m.

### Youth Group

Typically gathers every Sunday at 2:30 p.m. in front of the Meeting House. We do a check-in. We share stuff we did during the week. We make plans and discuss current events. We advocate for a more just world. Please join us! Grades 8–12 are welcome. Contact [Chloë](#) or [Maureen Butler](#) for more information.

## Life Learning on Zoom!

The 2020-2021 Life Learning brochure is available by clicking [here](#).

## Upcoming Events

**The World's Religions: A Personal Journey** — six sessions, Wednesdays, beginning Jan. 13; 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Led by Ken Read-Brown. Ken has led classes on the world's religious traditions several times over the years. This time will be less academic and more personal, as Ken shares the dimensions of each tradition that have inspired and moved him – inviting participants to do the same. Traditions will include Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and indigenous traditions. For more information and to sign up, email [Ken](#) or call him at 781-635-2060.

## Ongoing Groups and Gatherings

**Bodhisattva Study Group** — Gathers each Sunday morning at 8:30 a.m. On the first and third Sundays, Ken Read-Brown leads us in a twenty minute meditation, then we read aloud (this year from *Welcoming the Unwelcome* by the American Buddhist teacher Pema Chodron), then we talk, concluding by 9:45. The other weeks will include meditation and conversation facilitated by members of the group. All are welcome. For questions and for the Zoom links, email [Ken Read-Brown](#).

**Men's Breakfast** — Gathers on the *second Sunday* morning of each month at 8:30 a.m. for sharing and conversation. The next gathering will be December 13. Contact [Ralph Brown](#) or [Rich Elliott](#) for the Zoom link.

**Women's Breakfast and Conversation** — Meets on the *fourth Sunday* morning of each month at 9 a.m. Open to all the women of the church. The next gathering will be December 27. We gather to share our lives and enjoy one another's company. Conversations are confidential and, again, all are welcome! Click [here](#) to join us on Zoom.

**Sacred Texts Meditation Group** — In December this group will meet on the first and third Thursdays (Dec. 3 and 17) at 4:00 p.m. We sit for about ten minutes meditation, then read a chapter from the *Tao Te Ching*, then we talk, concluding at about 5:15 p.m. All are welcome. For the Zoom link, email [Ken Read-Brown](#).

**Ceilidh!** — Gathers on the first Tuesday of each month. So our next monthly song/poem circle will be on Zoom Tuesday evening, December 1, at 7:00 p.m. Email [Ken](#) if you have questions about the ceilidh, or for the Zoom link to attend.

## The Old Ship Calendar

The Old Ship Church calendar is available on our website by clicking [here](#).



If you have an upcoming event or meeting and you want to see it on the calendar, please email [Chloë](#) in the office.

Additionally, if you contact information has changed, please email [Chloë](#) so she can update the Old Ship database.

## Upcoming Committee Meetings on Zoom

**Board of Trustees** — Thursday, December 3, 7:00 p.m.

**Children's Religious Education Committee** — Tuesday, December 1, 7:30 p.m.

**Pastoral Care Leadership Team** — Tuesday, December 1, 1:30 p.m.

Contact [Chloë](#) for links to these meetings.

## Serving Others

### News from the Social Justice Council

**Our annual Guest at Your Table fundraising effort for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee begins on December 6!** The theme of this year's program is the Meaning of Home. During the pandemic, home has been especially important in our lives. As part of Guest at Your Table, we invite you to witness stories of our partners around the world as they tell you about home. UUSC partners in Central America are working to make sure no one is forced to flee their home due to violence or economic devastation. UUSC partners in Alaska, Louisiana, and the Pacific are fighting for their homes and ancestral lands against the ravages of extractive industries and climate change. And UUSC partners in Burma, Bangladesh, and beyond are working tirelessly to support the rights of the Rohingya ethnic minority of Burma after facing government backed genocide in their homeland. You can learn more about these partners in the Stories of Hope book, available this year [online](#).

You may make your donations to Guest at Your Table [online](#) through Old Ship by designating your donation to UUSC-Guest at Your Table or by sending your check to the church office, payable to UUSC. Donations also may be mailed directly to UUSC, at UUSC, PO Box 808, Newark, NJ 07101-0808 (be sure to put GAYT in the memo line and indicate your connection to Old Ship Church). You may also donate online at [uusc.org](https://uusc.org). During this time of "Zoom" church, we still are celebrating the beloved tradition of Guest at Your Table as our major fundraising effort for UUSC. Thanks in advance for your generosity!

**Hingham Food Pantry** — The food pantry continues to collect non-perishable food items on the following dates: Monday, December 14, from 2:30-4 p.m. and Wednesday, December 2 and 16, from 12:30-3 p.m. General food

items needed throughout the year include cookies, granola bars, canned beef stew, canned spaghetti, tuna, pasta sauce, white rice, mac & cheese, and hearty canned soups. Special holiday needs include cranberry sauce and turkey gravy. Donations also can be dropped off at Stop and Shop (large bin located by the main door at the front of the store--near the flowers).

### **Volunteer Opportunity from the Hingham-Hull Religious Leaders**

**Association** — Looking for a way to help others this holiday season? While the large-scale Hingham-Hull Religious Leaders Association sponsored MLK Day of Service meal packing event in January will not take place, the need continues as we seek to collectively end hunger in New England. The Outreach Program is packing meals in a socially distanced manner at a warehouse in Pembroke, in groups of no more than 24 at a time. You can [sign up here](#) to reserve a slot (scroll down) anytime over the next few months, and also view ways to donate online. Thank you!

**Anti-Racism “Drop-In” Book Group** — We will meet on Sunday, December 13, at 7 p.m. via Zoom, to discuss Zora Neal Hurston's classic novel, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. If you would like to join, contact [Davalene Cooper](#) for the Zoom link. Also, if you would like to keep up with this group and its conversations and sharing of resources to learn about and combat racism, we have established a Google Classroom for this purpose.

**Old Ship Social Justice Action Alert Network** — Sign up for the Old Ship Social Justice Action Alert Network to find out about specific advocacy opportunities such as letter writing, advocacy calls, and participating in educational/advocacy events with local legislators. Send your email address to [Davalene Cooper](#), Keeper of the List.

## **Mask and You Shall Receive**

Are you tired of wearing the same masks day in and day out?

Well, Old Ship's crafting group, the Fiber Fun Ship has heard you. They have been socially distancing sewing for weeks and will have masks for us to purchase soon.

## **Visit Old Ship Virtually!**

Last week, panorama photographer John Wood visited Old Ship Church. He took some beautiful 360° photos of the church and shared them with us as a gift from him. We invite you to take a look!

[Inside the Meeting House](#)

[Inside the Meeting House \(Enhanced\)](#)

[From the Pulpit](#)

[From the Pulpit \(Enhanced\)](#)

[From the Balcony](#)

[Outside the Meeting House](#)  
[Outside the Meeting House \(Moonlight\)](#)  
[Outside the Meeting House 2](#)  
[Outside the Meeting House 3](#)  
[Hingham Memorial Bell Tower](#)

## Important Parish House Reminder

Our weekday renter of the Fellowship Hall is “Launch” – a state-funded program whose mission is “to empower and encourage self-determination for individuals with disabilities by accessing work and social opportunities in a truly community-based setting.” Launch is a source of very helpful income for us, but just as importantly we are pleased to be able to support their good work.

**Please remember that the Fellowship Hall is exclusively for the use of Launch — do not walk through or enter for any reason on any day (even weekends). This is more important than ever during the time of Covid-19, to help ensure the safety and health of Launch clients and staff.**

**Happy Holidays  
from your friends  
at Old Ship Church!**

First Parish, Old Ship Church | 107 Main Street, Hingham, MA 02043

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