



The eBulletin

April 24, 2025
A weekly newsletter

Worship in the Meetinghouse Sanctuary and online
~~ Sunday at 10am ~~

"The Something I Can Do"

Shinn Service

Dr. Amy Smith, 2025 Shinn Speaker, preaching
Sunday, April 27, 2025, at 10am



In this sermon, Dr. Amy Smith reflects on her experiences in international development and how those experiences have been influenced by the UU principles she grew up with. After the service, the Social Justice Committee invites all to "Reverberations," an occasional gathering at First Parish for discussion following a sermon. Lead Minister Rev. Marta Flanagan hosts Reverberations with Amy Smith in the sanctuary at 11:45 am.

The Shinn Service honors Barbara Shinn (1912-1976) and her commitment to justice. Barbara served as chair of what was then known as the Social Responsibility Committee. An educator and leader, she had a passion for teaching children with disabilities. She displayed personal courage in the face of a debilitating illness, arthritis of the spine.

This year's Shinn Service preacher is Dr. Amy Smith. Dr. Amy Smith is the Founding Director of MIT D-Lab, an innovative university-based program in international development and a senior lecturer in Mechanical Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). She is also the founder of the International Development Design Summit, co-founder of the MIT IDEAS Global Challenge, co-founder of Rethink Relief conference, and originator of the Creative Capacity Building Methodology. Amy's most recent work has been in Africa with displaced people, often in refugee camps. She works collaboratively with them as they identify problems and collectively create solutions. She grew up as a Unitarian Universalist in the Follen Church in Lexington, MA.

Join us in the sanctuary or [online!](#) View the Order of Service [Here](#)

Religious Education News

Spring Term continues, with
grade-based religious

Calendar

Apr 26: [Walking Tour of UU History](#)

Apr 27: [Zoom Meditation](#)

Apr 27: [Worship Service - Shinn](#)

Who are UU? Guided Conversation - THIS SUNDAY

THIS Sunday, April 27,

education programming for Pre-K through Grade 7.

Sunday evening: Youth group, COA, and OWL meet as usual (fifth workshop).

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[Visit the 2024-25 religious education calendar.](#)

[Service](#)

Apr 27: [Who are UU? Conversations](#)

Apr 28: [Spirit Talks](#)

Apr 28: [In-Person Meditation](#)

Apr 29: [Lectio Divina](#)

Apr 30: [Spring Birding Walks](#)

Apr 30: [Lectio Divina](#)

Apr 30: [Monthly Community Potluck](#)

May 1: [Lectio Divina](#)

May 1: [Older Men's Lunch](#)

May 1: [Women's Book Group](#)

May 3: [Spring Clean-it / Fix-it Day](#)

May 3: [Screening - "No Other Land"](#)

Parlor. The Who are UU? series is designed to ease us beyond small talk and learn more about each other. It is aimed at newer folks, but is not exclusive! No registration is required. The April 27 session will feature a sample Lectio Divina session focused on a poem rather than on biblical text.

[Walking Tour of UU History in Boston](#)

Saturday, April 26, 11:00 AM, [Old West Church](#). Unitarians and Universalists were central to many of the most important events in Boston's history. You can learn about them in a 2-mile walking tour of Boston led by Eric Segal. You will learn:

- How God is like a mop
- How Unitarians were key figures on both sides of the slavery debate
- The Unitarian minister who led one of the biggest riots in Boston history
- The women behind the scenes for Transcendentalists Thoreau and Emerson.
- The Universalist minister who was the last person in the US prosecuted for blasphemy.

Meet at 11:00am in front of the [Old West Church, 131 Cambridge St in Boston](#). RSVP ahead of time to segal.eric@gmail.com, and we can coordinate rides.

[Spring Birding Mindfulness Walks \(STAR Program\)](#)

Wednesday, April 30, 8:00am, Arlington Reservoir Parking Lot. Birding is a wonderful way to stay in the present moment. As we walk through a forest or around a pond or field, we focus our attention on bird sounds and subtle movements in the trees and shrubs rather than the chatter in our heads. Join us for this first of two upcoming walks led by Debora Diggins, birder and casual naturalist. The walks will be slow-paced and on level ground; suitable for adults at any level of birding skill. Bring binoculars. Meet at Arlington Reservoir parking lot. To register, please email debora.diggins@gmail.com or STAR@firstparish.info. Rain cancels.

[Monthly Community Potluck](#)

Wednesday, April 30, 6:00pm, Vestry. Join us next week for the monthly community potluck, sponsored by STAR and hosted by the First Parish Worship Associates this month. Bring a dish to share and, if possible, your own re-usable tableware. All are welcome, no registration necessary - even if you don't have a dish to share (there is always plenty of food!).

[Film Screening: "No Other Land"](#)

Saturday, May 3, 700pm, Vestry. Come join us in gaining insight about some of the issues around land and people in the West Bank. You are invited to attend a showing of the Academy Award winning documentary, No Other Land. The film resulted from the collaboration of a young Palestinian

activist and a young Israeli journalist, and it shows the process and the personal impacts of the displacement of a Palestinian community after Israeli authorities designated the area to become a military training zone. The showing will be followed by a brief and optional discussion session.



Spring Clean-It / Fix-It Day - Help Keep First Parish Beautiful!

The entire First Parish community is invited to help out on the spring Clean-it/Fix-it day on **Saturday, May 3 from 9am-noon.**

Past days have included gardening, painting, cleaning and just general sprucing up around First Parish.

This is a great way to meet new people and make a difference~~we hope you will join us. All are welcome - no RSVP necessary. Come ready to roll up your sleeves and get dirty!

Reckoning, Repair, & Regime Change Teach-In

Sunday, May 4, 11:45am, Sanctuary and Zoom. How should we carry out the work of justice in a time when government agencies are scrubbing words like "equity," "oppression," and "racism" from their websites? In the chaos, fear, and furor of this moment, it's easy to feel overwhelmed and powerless. Join members of the First Parish Reckoning & Repair Working Group to explore our current context, find inspiration in the historical roots of the right-wing bogeyman known as DEI, and build our collective capacity for resistance. Food will be served!

A Gift for Rev. Marta Flanagan, Lead Minister

As Rev. Marta Flanagan's retirement in June quickly and sadly approaches, after nearly 16 years of exemplary service, First Parish is finding many ways to express our appreciation, our gratitude and our love for her. The Parish Committee would like to offer one additional way in which everyone may join- by making a donation to First Parish to fund a retirement gift to Marta. This is a traditional way in which many Unitarian Universalist congregations seek to ease the transition of their beloved settled ministers to the uncertainties of retirement. This is particularly apt in Marta's case as she is retiring earlier than she had planned.

Donations in any amount will be gratefully received. If you wish to make a donation, you may pay by check (noting "Marta gift" in the memo line) or on Realm using the donation code "XXXXX" (denoting "Marta gift"). We will present Marta with this gift at the upcoming party for Marta on May 31st with a card that lists all who have donated. Should you have questions, please feel free to contact Jeff Keffer at (781) 686-3788 or Al Tosti at (781) 820-1580.

Parish Committee, Anne Quaadgras (Chair), John Anderson (Vice Chair), Carolyn Hodges (Treasurer), Joanna Pushee (Clerk), Jeff Keffer, Stephen McMullin, Susan Moore, Kate Tranquada, Al Tosti

A Book of Memories and Blessings for Marta

What will you contribute? Your letters, poems, essays, photos, and 2D art will be collected into a 12" x 12" scrapbook for Marta on her retirement. See Kate Tranquada at social hour, email ktranquada@gmail.com, or [submit online](#). The deadline

for submissions is May 17.

Rev. Marta Flanagan, our lead minister, is retiring in mid-June after serving First Parish for 16 years.



Open Sessions to Review Annual Meeting Warrant Articles

Wednesday May 7 at 7:30pm (Zoom), Sunday May 11, after worship (Sanctuary), Monday May 12, 7:30pm (Zoom). Open sessions will be held to review the 2025-2026 proposed budget as well as the Parish Committee recommendation for conferring Minister Emerita status on Marta Flanagan upon her retirement in June. Hosted by Parish and Finance Committees. Questions? Email Treasurer@FirstParish.info or parishexec@firstparish.info.

Click on the link to learn more about these upcoming First Parish events:

[Walking Tour of UU History in Boston](#) , April 26
[Spring Birding Mindfulness Walks](#) , April 30 and May 10
[Community Potluck](#) , April 30
[Spring Clean It / Fix It Day](#) , May 3
[Film Screening: "No Other Land,"](#) May 3
[Reckoning and Repair Teach-In](#) , May 4
[Annual Meeting](#) , May 18

Weekly or Bi-weekly

- **Lectio Divina:** *(Meets Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays on Zoom.)* Lectio Divina is a method of reading and listening, lingering with, and sharing personal responses to selected biblical texts. Diverse responses to the text provide new insights and help us grow in our spiritual lives and set intentions for our daily lives.
- **Meditation Groups:** *Meets Sunday, 9am (Zoom); and Monday, 6pm (in person)* Beginners and experienced meditators are welcome. Please feel free to drop in whenever you like. For more information, or to be added to the list to receive each Zoom session's unique link, please email meditation@firstparish.info
- **Bell ringer rehearsals:** Starting in September, we meet most Thursdays 8-9pm in the Sanctuary after choir rehearsal. All interested are welcome - being able to read music is helpful. Contact ringers@firstparish.info for more details.
- **Spirit Talks:** Weekly discussions provide an opportunity for a small group to reflect together on a spiritual theme every Monday at 4pm. Email spirittalk@firstparish.info to be added to the mailing list for Spirit Talk or just check us out by joining a discussion.
- **Wednesday Evening Chapel** Starting on September 11th and running through the end of January, we will gather on Zoom for Wednesday evening chapel. This is a 25 minute gathering of sharing, silence, poetry, and song. [Learn more.](#)
- **Men's Group** - Men of all ages and backgrounds are welcome to meet online, every other Sunday at 7pm to connect and support each other on our spiritual journeys. [Email](#) for the

Zoom link.

- [Older Men's Lunch Group](#) continues to meet, on Zoom. Email oldermen@firstparish.info for more information. The sessions will be held at noon every other Thursday.

Monthly

- [Covenant Groups](#) Each group meets once a month from September, 2024 through June, 2025. Through discussion of a monthly theme,
- [The Diversity Book Club](#) generally meets on the third Tuesday of *alternate* months. All are welcome, please join us to discuss our next title. Register by email diversitybookclub@firstparish.info
- [Grief Support Group](#) Lay Ministry led support for individuals who have lost loved ones. The group generally meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month, at 7:30pm on Zoom.
- [Transition to Retirement](#). You are welcome to this drop-in group that meets approximately once a month to provide support around the emotional (not financial) aspects of the retirement transition. Contact the Lay Ministry, layministry@firstparish.info, to receive the Zoom link.
- [Women Aging Well](#): Join our vibrant community of women over 50 as we explore the joys and challenges of aging together. Through discussions of a variety of topics we foster meaningful connections and learning from one another. We meet on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 11am to noon. Meetings may be on zoom or in person.
- [The Women's Alliance of First Parish](#) The Alliance is the women's organization in our church, with a mission to support the women in our congregation, and through that support to advance the interests and efforts of our entire church.
- [Women's Book Group](#) The women's book group meets the second Thursday of each month at 7pm, not including summer months. The May book selection is *1776* by David McCullough.

Get the
"Workings"
Booklet for
2024 - 2025

First Parish Playlist



Download
Playlist

SAVE THE DATE



Retirement
Celebration
for
Rev. Marta Flanagan

First Parish publishes events and news from our community. Click this banner to submit your news or event.

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