



First Parish, Hingham

## Old Ship Church

Unitarian Universalist

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### June 2017 Newsletter

[Want to print out the newsletter? Click here.](#)

## Worship

### Sunday, June 4, 10:25am

On this, our New Members Sunday. If you would like to join Old Ship and be formally welcomed during the service, please contact Ken Read-Brown ([oldshipkrb@gmail.com](mailto:oldshipkrb@gmail.com)) or our Membership Coordinator Erin Alix ([membership@oldshipchurch.org](mailto:membership@oldshipchurch.org)).

Ken's sermon will be "Thin or Thick". In a recent column, New York Times scribe David Brooks wrote about the difference between communities that are thin or thick. What did he mean by that... and what sort of community is Old Ship... is our nation? Thin? Thick? A little of both? What sort of community and nation do we want to be? What sort of community do we need in our lives and for the sake of the wider world?

In addition to welcoming our new members, we will also have an opportunity to meet Dave Egan, who will be our ministerial intern beginning this September.

At 12:45 we will gather in the Fellowship Hall to celebrate the life of Marj Vining, a member of Old Ship since 1961; Marj died several weeks ago at the age of 95.

### Sunday, June 11

"White Supremacy - Then and Now" will be Ken's sermon. Easy enough to see that white supremacy was the order of the day in our country during the time of slavery. What about now? Is "white supremacy" just a fringe phenomenon, or is it still the order of the day, just in mostly subtler ways? The recent controversy over hiring practices at our own Unitarian Universalist Association brings such questions close to home.

This will be our annual UUSC Justice Sunday, and there will be opportunities to write postcards to elected representatives following the service. This is UUSC's annual program designed for each of us to reflect and consider what specific actions we might take related to one of UUSC's three core program areas: Economic Justice, Rights at Risk, and Environmental Justice and Climate Action. This year, UUSC is asking us to support marginalized communities targeted because of who they are: people under particular threat because of religion, race, and immigrant or refugee status. Specific groups - such as Syrian refugees and the Rohingya Muslim minority in Burma - are facing heightened hostility, violence, and threats. The Social Justice Council will provide postcards, stamps, addresses, and sample messages for your convenience. Right now is the time for all of us to support human rights!

At noon in the Fellowship Hall, Mal Malme (daughter of Jane and Chuck Malme) and her collaborators will be presenting "The Pineapple Project" - an entertaining interactive theater piece designed to give children (ages 3 and up) and families (and everyone) a vehicle for conversation and dialogue around issues of gender.

### Sunday, June 18



This will be our final service in the Meeting House until the Sunday after Labor Day, and it will include our annual Flower Communion ceremony, representing our gathering and sharing in community. We are each invited to bring a flower or flowering branch to the service to contribute to a single bouquet, and when we leave we will take a different flower. Ken's sermon, honoring the upcoming 200th birthday of Henry David Thoreau, will be "Be Thoreau." Following the service we will enjoy lunch together along the side driveway of the Parish House (indoors should it rain).

### **Sunday, June 25**

This will be our first "summer service" held in the Fellowship Hall of the Parish House. It will be led by Ken Read-Brown following the practice of Quaker meeting for worship: Gathering in silence and sharing messages as the spirit moves. All are - of course - welcome!

The summer newsletter will include a full listing of summer services.

### **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.*

### **Musing**

from the minister's desk

*This month's Musing was printed last week as my "Earth and Spirit" column in the Hingham Journal:*

Henry David Thoreau was born on July 12, 1817 - two hundred years ago. He was actually born David Henry Thoreau, but decided when he was a young man to switch to Henry David; his friends called him Henry from then on.

Well, if you know anything about Henry Thoreau you know that he spent two years living in a small cabin he built by the side of Walden Pond - and then wrote a book about his experience. His cabin was on land owned by his older friend Ralph Waldo Emerson. Many have noted that though he had a bean patch near the cabin, and occasionally caught a fish, Thoreau was hardly entirely self-sufficient. He often walked to his native village of Concord to enjoy one of his mother's pies or the hospitality of the Emersons, or just to pass the time of day with whomever else was out and about in the village. This, though, is no knock on Thoreau's Walden experiment, for complete self-sufficiency dis-connected from others was never his intention when he set up housekeeping at the edge of the pond. In his own words from the first chapter of Walden:

*"It would be some advantage to live a primitive and frontier life, though in the midst of an outward civilization, if only to learn what are the gross necessities of life and what methods have been taken to obtain them..."*

"...though in the midst of an outward civilization." This, it seems to me, is the key to Thoreau and to understanding what he was about at Walden Pond. Thoreau did not intend to live a hermit's life for two years - which, after all, would not be much of an example for the rest of us, who have a variety of responsibilities to family and community that we can't (nor would wish to, nor should) dismiss. Rather, Thoreau's intention was to experiment in a way that might actually inspire the rest of us in practical ways in own lives. The challenge is simply put: To try to simplify our lives "in the midst of an outward civilization."

Yes, this might actually be something we could learn from, maybe even try, in the midst of the outward civilization of our time. For it seems to me that though much about our time is different from Thoreau's time, the essential challenges of how to live a life of meaning haven't changed much: What do we need... and what do we merely want? What is necessary to our life... and what, by stark contrast, might (even though we think we want it) be not only not necessary, but even harmful to ourselves and to others? And how do we, through our way of living, serve and enhance the larger life we all share?

The contemporary poet Mary Oliver some years ago wrote a poem she titled "Going to Walden". She begins the poem by noting that some think she would do well to visit Walden Pond ("Friends argue that I might be wiser for it..."), but she concludes with these lines:

*...in a book I read and cherish,  
Going to Walden is not so easy a thing  
As a green visit. It is the slow and difficult  
Trick of living, and finding it where you are.*

In this spirit, whatever the summer brings to you, and wherever you go - or if you stay quite close to home - may you discover a bit more of the "trick of living... right where you are" - even "in the midst of an outward civilization."

Peace and blessings,  
Ken  
oldshipkreb@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, oldshipkreb@gmail.com. -Ken*

#### **Note from Chris Hossfeld, Music Director**

The end of the season is upon us-and what a year it has been! Gardens are being planted, summer feels like it's just around the corner, and Thursday evening choir practices have ended until September. But it's not too late to give the choir a try!

The choir is singing at three more Sunday services: June 4, 11, and 18. All are welcome to join us! Just come to rehearsal on Sunday morning at 9:15 before the service. If you'd like to take a look at the music ahead of time, e-mail me for a link at [musicdirector@oldshipchurch.org](mailto:musicdirector@oldshipchurch.org). If you've never sung in the choir before but have always wondered what it would be like, now is your opportunity to try it out.

Peace,  
Chris Hossfeld  
[musicdirector@oldshipchurch.org](mailto:musicdirector@oldshipchurch.org)

#### **Dear Old Ship,**

Here's something from Proust's seven-volume work, *Remembrance of Things Past (or In Search of Lost Time)*. "The only true voyage of discovery, the only fountain of Eternal Youth, would be not to visit strange lands but to possess other eyes, to behold the universe through the eyes of another, of a hundred others, to behold the hundred universes that each of them beholds, that each of them is;"

Ten members of our Youth Group went on a voyage in April... four Old Ship adults went with them. We voyaged by cars, vans, airplanes and boats... and we made discoveries... We learned a number of things about land that was new to us... We beheld some parts of the universe through the eyes of others... and I will make bold to say, "We developed new eyes..."



We learned:

- Some churches have coffee hour outdoors.
- Some churches have lizards in their yards.
- Some churches don't have pews.
- Alligators are everywhere.
- When your lodging is within the Panther National Wildlife Refuge system, you don't hang around outdoors after dark.
- Some dogs have work to do.
- Among migrant farmworkers, some folks work "on the tree" and some folks work "on the ground"... and the differences matter; they matter a lot.
- 70% of the vegetables we eat between November and April come from South Florida.
- The work that goes into planting and picking those vegetables is strenuous... and exacting.
- Neither teens nor adults can take in more than two speaker-presentations in any given day.
- Each of us does self-care and centering in our own ways; some need a nap... some need to listen to music... some need to climb a tree.
- Most of us are better and happier DOers than we are LISTENers.
- People sometimes do unspeakable things to their fellow humans... Regulations, consequences, and strategically-thought-out pressure, sometimes makes those people stop... Some people will go to any lengths to continue to have the right to do unspeakable things.
- Some people go to the laundromat carrying their laundry on top of their heads.
- Chickens wander freely in Immokalee.
- A picking bucket of tomatoes weighs 32 pounds... Thirty two pounds is heavier than it sounds.
- Vultures are everywhere... for a reason.
- Almost everyone loves a gift shop.
- Almost everyone feels self-conscious protesting... People of conscience do it anyway.



Thank you for "beholding the universe" with me...

Beverly Tricco

Director of Religion Education

beverlytmail@gmail.com

### Notes from your Membership Coordinator

I hope that by the time you are reading this the weather has begun to warm up and feel more like summer is on its way! Though the rain does, indeed, help our flowers grow, it's so nice to see and feel the sun.

With our last month of Sunday worship in the Old Ship Meeting House at hand before we slow down for the summer, I'd like to reflect on some events that particularly stood out in my mind this year: First, there was Birthday Day. When I asked for help making cakes, I got lots of it. And when I looked around during Fellowship Hour I saw smiling, happy faces. I saw conversations that may not have happened otherwise. I saw the young talking with the young at heart and I saw a community strengthening. I also saw lots of cake - which isn't a bad sight, if you ask me! Secondly, there was the Community Dinner held in that very same space. The group of about 20 or so of us had a wonderful time talking and eating delicious food. There was a beautiful homemade salad, delicious homemade chili, savory homemade mac n cheese, vegetarian dishes, and so much more! It was a night of laughter and good conversations. Seeing Old Shippers share thoughts over good food is heart - and belly - warming! Lastly, there was the Blessing of the Animals. On yet another very, very cold day Ken blessed the brave and their pets for another healthy, happy year. I looked around and saw smiling faces on both the animals and their owners. Everyone seemed happy to be around one another despite the temperature outside.

All of these things showed me that Old Ship truly is a community. And it's the best kind of community: it's a community of people who want to be there, who want to get to know their fellow congregants. That tells me that Old Ship will continue to grow and, as your Membership Coordinator, that makes me very happy.

Kindly,  
Erin Alix  
Membership Coordinator  
Old Ship Church  
[membership@oldshipchurch.org](mailto:membership@oldshipchurch.org)

### Among Us

#### Joys and Concerns

The memorial service for Andrea Zucker will be held at the Unitarian Society of Northampton and Florence on Saturday, June 10, at 11:00. Ken Read-Brown will be participating in the service, officiated by Rev. Janet Bush, minister of the church.

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

### UUA: Of Purpose, Structure and Presidents

At the Old Ship Annual Meeting, there was significant discussion about Old Ship's annual contribution to our Unitarian Universalist Association. Most of us don't know much about the UUA, and why it is so important that Old Ship remain an active member. The UUA is a membership organization of congregations and Old Ship is one of its members along with over 1,000 other Unitarian Universalist congregations. The UUA's primary purposes are to serve member congregations, organize new congregations, extend and strengthen Unitarian and

Universalist institutions and implement its principles. The UUA is divided into regional districts. Old Ship is a member of the Ballou Channing District (BCD); Ralph Brown is incoming President of the BCD. You might have heard Debbie Squires Lee mention "congregational polity" at Sunday's annual meeting. That means that our congregations are self-governing. The UUA cannot mandate anything. When we vote at GA, we vote as delegates of the member congregations, not as members of the UUA. As a member congregation, we pay dues of \$79 per Old Ship member to the UUA/BCD annually. These dues have been a subject of debate in our annual Old Ship budget discussions; to balance our operating budget the past two years, we have made the difficult choice to not pay our full share to the UUA/BCD.

We all have an opportunity to learn more by preparing to exercise our congregation's right to cast five votes at the annual General Assembly (GA) in June. There is a race for President involving three candidates, and much is at stake in this election. At issue is further discussion about "white supremacy," especially related to hiring practices within the UUA and member congregations and the relationship between the UUA Board, the President, and member congregations. Three delegates will represent Old Ship at GA - Eva Marx, Kitty Ward, and Ralph Brown. They will vote their conscience, as allowed by our bylaws. We would like to determine how we will cast the remaining two votes, by asking you, our members, what you think. Please go to the UUA election website (<http://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/elections>), read about the candidates, and join us for a conversation on Wednesday, June 7 at 7:30 in the parlor. We will discuss the role of the UUA, and our views on who might best serve as President.

### **Parish House Update**

Dear members and friends,

I'm pleased to tell you that the Parish House is under contract. Our agreement requires us to keep all of the details of the agreement highly confidential, and not share any details of the agreement with anyone outside of the close Old Ship community until the plans are made public. Failure to keep the agreement and its terms confidential could cause consequences for Old Ship and even jeopardize the agreement. It is important that we all respect this important provision, by speaking only with other members who were at the meeting for details. If you have further questions, feel free to contact me or our realtor, Gail Bell.

Thank you!

Nina Price, President, Board of Trustees

### **Educating Hearts and Minds: Life Learning Programs**

#### **An Evening with Thoreau Wednesday, June 14, 7:00, in the Parish House parlor**

Ken Read-Brown will share some reflections and invite conversation about Henry David Thoreau, whose 200th birthday will be on July 12. Who was Thoreau: Hermit? Naturalist? Philosopher? Reformer? The village crank? All of the above? Everyone is invited and welcome to celebrate Henry's birthday.

#### **Old Ship Women: Unite!**

Calling all Old Ship Women - senior high youth and older - for a special gathering of Old Ship women on Saturday, June 24 at 10:00 a.m. over brunch (place to be announced). Building on the various women's groups we have gathered this year and the other committee work we do together, is there something we might like to do or to be as "women of Old Ship..."? Let's take a moment (with food, of course) to take a look at the bigger picture... how can we get to know each other better, across generations, to strengthen and grow our own community and maybe express a particular identity to the broader community beyond Old Ship? Looking forward to a free-ranging conversation, and the chance to connect with the wonderful women who come to Old Ship - but whom we might not know very well. (We're also looking for a house with room and enough parking where we can hold this gathering - any volunteers?) Thanks!!

—Ginny Perelson Janice McPhillips, Ivy Butterworth, Diane Morrison, and Nina Price.

#### **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 to the Men's Breakfast, Women's Breakfast, Book Group, Sewing Group, and the monthly Ceilidh song circle.

### **Life Learning next year:**

If you have ideas for classes or workshops or Sunday forums please contact Ken Read-Brown ([oldshipkrb@gmail.com](mailto:oldshipkrb@gmail.com)) or another member of the Life Learning Committee: Ralph Brown, Claire Petrie, Rich Elliott, Elizabeth Torrey, or Beverly Tricco.

### **Two committees seek new members:**

**Social Justice Council:** The focus of social justice actions next year will be "Sustaining Vulnerable Communities". The Council will continue its outreach to partner with other groups at Old Ship and in the local community, and Brenda Black Pollara will continue as chairperson, with Kate Philbin as co-chair. We would love to add new members to the Council - please contact Brenda or Kate if you are interested. Thank you!

**Friends of Old Ship:** Do you love the Meeting House and want to ensure that it is preserved? The Friends of the Old Ship Meeting House was established 40 years ago as a non-sectarian non-profit, whose purpose is to raise and spend funds as needed to preserve the Meeting House. Its Board is supposed to consist equally of representatives of Old Ship and reps from the non-Old Ship community. FOMH has its own website, [oldshipfriends.org](http://oldshipfriends.org), and is active especially when major needs arise, such as for the restoration in 2010 and with the steeple reconstruction. The Friends' Old Ship members need refreshing, and we need to recruit new members from the community at large. Please speak to Nina Price if you are interested in joining this low-key but important group.

### **Secrets!**

Back in 1681, the pulpit was built on the northeast wall, and the meetinghouse was entered from three other directions. When a balcony was added on that same side the pulpit migrated to the adjoining wall, where it is today. The door which the new pulpit hid was simply incorporated into the wall, where it waited behind the pulpit for over 250 years before it was recently recognized as one of the original doors.

There may not be other such grand secrets to be unraveled, but the doors of Old Ship history will be thrown wide to all tour guides. Consider signing up for some afternoons this summer. The meetinghouse will be open to visitors every day from 1- 4 through July and August, and you will be prepared by Ken to answer all questions. Please call Fan Leonard at 781-749-2852 or e-mail her at [toomuchfun33@hotmail.com](mailto:toomuchfun33@hotmail.com).

### **Social Justice Council**

#### **Hingham Food Pantry**

The final food donation for this year will be on Sunday, June 11. Thanks to everyone who has contributed throughout the year.

#### **Welcome Neighbors**

Welcome Neighbor Project: Have you noticed the new signs in front of the Meeting House and Parish House? The Social Justice Council has arranged for Old Ship to participate in the nation-wide Welcome Neighbor project, whose intent is to communicate that "we choose to reach out to our neighbors and neighborhoods, welcome those who come from different backgrounds and places, and practice hospitality through the open doors of our communities."

Welcome Neighbor began at a Mennonite church in Harrisonburg, VA when the congregation sought a way to communicate a positive message in response to the divisive nature of our recent election and it has spread across the US with their brightly colored signs stating in Spanish, English and Arabic, "No matter where you are from, we're glad you are our neighbor," popping up

in community after community. Welcome Neighbor is intentionally not partisan nor denominational but is aimed at communicating the shared value (and our UU principle) of respect, tolerance and acting in welcoming all. You can find more information about Welcome Neighbor at <https://www.welcomeyourneighbors.org/>

### **Sustaining Vulnerable Communities**

The focus for the Social Justice Council for the next two or three years will become "sustaining vulnerable communities". The Council will continue with activities related to hunger and homelessness, and will broaden the scope of support for action and activities to include those that the members of the congregation are strongly interested in. Examples of those to be considered are:

- showing a film about criminal justice reform
- serving as host for Empty Bowls in the fall
- working with South Shore Action and other local churches to help immigrants in this area

The Social Justice Council continues to invite and welcome new members. The Council will hold its first monthly meeting in September.

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

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