



First Parish, Hingham

## Old Ship Church

Unitarian Universalist

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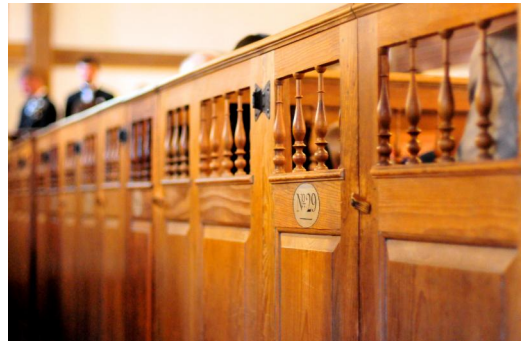
### December 2014 Newsletter

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#### A Month of Sundays...

##### Sunday, December 7

Families gather around home and hearth during this season. Yet millions around the world have no home to call their own: From homeless individuals and families in our nation's towns and cities, to refugees in and from troubled and violent lands around the world. Jesus himself is said to have lamented that "The son of man has no place to lay his head." Ken's sermon will be "The Way Home."



After having worked, and eaten lunch, and shopped for toys and books and treasures at Saturday's Merrie Market, we'll be too tired for Sunday school...December 7 will be Pancake and Pajamas day for anyone who wants to dress in jamies. Children, youth, teachers and R. E. Committee members and the DRE are urged to come in their comfiest pajamas

##### Sunday, December 14

As Hanukkah approaches and tensions rise in a land and city holy to three faiths, Ken's sermon will be "Jerusalem, Jerusalem" - reflections on the nature of religious freedom and the eternal hope for peace. Among other things, a question: On balance, does religion tend to foment discord and violence... or does religion tend to bring peace?

##### Sunday, December 21

Would you like to be a wise one from afar... or perhaps a shepherd... or maybe an angel...? Well, our Christmas Pageant will offer the opportunity for anyone who wishes, whatever your age, to participate. We will welcome into our hearts the layers of meaning within the timeless nativity story, preparing room for the rebirth of love in our lives and in the world. Along the way we'll sing Christmas carols and enjoy music of the season from the choir loft.

#### Christmas Eve

Our annual Christmas Eve service will as always be at 5:00. Old-timers know to arrive no later than 4:30 in order to have a choice of pews; the Meeting House will fill early and quickly with people and with Christmas spirit.

We will listen to Christmas readings traditional and not so traditional, enjoy beautiful music from an expanded choir and a brass choir, sing Christmas carols, and enjoy a story for Christmas Eve from Ken. The Christmas Eve offering will be divided among the UU Service Committee, UU Urban Ministry, and Father Bill's and Mainspring.

Childcare for the very young will be offered in our Parish House by generous volunteers

from our friends at Congregation Sha'aray Shalom at the other end of Main Street.

### **Sunday, December 28**

This will be our annual New Year's service held in the Fellowship Hall. All are invited to gather for a light breakfast (including Ken's famous homemade granola!) at 9:30, followed by the service of shared readings at 10:30. Everyone is invited to bring a favorite reading, poetry or prose, that speaks to you as we approach the turning of the year.

### **Seasonal Vespers Services**

Our Old Ship tradition continues of vespers services on Wednesday evenings between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Led by Ken Read-Brown, each service is held at 6:30, and includes a blend of readings, music, and silence all in a dimly lit Old Ship Meeting House.

All are welcome! And if you'd like to participate by reading a selection or sharing music, contact Ken at [oldshipkrb@gmail.com](mailto:oldshipkrb@gmail.com) or 781-749-1679. (Following each vespers will be a conversation at 7:30 in the Parish House parlor on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount - details are elsewhere in the newsletter and on our web site.)

### **Most Sunday mornings...**

Most Sunday mornings at Old Ship begin with gatherings in small circles in the Parish House parlor for sharing and spiritual enrichment. And we are all invited! Our web site has more detailed information about these opportunities:

- The "Bodhisattva Study Group" meets at 8:30 on the first and third Sundays of each month, offering time for meditation and then conversation concerning a Buddhist book the group is reading.
- "Men's Breakfast" meets at 8:30 on the second Sunday of each month for sharing and conversation (and bagels and coffee and tea too).
- "Women's Breakfast and Knitting" meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at 8:30 for... breakfast and knitting... and conversation.

*Childcare available before Sunday services: If you plan to attend the Men's Breakfast or Bodhisattva Study Group or Women's Knitting or a committee meeting on Sunday morning and need childcare in order to do so, please call our office by Wednesday before the Sunday, and we will do our best to arrange childcare in the nursery for you.*

### **Musing from the Minister's Desk**

We enter the holiday season in a troubled world. We all know the list: Ebola, ISIS, Jerusalem, Iran, Korea, climate change, the widening gap between rich and poor, the plight of undocumented immigrants, hunger, homelessness, Ferguson... and much of this made the worse because of political polarization and gridlock in Washington and around the nation.

So we might understandably be moved to ask: Dare we celebrate? Dare we celebrate when so many suffer? Dare we celebrate when so many problems and challenges clamor for our attention?

Well, it seems to me the better question is this: Dare we *not* celebrate?

For our spirits yearn for and need connection to realities other than the day's - or the year's - troubles, whether those troubles are global, national, or personal. We yearn for connection to one another and connection to sources of meaning and purpose well beyond the daily headlines or our personal struggles, however serious they may be.

The good news at this time of year is that our spirits can be heartened and renewed through Hanukkah's celebration of religious freedom and, as a rabbi once put it, our "right to be different"... and as we allow the Christmas message of peace on earth, good will to all, and the rebirth of love to resonate deeply within us... and at the time of solstice, bringing with it a reminder of our place in the cosmos, along with the turning seasons assurance that light will return after the darkest night.

Yes, we must celebrate. But not the commercial, hyper-consumerist way the culture encourages us to celebrate. Instead, may we celebrate in ways that connect us more deeply to one another. May we celebrate in ways that remind us we are not alone, and that life and love hold and sustain us.

It is in this spirit that everyone is invited to all of Old Ship's many activities and special services during the season. But only choose the ones that will nurture your spirit during this season of our shared life and during this season of your life.

Know, too, that my door is always open for conversation or counseling; this can be a hard time of year for many, and I'm always here to help and support each and every member and friend of our congregation, even as you help and support one another.

I wish you all many blessings this season and always.

Peace and blessings,

--Ken

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

*My Parish House office hours are ordinarily Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday beginning about 10:00. Monday is my day off, and Thursday my sermon writing day. My primary phone contact is through the Parish House office - 781-749-1679. The office answering machine includes my cell phone if you need to reach me quickly - since when I am not in the office I am either working in my study at home, or making visits or attending meetings elsewhere. I can also be reached on email.*

*--Ken*

## Religious Education Notes

Holidays... it used to mean Holy Days... and even if one had no sense of the sacred, it used to mean fun...

Since before Halloween, I've been hearing the word, "holidays", followed immediately by groans growls and grumbling... Some of the grumbling has come from me...

Last year, for the first time we decided to cut down on the planning and stress by doing a have a spontaneous, voluntary, Nativity tableau instead of a scripted, casted and rehearsed pageant. It worked wonderfully... This year, we'll do that again, on Sunday, December 21st.

A tableau (for those who may not know) is a dramatic scene in which the players are both silent and motionless. The players move into a pose and then stay in that position during the reading. Ken will do the reading.

The only "pre-casting" we will need to do will be Mary and Joseph, as they will have to make an entrance and stay still the longest; not to mention be costumed before the start of the



service. All other parts will be casted and costumed during the reading. All parts will be unlimited in number, and available to children and adults alike.

To that end, please let me know if you or your child wants to be Mary or Joseph... If you have magnificent props or costumes to lend (we do have a good number already)... Or if you would like to be part of the Costuming "Pit-crew" at the back of the sanctuary...

Many hands make light work...

Beverly Tricco

Director of Religious Education

beverlytmail@gmail.com

## **Educating Hearts and Minds**

### **OLD SHIP LIFE LEARNING PROGRAMS**

*A full schedule for 2014-2015 programs - including classes as well as ongoing groups open to all - is posted on our web site; fliers are also available on our literature tables.*

The next class upcoming will begin after Thanksgiving:

### **Sermon on the Mount for Today**

three sessions, Wed., Dec. 3 - 17, 7:30, Ken Read-Brown

These gatherings for conversation based on Jesus' well-known words from the Gospel of Matthew, chapters 5-7, will follow the weekly 6:30 vespers services that are a December tradition at Old Ship. Are Jesus' teachings in the Sermon on the Mount more relevant today than ever? For more information or to sign up, contact Ken at [oldshipkrb@gmail.com](mailto:oldshipkrb@gmail.com) or by phone at the office, 781-749-1679.



### **Leadership as a Spiritual Practice, A Recap from the Workshop held on November 15, 2014**

About ten Old Shippers gathered to discuss how leadership might be part and parcel of our spiritual lives. We began by identifying leaders we admired (many of whom were people in our daily lives) and then moved to a discussion of leadership styles. There are three basic leadership styles: Autocratic, Democratic, and Laissez-Faire. We then took a test that measured our own tendencies regarding these styles. (If you would like to take the test, email me at [davalenecooper@verizon.net](mailto:davalenecooper@verizon.net) and I will send you a copy.)

After discussing our results and other possible styles of leadership, we discussed Parker Palmer's idea of the shadow side of leadership, which our inner spiritual journey may help us confront. There are five shadow sides of leadership: (1) insecurity about our identity and worth. (2) the idea that the universe is a battleground, hostile to human interests, which causes us to separate ourselves from the universe. We are competitive with it, and among ourselves, instead of looking for harmony and cooperation. (3) The idea of "functional atheism." The idea that it all depends on us - we alone are responsible for everything. (4) Fear, especially the fear of chaos. We want to organize and orchestrate the world. We want rules and predictability, but in fact, creativity comes out of chaos. (5) The fear of death and the refusal to understand



that everything dies and eventually even the best system, process, or life outlives its usefulness.

Finally, we discussed the idea of servant leadership as a theory of leadership. This style of leadership is particularly effective when considering leadership as a spiritual practice. The qualities of a Servant Leader are as follows: 1. Values diverse opinions. 2. Cultivates a culture of trust. 3. Develops other leaders. 4. Helps people with life issues. 5. Encourages. 6. Sells instead of tells. 7. Thinks you, not me. 8. Thinks long term. 9. Acts with humility.

We had a rich and meaningful conversation, and we are considering ways to continue that conversation, so pay attention for announcements about future workshops or opportunities to learn about leadership as a spiritual practice.

## **Nurturing Community & Among Us**

### **Caroling!! on December 13**

Our annual Carpool Christmas Caroling to some of our Old Ship members who have been ill or are otherwise limited in getting out, as well as to Harbor House Nursing Home, will be on Saturday, December 13. We will gather at the Parish House at 12:45 in order to leave at 1:00.

Come if you've participated for years; come if this would be your first time. Whatever your spirits at 1:00 on December 13, your spirits will be lifted by 3:00 or 4:00. (And then you might wish to join

in our annual Gingerbread House Making in the Fellowship Hall - details below...) Songbooks will be provided. All ages are welcome. Spirit way more important than perfect pitch! Questions? Contact Ken Read-Brown at [oldshipkrb@gmail.com](mailto:oldshipkrb@gmail.com) or 781-749-1679).



### **Gingerbread House Making**

Saturday, December 13, 4:00 p.m. Fellowship Hall  
(immediately following  
caroling)

Join us for our annual Gingerbread House Making party in the Fellowship Hall. Chili, corn bread & hot cider will be available for snacking while we build. EVERYONE'S INVITED!! If you've never built a gingerbread house, this is the perfect time to start a new family tradition! Prepare your walls in advance - Recipes and templates will be available during coffee hours. Show up at the Parish House on Saturday the 13th at 4:00 with walls, a tray large enough to hold your finished house, and some fun decorations to share. If you don't have the opportunity to bake the walls before the 15th, bring a store-bought kit or a box of graham crackers and an empty milk carton or two and achieve the same magical result! Icing glue, enthusiasm, and construction assistance will be supplied. Please call 781-749-9069 or email: [yruumom@gmail.com](mailto:yruumom@gmail.com) to let me know if you are coming so we will have enough supplies. -Judi Flaherty

### **Coffeeshouse off the Square presents Aine Minogue's Celtic Christmas**

Sunday, December 21 at 4pm in the Meeting House

Aine's renowned harp playing, her beautiful, nearly ethereal voice, and her oft-time enchanting guests have made this sellout event the high point of many recent seasons. She plays, sings, and discretely explains the Celtic mythology and tradition behind some of the music. Come early as we welcome her back. Failte! \$15 at the door

### **Winter Solstice Poetry Circle on Friday**

Friday, December 19, at 7pm, in the Meeting House

This season's Crossing Time is the Winter Solstice, the longest night of the year which heralds the return of light. Leave the busyness of the holiday rush and come share and replenish creative energy. Bring a poem to read or speak or simply come and listen. The choral quintet Crossroads will perform some winter carols and poetry set to music. Come and bring a friend. All are welcome. For more information contact: Elizabeth Torrey 781-749-0543.

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### **Pastoral Care Leadership Team**

The Pastoral Care Leadership Team meets monthly with Ken and often coordinates meals and other forms of caring for Old Ship individuals and families in the midst of illness or crisis. If you have a need or are aware of a need that the PCLT might be able to help meet, you may be in touch with Ken or any member of the group. At Old Ship we all share in our mutual caring and helping one another; the Pastoral Care Leadership Team simply helps to identify needs and coordinate responses.

There are specifically three ways Old Ship members might want to help out:

- Rides: Would you be able to give an Old Ship parishioner a ride to church, either regularly or from time to time?
- Food: Would you be willing to prepare a casserole to be given to someone who could use a little extra help following a hospitalization or in the midst of illness or treatments?
- Companionship: Would you be willing to spend a few hours now and then with an Old Ship member when the primary caregiver in their household needs to be away from the home for a short while?

If you might be able to help in any of these ways, please be in touch with a member of the Pastoral Care Leadership Team. Thanks very much!

Abby Diamond-Kissiday, Abby@AbbyCMA.com, (781) 925-1305

Elaine Gomez, eh-gomez@comcast.net, (781) 740-1663

Alicia Harkness, PAJL7@verizon.net, (781) 749-7825

Fan Leonard, (781) 749-2852

Bob Shepard, cheney777@verizon.net, (781) 878-2766

Beverly Tricco, oldshipdre@oldshipchurch.org, (781)-749-1679

Ken Read-Brown, oldshipkrb@gmail.com, (781-749-1679)

*Please send any items for "Among Us" either to Julianna Dunn in the Parish House office (office@oldshipchurch.org). Like our Candles of Joy and Sorrow on Sunday mornings, this page helps us to knit the fabric of community.*

### **Social Justice Council**

#### **Baby It's Cold Outside! Mittens, hats, and scarves are being collected.**

We will be collecting new hats, scarves, and mittens during December for people who are homeless. Please bring items to Sunday Services. There will also be a collection area at the Parish House. All sizes needed.

### **Hingham Food Pantry**

The Old Ship congregation has enthusiastically collected food items for the Hingham Food Pantry for Sundays in October and November instead of serving food during fellowship hour. We will have one more Sunday donation this year on Sunday, December 16.

REMINDER: Save the stamps being given away by Shaw's Supermarkets which are being collected for South Shore Friends of the Homeless. These stamps can be placed in the envelopes that are on the front of the food collection baskets in both the Meeting House and Parish House. Thanks to everyone who is giving so generously! Special thanks to Belinda for organizing this project.

### **Father Bill's**

We are grateful to Ernie Sofis for his contributions and dedication to the cooking teams providing meals to Father Bill's for many years. He will be turning his responsibilities over to Dave Petrie, who will work together with Fan Leonard to continue the good work.

### **Annual Dinner**

Mark your calendars for the annual Social Justice dinner to be held on Saturday, January 24. This year the topic will be community resources to address Hunger and Food Insecurity. We will host three presenters: the Boston Food Bank, the Hingham Food Pantry, and the Boston-based organization, Lovin' Spoonfuls. The evening will be informative and inspiring. We hope to see you there!

### **Did You Know?**

Judy Heithmar reports from Boston on the closure of the city's largest homeless shelter on [www.socialistworker.org](http://www.socialistworker.org). The Homeless Service Bureau for Boston Public Health Commission operates two emergency shelters--one of them, the largest shelter in Boston, with some 450 beds, is known as "Long Island Shelter." As the name suggests, the shelter, along with a dozen of other human-service agencies, is located on Long Island, located off the coast of the city in Boston Harbor. The mass of land, often referred to as "the social service island," provided desperately needed services to an average of 1,000 people daily. But on October 8, with an abrupt order from Mayor Martin Walsh, the bridge leading to Long Island was shut down after a routine inspection concluded it was too unstable for vehicles. In a matter of two hours, everyone was evacuated. The action displaced more than 700 people who had sought refuge on the island. The island contained nearly one-third of all the shelter beds for people who are homeless and about half of the city's detox beds. The estimated cost for repairs to the bridge is around \$80 million--these repairs will take three to five years to complete.

### **Merrie Market Opportunities!**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

9:00 AM to 2:30 PM

Books & Media: Please donate items in good condition. Books, DVD's, CD's. No textbooks...Ivy & Rick

Butterworth [ivy\\_butter@yahoo.com](mailto:ivy_butter@yahoo.com), 781-749-3190



Toys: Please donate toys, games in good condition as well as children's books, dvd's. Label items as Merrie Market and place in Parish House vestibule before 12/6. Thanks! ...Susannah Thomas, [zanthomas@gmail.com](mailto:zanthomas@gmail.com), 781-875-1049

Treasures: We are famous for this! We try to have everything priced before Thanksgiving, so your treasures need to be in before that. Thanks!...Fan Leonard, 781-749-2852, and Diane Elliott 781-749-2248, [dianeabbeyelliott@gmail.com](mailto:dianeabbeyelliott@gmail.com)

Gift Baskets: Create a themed gift basket. Very popular items! Various sizes of baskets available. These baskets sell like hotcakes, and are fun to put together by your family or your committee! Please bring basket by Tuesday, 12/3 to the Parish Hall and we'll wrap in cellophane and price. Thanks!...Sharon Prehn, [prehn@verizon.net](mailto:prehn@verizon.net), 781-925-0101, Mary Sofis 781-749-3830, [maksofis@gmail.com](mailto:maksofis@gmail.com)

Bake & Craft Tables: We are looking for a variety of homemade culinary items: pies, breads, cookies, fudge, baked beans, jam or whatever your specialty may be. Please deliver your goodies to the Parish Hall on Friday, Dec 5 (up until 7PM) or by 8:30AM Saturday. Craft Table: Unique offerings and an opportunity to make a Christmas Stocking at MM ....Joan Wilson, [joanielw@verizon.net](mailto:joanielw@verizon.net), 781-740-8840. Place your order for Gourmet Cookies at MM!

Silent Auction: Merrie Market's Silent Auction is coming! Did you miss the Mad Hatter Auction in October? Did you want to donate a unique item or service? You have another chance at our silent auction at Merrie Market! Please contact Pam Harty [pamharty@comcast.net](mailto:pamharty@comcast.net) or 781-749-7729 by November 25 with your description and photo if applicable. Thank you!

Decorated Wreaths: Join the decorators - prettiest wreaths in town! Beginners welcome! 9:30AM to 2PM: Saturday, Nov 29 to Thurs, Dec 4, Tues night 6-9PM (cider, soup, fun!) in Fellowship Hall. Decorating is relaxing and the fellowship is great! Thanks!...Pat Bianco, [bluesulphur3@yahoo.com](mailto:bluesulphur3@yahoo.com), 617-774-7474

### **Holiday Pledge Reminder**

As we head into the busy holiday season, we want to ask you to remember Old Ship and to please keep up with your annual pledge. This is also a good time to review all your charitable giving with the December 31 tax year-end approaching.



Old Ship has run at a deficit through the fall, so we need to do some catch up! The end of December is also the end of Old Ship's second quarter, so we ask you to make sure you have completed at least the first half of your pledge for this church year.

Please remember that if circumstances prevent you from completing your pledge, you can speak with our minister or me to let us know so that we may make adjustments to your pledge.

Wishing you and your family good holidays,

Ron Pollara, Treasurer  
[blackpollara@verizon.net](mailto:blackpollara@verizon.net)



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