

Next issue deadline
Sunday, September 13

The Spire

JUNE 7, 2026

THE FIRST SUNDAY RECORD

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A Summer Rest

In July and August *The Spire* takes a break. The next issue will appear in September. Enjoy the summer!

Parish Committee Notes

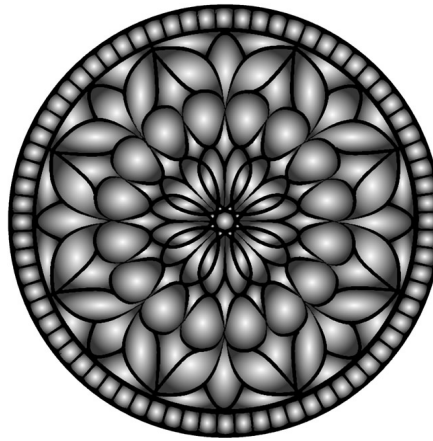
As our program year ends, the Parish Committee would like to thank the congregation for volunteering, supporting, being, doing, speaking up, holding on, and letting go during this transition time. First Parish is an active spiritual community and we continue to lean on each other. During a difficult time in our country, the vibrant congregational life that we enjoy here at First Parish continues to strengthen and deepen. We are self-governing as a congregation, and both our budget and our mission come from the members of the congregation.

Annual Meeting

At the Annual Meeting on May 3, which was extremely well attended by about 150 people, plus a dozen households watching on Zoom, we came together to vote on a budget that aligns with our values, to thank our many talented volunteers, to elect new leaders, and to move one step closer to completing the ministerial transition.

There was a “Kidz Annual Meeting” simultaneously, and the youth provided lunch as a fundraiser. Many thanks to the youth, the adult advisors, the parents, and K Milano!

We heard presentations from the Reckoning & Repair Working Group, the Front Corner Task Force, and the Transition Team. Among the volunteers we thanked were Pam and Alan Linov, who, after almost 25 years of service and sharing their time, talent, and treasure, will be moving to their next chapter.



First Parish elected the members of our Lead Minister Search Committee: Amy Anderson, Genevieve Baldwin, Betsy Carlton-Gysan, Katherine Fleming, Sanjay Newton, Anne Quaadgras, and David Whitford. Their charge is finding a new settled, lead minister. They will select a candidate and present that person to the congregation in 2027.

We are in an interim period between the ministry of Rev. Marta Flanagan, who retired in June 2025, and our next lead minister, who should begin in September

2027. With us currently are Rev. Dr. Jonipher Kwong as our Lead Interim Minister and Rev. Erica Richmond as our Parish Minister, along with Rev. Stevie Carmody, our Minister of Religious Education.

At the Annual Meeting we elected Alan Schweitzer as auditor and David Whitford as moderator, and three new members of the Parish Committee (ParCom):

Summer Services

Lay-led services on Zoom only.

Minister-led services both in-person and on Zoom.

June 21	Diane Taraz	<i>Good Trouble</i>
June 28	Rev. Jonipher	
July 5	Loren Gomez	<i>Faithing</i>
July 12	Rev. Erica	
July 19	Elizabeth Hunter	<i>How to Worship</i>
July 26	Rev. Jonipher	
August 2	Lyn Fulton Jon	<i>Finding a Home</i>
August 9	Rev. Erica	
August 16	Jim Jolley	<i>Nature and Spirituality</i>
August 23	Rev. Erica	
August 30	Rev. Jonipher	
Sept. 6	Maggie Carey	<i>Courage, Compassion and Creativity</i>

Susan Moore, Ellen Robie, and John Shriver. After the meeting, the Parish Committee unanimously elected Marie Meter chair and Amy Speare vice chair.

ParCom's May Meeting

ParCom has created a Communications Committee and a Bylaws Task Force.

The Communications Committee will work on aligning and coordinating important information from ParCom, the Transition Team, and the Lead Minister Search Committee. The communications folks will also review the current avenues being used for communicating important information.

The Bylaws Task Force has no formal charge yet, for the group is still forming, but part of our transition time includes a review of our bylaws, which were last updated in 2016. One task will be to align the bylaws with technology so that hybrid meetings can include online participants fully.

Summer Service Experiments

The Parish Committee discussed a proposal from Rev. Jonipher and the Tech Task Force to test some audio and video improvements in some of our summer services. Half of the services will be on-line only, but on the last Sundays in June, July, and August we will gather both in person and via Zoom for services led by Rev. Jonipher Kwong and Rev. Erica Richmond.

Our weekly potlucks will continue each Wednesday.

As June tends to be a month of celebration with flowers, rainbows, and outdoor gatherings, let's pause and celebrate how far we have come and look ahead to where we are going. Many thanks to the Transition Team for their continued, thoughtful, and thorough



May your summer be just a little bit sneezy.

work of helping us all through this time of change. If you missed the Transition Team newsletters, they can be found on the First Parish website under the "In the Interim!" tab, which is under "News and Events."

Welcome aboard to the Covenant Task Force, which has already begun gathering input from the congregation on what a congregational covenant would include. As mentioned in a sermon by Rev. Stevie earlier this year, covenanting is a process of adapting and working with each other, from making sure we are using the correct pronouns to holding each other accountable in ways that are supportive and in line with our UU values.

These are the members of various groups currently hard at work:

The Covenant Task Force: Tali Avery, Anthony Fernandez, Julie Garry (Transition Team Liaison), Amy Hadley, and Tina Schultz. Rev. Jonipher serves as an advisor.

The Transition Team: Julie Garry, Kay Snowden, Marc Jacobson, Elizabeth Hunter, Lois Fine, and Marilyn Downs. Rev. Jonipher is an advisor.

In celebration of good things to come,

Joanna Pushee, Clerk

Giving First Over the Summer

In all of our summer services, half of the offering will support First Parish and half will be donated to Pink Haven Coalition. This group of trans organizers, mutual-aid groups, progressive faith organizations, queer associations, and individual justice-lovers work together to create networks of safety and direct support for trans beloveds and their families who need to relocate, access healthcare across state lines, or stay as safe as possible where they are. We know that liberation is a group project and that no one is free until everyone is free. We proclaim that trans lives are sacred. Pink Haven's work centers trans lives and experiences, particularly the lives and experiences of BIPOC trans and gender-expansive people.

Looking Ahead to Ferry Beach

Registration is open for our annual retreat, which will be held September 25 to 27 in Saco, Maine. Contact ferrybeach@firstparish.info for details.



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and mission of First Parish.

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The Spire

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Submissions due by Sunday, September 6
Items may be edited for space and clarity.

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