



First Parish, Hingham

Old Ship Church

Unitarian Universalist

107 Main Street Hingham, MA 02043

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office@oldshipchurch.org www.oldshipchurch.org

December 2016 Newsletter

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Worship

Wednesday Evening Vespers

We continue our annual tradition of peaceful services between Thanksgiving and Christmas in a gently darkened Old Ship Meeting House on Wednesday evenings at 6:30. This year's services will be on November 30 and December 7, 14, and 21. Each service lasts from thirty to forty minutes, and consists of brief readings, musical selections on guitar, violin, dulcimer, or piano, and plenty of healing silence. All are of course welcome.

If you would like to participate as a reader or musician, please contact Ken Read-Brown, who will be leading and coordinating the services: oldshipkrb@gmail.com



Sunday, December 4, 10:25am

"A Jesus Worth Waiting For" will be Ken's sermon.

The season of Advent on the Christian calendar is about waiting for the birth (or the celebration of the birth) of Jesus - Jesus Christ as most Christians understand it. But Unitarian Universalists have very diverse views of just who Jesus was, not to mention diverse feelings as to how important he or his teachings are to our spiritual lives. Who is "Jesus worth waiting for" for each of us?

Sunday, December 11, 10:25am

A line from a Theodore Roethke poem affirms that "In a dark time the eye begins to see. Ken's sermon, "In a Dark Time," will blend reflections on solstice, Jesus' birth, and our own lives.

At noon there will be a forum in the Parish House parlor with Mikey Walker, founder of the Kerry Jon Walker Fund. The fund provides opportunities for financially under-resourced teens from Boston to travel to Africa and work in service with orphaned teens at the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village (ASYV) in Rwanda. Last spring, our Social Outreach Committee made a grant to support a partial scholarship for one of these teens. One of the students who has benefited from the fund will be present along with Mikey. Join us to hear stories and learn more - and receive a thank you!

Sunday, December 18, 10:25am

As we have done for the past few years, we will look towards Christmas with a pageant for everyone - participation open to anyone of any age willing to carry a shepherd's crook or a star, or wear a crown or halo.

Christmas Eve: Saturday, December 24, 5pm

Christmas Eve at Old Ship brings not only Old Ship members and friends, but many from Hingham and surrounding communities for whom this has become a beloved annual tradition. Savvy old-timers know to arrive no later than 4:30 (even earlier is better) in order to have a chance at or near a favorite pew. There will be child-care for the very young in our nursery, offered by wonderful volunteers from Congregation Sha'aray Shalom.

The service will include familiar carols for all to sing, wonderful music from the choir loft led by our new music director, Chris Hossfeld, traditional and contemporary readings, and as always a story for Christmas Eve from Ken.

Sunday, December 25

There will be no worship service at Old Ship on Christmas morning.

Sunday, January 1 - service of shared readings in the Fellowship Hall

Our annual service sharing readings and poems falls on New Year's Day this year. Bring a reading to share, or just bring listening ears. Ken will provide a light breakfast (yes, including that famous home-made granola) at 9:30, followed by our service at 10:30. All in the Fellowship Hall.

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 "Way of the Bodhisattva Study/Meditation Group" meets at 8:30 on the first and third Sundays of each month. "Men's Breakfast" meets at 8:30 on the second Sunday of each month for sharing and conversation. And the Women's Breakfast meets at 8:30 on the fourth Sunday of each month.

Childcare available before Sunday services: If you plan to attend any early morning gathering or committee meeting 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.

from the minister's desk

Musing

I've shared Peter Laforge's Thanksgiving poem on many a Thanksgiving. Some of you heard it read in our Old Ship Meeting House again just this past Sunday. But though Laforge's poem is just right for Thanksgiving, it surely works for any gathering of family or friends around a shared table for a holiday meal at any season or, for that matter, at any meal at any time.

So I share the poem with you again here in the newsletter, with the wish that this season, though it may feel "busy" at times, will also be full in the best sense: Full of love and shared kindnesses, perhaps mostly "only" small words or gestures of kindness, but remembering that every act of kindness and goodwill ripples beyond our imagining, making the world better, more peaceful, more just, than it would have been otherwise. So... thank you for all that you do and say in precisely this spirit. Know that it really matters, and know that you really matter.

Here's the poem:

Perhaps I should have said it just between
The wine and grace, the wishing and the blessing.
That was a time for words, when the scene
Had just begun, before we passed the dressing.
Before the knife cut deep into the breast,
I might have paused, looked up and all around
Into the eyes of each of them.
A jest came easier, wit tossed into the sound
And lost. Between the stuffing and the pie,
Was yet another quiet moment when
I could have told them all. Instead, I sighed
and let it pass. Just once before the end
I should have cried, "listen, before you go.
I love you. I just wanted you to know."

- Peter Laforge

Peace and blessings,

--Ken

oldshipkrib@gmail.com

cell: 781-635-2060

My Parish House office hours are ordinarily Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday mornings from about 10:00 - 2:00 and by appointment. 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 via email, oldshipkrb@gmail.com. --
Ken

Notes from your Membership Coordinator

With December upon us we will now begin to focus wholeheartedly on the holiday season and, of course, the weather! Here in New England it's always interesting to see what Old Man Winter will bring as "gifts" that year. Will it be snow? Will it be ice? Will it be snow and ice?? As long as we've warm places to go and people we love to share those spaces with, it will make these cold months much easier to bear.

Please remember that your presence at Old Ship is a gift and to remember to share it with everyone there: those you know well and those you have yet to know. We have many new faces with us this year and we want to keep them feeling warm and welcomed! After the holiday season I will again plan a Community Dinner where we can enjoy a relaxing evening with each other and meet new faces. Until then please continue to be inclusive and friendly to everyone you see on Sunday—for what a gift that can be!

Kindly,
Erin Alix
Membership Coordinator
membership@oldshipchurch.org

Music Notes

Come Sing in the Choir for Christmas Eve

Thank you all for such a warm welcome to the Old Ship community! I am excited to get to know you better and am already looking forward to my first Christmas Eve service with you.

You are all invited to sing in the choir for Christmas Eve. Christmas is one of the best times of the year for music. We will be singing many of your favorite carols and seasonal songs. If you've always wanted to give the choir a try, this is the time. Singers of all abilities are welcome!

The choir rehearses on Thursday evenings from 7-9 and we will be devoting the first hour to Christmas music starting on December 1. There will also be an important rehearsal on Dec. 24 before the service at 3 p.m.

If you are planning to join us or have any questions, please send me an e-mail at musicdirector@oldshipchurch.org. I hope to see you in the choir!

Christopher Hossfeld, Music Director

Merrie Market is Saturday, Dec. 3!

9:00 - 2:30

The Merrie Market Season is upon us!

This year it will take place on December 3rd. This is a major fund raising event for our Old Ship Community. There are many ways for everyone of all ages to become involved. Please look over the list below and decide how you can become an active participant in helping to make this the wonderful festive event that it has always been.

Merrie Market Opportunities!

Treasures Table: We are famous for this! We are looking for treasured items that you can just barely bare to part with, that are still beautiful and useful or just unusual. Small furniture, linens, silver, china, decorative items and jewelry. Please bring them to the Parish

House, labeled "Merrie Market." Please no computers. We try to have everything priced before Thanksgiving, so your treasures need to be in before that.

The Fellowship Hall is being rented during the week. We ask that you **Do Not** leave items by the back door. Please leave them on the bench in the hallway by the Parish House office. Diane Elliott 781-749-2248, dianeabbeyelliott@gmail.com and Fan Leonard 781-749-2852.

Books & Media: Please donate items in good condition. Books, DVD's, CD's. Please No textbooks. . . Ivy & Rick Butterworth, ivy_butter@yahoo.com, butterworth@comcast.net, 781-749-3190. If possible we ask that these items be brought to the Parish House a week before Merrie Market. Do not leave them by the Parish House back door

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 or carry the items to the 3rd floor and put them in the section labeled Toys before 12/1. Susannah Thomas, zanthomas@gmail.com, 781-875-1049

Gift Baskets: Create a themed gift basket. Very popular items! Various sizes of baskets along with instructions will be available. These baskets sell like hot cakes, and are fun to put together by your family or your committee! Please bring basket in by Tuesday, November 29- to the Parish House and we'll wrap in cellophane and price. Thanks!. . . Sharon Prehn, prehn@verizon.net, 781-925-0101 and Mary Sofis maksofis@gmail.com

Bake Table: We are looking for a variety of homemade culinary items: pies, breads, cookies, fudge, baked beans, jam or whatever your specialty may be. Knowing how busy many people are, some food items can be made ahead of time and frozen. Ask Joan for suggestions. Please deliver your prepared goods to the Parish Hall on Friday, Dec 2 (up until 7PM) or by 8:30AM Saturday. . .

Oh Merrie Market, My Merrie Market!

By Paul Steven Stone

(sung to whatever tune comes up in your head)

'Tis that time again, when Christmas is nigh,
Merrie Market arrives, ah! the treasures you'll buy:
Hand-crafted wreaths to deck your merry halls
Generational hand-downs to please one and all.

Toys for the children, books and videos for all ages,
Long tables filled with attic treasures, simply outrageous!
Decorated wreaths and gift baskets galore
At a price much lower than a Derby Shoppes store.
And while you're here, try our Jingle Bells café,

Hot chili to warm your insides, hot chocolate to sweeten your day.
Missing this Holiday festival would be an historic shame,
Saturday, December 3rd, still doing business at 107 Main,
"Merrie Market," at Old Ship, of wide repute and well-earned fame.

Pardon the doggerel but Merrie Market is too much fun to announce with a dry news story. At the very least there should be singing, as there is at Merrie Market when Eric Cornetta, Old Ship's resident troubadour, strums up traditional holiday songs at this annual church fair and bazaar. Dressed like a fabled troubadour, traveling from room to room, Eric serenades Merrie Market shoppers who have come to search for bargains and unexpected treasures among the many items for sale.

This year Merrie Market will be spinning its magic from 9:00 to 2:30 Saturday, December 3rd at Old Ship's parish hall across the road from the iconic Meeting House on Main Street.

What might you find at Merrie Market? Treasured items donated by the Old Ship community - toys, books, jewelry, attic treasures. Holiday gift baskets and an auction of unique experiences.

A variety of specialty hand-crafted gifts. Delicious and delightful baked items and a spectacular gingerbread house. Plus you'll find wreaths- dozens of wreaths!-individually decorated with an artist's eye and priced to move quickly.

While at Merrie Market, plan to visit Old Ship's Jingle Bells Café, where many a Hingham tummy has been warmed with the house's fabled specialties of chili, mac and cheese, and cornbread. That's The Merrie Market Holiday Fair at Old Ship Church, 107 Main Street, Hingham. Running from 9am - 2:30pm, Saturday, December 3. Or as we who prefer doggerel like to say...

We hope to see your friendly faces
At the holiday fair a good time embraces.
Merrie Market at Hingham's Old Ship,
December 3rd, you better not skip.

Director of Religious Education

This spring, our Youth Group will be travelling for the fourth time; carrying the name and the work of Old Ship Church out into the wider world once again. For the newer Old Shippers, for whom this might be your first "trip year", I will recap.

In 2014-2015, they travelled to Williamson, West Virginia, the heart of the coal fields, did varied labor on small farms, made dozens of raised garden beds with veterans and other grass roots agencies, and learned a lot about the people who have lost their livelihoods since the market for coal has dwindled. And, they brought home friendships.



In 2012-2013, they travelled to Washington, DC, kicking off their stay with a 350.Org rally on the mall, and continuing with an array of service and learning projects that took them from being kitchen grunts at DC Central Kitchen, to sorting children's clothes in a community center, to handing out free produce at a small neighborhood outlet in Anacostia. And they met and learned from people who they will never forget.

Their first trip in 2010-2011, was to post-Katrina New Orleans. Five years after Katrina, there was still devastation to be seen and human heartbreak to witness. Our young people put their hands to work at projects as varied as caring for animals at the over-burdened shelters, to helping to create and implement filing systems at the Ashe Center. The trip was so powerful; some Youth changed their career path, based on what they'd learned and who they'd met.



They do these trips because the urge to be "of use" is strong and real... because learning about people is best done face to face... and because changes made by work that is real, and the friendships that are formed working side-by-side, are deeply heartfelt and not soon forgotten.

This year, based on the interest and initiative of the Youth themselves, they will be travelling to Immokalee, FL on the April school vacation week. Through the UU College of Social Justice, they will be working with, and learning from, the Immokalee farm workers.

The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) is a worker-based human rights organization internationally recognized for its achievements in the fields of social responsibility, human trafficking, and gender-based violence at work.

Sarah Hurley and I will be travelling with the Youth, as will our beloved Fan Leonard. I spoke to Fan at some length yesterday and learned that this is not her first involvement with farm-workers' justice work.

In the late 1960s, Fan Leonard was a part of Cesar Chavez's efforts to gain justice for California farmworkers. Chavez's organization, "La Causa" was supported by organized labor, religious groups, minorities, and students. There was a Boston office that was organizing the local consumer boycott of California table grapes, begun in August, 1967.

Fan, and her sons, and others like the Maryknoll Fathers checked the local stores for boycotted grapes; and attempted to influence these markets, and the public, not to purchase grapes. Fan says she was "the token housewife".

Token though she may have felt, her efforts over those years got her harassed by passersby, arrested by police, and threatened by wine-company reps who actually came to her home.

When we discussed the continuing struggles of the farm workers and their families in Florida and their efforts to be treated with justice, Fan said, "Nothing has changed much."

Thankfully, neither has she.

Sweet inspiration to all of us,
Beverly Tricco
Director of Religion Education
beverlytmail@gmail.com

Youth Group Update

Last week we had 13 youth, along with three parents, clear a trail in More Brewer Woods, a piece of conservation land in Hingham. The day was beautiful and our two hours of work was productive, worthwhile, fun and community building.

Our youth LOVE this type of work. They ask for it. They show up for it. They talk about it afterwards.

This year we are fortunate to also organize a larger scale service project. The youth asked to find justice work around the issues of sustainable agriculture and farm workers rights. So Immokalee, Florida here we come! In April, we will be traveling with the Unitarian Universalist College of Social Justice (UUCSJ) and pairing up with local service organizations in Immokalee. The youth are ecstatic for this opportunity to broaden their knowledge in this field (no pun intended!) and to learn what they can continue to do from New England.

Stay tuned for more in the months to come, including some engaging fundraising activities.

I feel so lucky to work with these passionate and committed young individuals. I feel like I've won the lottery!

Sarah Hurley
Youth Advisor

Among Us

SUMMER TOURS 2016

The Old Ship Meetinghouse was open for tours every afternoon through July and August, except, we must admit, for a very few days that were just too unbearably hot. Our wonderful tour guides

were Rick Butterworth, Ursula Stone, Jane Malme, Nina Wellford, Dennis Hogan, Charlotte Champagne, Donna and Bruce Sutton, Ellen Adle, Fan Leonard, Ralph Brown, and - what a nice surprise! - two kind volunteers from the Congregational Church, Penelope Baltera and Jill Nilsen.

People came from 25 states, north, south, east, and west, and from such far-flung places as Syria; Bogota, Colombia; Amsterdam, the Netherlands; Bangkok, Thailand; Toronto, Ontario; and Chiba, Japan.

Celebrations and Sympathies

We extend continuing healing thoughts and prayers to Joan Ramsay. Notes may be sent care of Joan's daughter: Joan Ramsay, c/o Claire Ramsay, 200 Granger Road, Unit 37, Medina, Ohio, 44256.

Educating Hearts and Minds: Life Learning Programs

20th ANNUAL WINTER SOLSTICE POETRY CIRCLE:

Tuesday, Dec. 20th at 7 pm 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. Free. Come and bring a friend. All are welcome.

A New Look at the Gospel of Matthew

two sessions: Dec. 7, and Dec. 14, 7:30, Ken Read-Brown.

These gatherings for will be based on Thomas Moore's fresh new translation of Matthew. The class will follow the weekly 6:30 vespers services that are a December tradition at Old Ship. For more information, contact Ken, oldshipkrb@gmail.com

Mystical Dimensions of Islam - five sessions, Wed. Jan. 11- Feb. 8, 1:00 and 7:00 - Ken Read-Brown.

We will be continuing the exploration of Islam begun last year, this time focusing on the "mystical dimensions" of the Islam tradition, which largely means the tradition known as Sufism. The class will include exploration of the work of Rumi, Hafez, Ibn Arabi, and others. For more information and to sign up contact Ken, oldshipkrb@gmail.com

Other ongoing groups and gatherings....

[Link here](#) to the page on our web site that includes descriptions of all these groups: from opportunities to meditate and study spiritual texts ancient and modern as described above, to the Men's Breakfast, Book Group, Sewing Group, and the monthly Ceilidh song circle.

Social Justice Council

This month at Old Ship we are participating in the Guest at Your Table Program in support of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). For 76 years, UUSC has fought for human rights and human dignity. As UUSC President Tom Andrews stated recently, "Hope and the thirst for justice have extraordinary power. With your support, we will continue to unleash this power in the fight for the rights, dignity, and quality of life of the most marginalized." We urge you to support this program by taking a box from the meeting house and remembering those who need our help. Davalene Cooper will collect the boxes before the December 18 service, or you can send your donation directly to UUSC (instructions and an envelope are in each box). Questions? Ask Davalene, davalenecooper@verizon.net or 781-749-0790.

Hingham Food Pantry

The collection during coffee hour for December is Sunday, December 18. Remember CASH is acceptable if you are not able to bring in food donations. THANK YOU!

SAVE THE DATE(s)

Tuesday, December 13th, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. is the annual HOLIDAY PARTY for South Shore Friends of the Homeless. This party has been hosted by Old Ship for many years. Since last year, the Board of Directors along with the Social Justice Council has taken on the task of providing the meal for the holiday party.

This year is challenging, due to our lack of adequate kitchen facilities. We are asking for volunteers to:

- Cook specific items at home and deliver to Old Ship
- Warm up prepared food and deliver to Old Ship
- Serve at the meal
- Hold babies so that family members can eat
- Clean up
- Pick up and deliver residents

If you can volunteer for any of these tasks, please contact Ginny Perelson: gperelson@gmail.com or Brenda Black Pollara: blackpollara@verizon.net

Annual Social Justice Council dinner will be held on Saturday, February 4. The speaker will be John Lathan from Father Bill's.

Other December Events

Caroling!! on Dec. 10

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 10. 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 10, 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 or 781-749-1679).

Gingerbread House Making Saturday, Dec. 10, 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 10th at 4:00 with walls, a tray large enough to hold your finished house, and some fun decorations to share. Bring a store-bought kit or a box of graham crackers and an empty milk carton or two! Icing glue, enthusiasm, and construction assistance will be supplied.

Coffeehouse off the Square presents Aine Minogue Sunday, December 18 at 4pm in the Meeting House.

Aine's renowned harp playing, her beautiful, nearly ethereal singing voice, and her sometimes enchanting guests have made this sell-out event the high point of many recent seasons. From her time as harpist in residence at Ireland's Bunratty Castle, to her playing and teaching her, Aine' only gets better. This time she will be playing at the Old Ship's beautiful and evocative sanctuary. www.aineminogue.com.

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

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