



Sunday Worship

First Parish

A liberal religious community, welcoming to all

First gathered 1739

December 8, 2024

Worship in the Meetinghouse Sanctuary and Online

The sun rose at 7:01am and will set at 4:12pm *in sh'allah*
bringing us 9 hours, 10 minutes of sunlight,
9 minutes less than last Sunday.

The moon is waxing to its fullness
next Sunday December 15.

Today is the second Sunday in Advent.

For Roman Catholics, today is also
the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Thursday is the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

For Buddhists of the northern tradition today is

Bodhi Day,

the anniversary of the Buddha's enlightenment, ca. 596 BCE.

Sounding of the Chime

*In the sanctuary silence during the prelude is appreciated.
Please also silence your cell phones and electronic devices.*

Prelude

Keep Your Lamps

Andre Thomas

First Parish Choir

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Erica Richmond
Parish Minister

Greeting Your Neighbor

Call to Worship and Chalice Lighting

Rev. Erica Richmond

Hymn 226

People Look East

Time for All Ages

Rev. Stevie Carmody
Minister of Religious Education,
with Sean Maher, First Parish Youth Group

As children leave for religious education we sing:

Go now in peace, go now in peace.
May the spirit of love surround you
everywhere, everywhere you may go.

Vayan en paz, vayan en paz
Pueda el amor rodear los siempre
por doquier, por doquier que vayan.

Go Now in Peace -- Vayan en paz

Trans. Rev. Lilia Cuervo

Natalie Sleeth

The image shows the musical notation for the hymn 'Go Now in Peace'. It consists of two staves of music in 4/4 time. The first staff contains the first line of the hymn, and the second staff contains the second line. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Go now in peace, Go now in peace. May the spi - rit of
Va - yan en paz, va-yan en paz, Pue - da el a - mor ro-de -

love sur - round you ev-'ry where, ev-'ry-where, you may go.
ar- los si - em - pre por do-quier, por do-quier, que va - yan.

Celebrations and Concerns

Robbie Rinearson
Lay Minister

If moved to do so, you may place a stone
for a joy or sorrow you are holding in your heart.
If you write a joy or sorrow on the card available
at the back of the sanctuary,
the ordained and lay ministers will hold it
in their thoughts and prayers.
If you wish to speak of your joy or sorrow,
please line up after placing your stone.
When you are motioned forward,
speak into the microphone and tell us your name.
Speak briefly and from your own experience.

Interlude for the Placing of Stones

Candle Music
Kenneth Seitz, piano

Prayer and Silent Meditation

David Whitford
Worship Associate

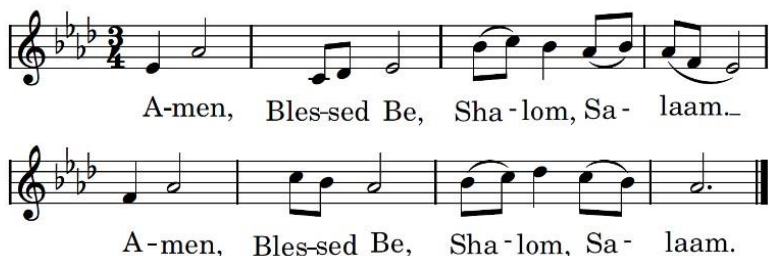
Musical Response

Amen, Blessed Be
Kenneth Seitz, piano

Words: *Amen, Blessed Be. Shalom, Salaam.*
Sung twice by the congregation

Amen, Blessed Be, Shalom, Salaam

Kenneth H. Seitz



Offering

“Comfort Ye & Every Valley” (Isaiah 40.1-4)
from *Messiah* by G.F. Handel
Travis Benoit, tenor

*This Sunday half of your offering supports
The Children’s Room of Arlington, MA.
The Children’s Room offers grief support services
for children and families,
for schools, and for community organizations.
Services include peer support groups, parent groups,
teen programs, and Family Night.*

*The remaining half of your offering supports the
life and work of this Parish.
To donate using your smartphone, you may text
“fpuu offering” to 73256.
Then follow the directions in the texts you receive.
If you would like your entire offering to support
your pledge, indicate “pledge” on your check.*

Reading

“Winter: Tonight: Sunset”
by David Budbill
read by Marta Flanagan

Hymn 15

The Lone Wild Bird

Sermon

Rev. Marta Morris Flanagan
Lead Minister

“Responding to the News”

Hymn 47

Now on Land and Sea Descending

Verse 1 is printed below
followed by verses 3 and 4

Now the earth and season spinning,
bring the dark its peace profound;
let our gentle hymn be blending
with the holy calm around.

Jubilate! Jubilate! Jubilate! Amen.

Jubilate! Jubilate! Jubilate! Amen.

Benediction

Rev. Marta Morris Flanagan

***May faith in the Spirit of Life,
Hope for the community of Earth,
and Love of the sacred in one another
Be ours now and in all the days to come.***

*Saying these words responsively
is a custom at First Parish.*

*You are invited to take the hand of
one beside you or place your hand on their shoulder.*

Postlude

Hear Those Jing-a-ling Bells

Kenneth Seitz

Kenneth Seitz, piano

*Our postlude is the concluding passage of our
common worship.*

All are asked to remain seated during the postlude.

*After worship those in the sanctuary are invited to move
into the vestry for light refreshments and conversation.*

*If it is 11:30 parents are asked to quietly leave to pick up
their children from the religious education program.*

You Sing My Hymn, I Sing Yours

Welcome to worship at First Parish- whatever your story, wherever you are on your journey.

In worship we seek both affirmation and challenge, for these are necessary ingredients for spiritual growth and deepening.

We come with different theological and religious orientations, but we do not seek sameness or some common denominator. We engage in worship with open hearts and minds. Our sung and spoken words reflect a range of religious perspectives.

In worship, some elements will touch us deeply, and some will not. Whatever our personal preferences about the elements in any worship service, we say, *You sing my hymn, I sing yours*. In worship we give and receive.

The First Parish Worship Associates
November 2015

First Parish's Mission

First Parish is committed to inward spiritual growth, side by side companionship of one another, and turning outward in our work in the world.

We choose to be a liberal religious community,
welcoming to all.

We encourage each other on our spiritual journeys,
Support one another through the changes in our lives,
And challenge the excesses and injustices of our time.
Called to love and upheld by joy, we live our faith.

Adopted by the members of First Parish Arlington MA
March 28, 2010

On Hope This Season

a selection from the Benedictine nun, theologian and author
Joan Chittister

Hope is a thin and slippery thing, sorely tested and hard to come by in this time. We have seen the social fabric of the country rent, not only by others but even by our own hands. We can feel hopeless.

But Advent reminds us that hope is not for easy times. Hope comes only when hope is gone, when our “hands are feeble” and our “knees are weak” over what is coming upon our worlds.

Hope is not insane optimism in the face of palpable evil or dire circumstances. It is not the shallow attempt of well-meaning but facile friends to “cheer us up” in bad times. It’s not the irritating effort of ill-at-ease counselors who work to make us “reframe” our difficulties so that everyone around us will not have to deal with them, too. No, hope is not made of denial. Hope is made of memories.

Hope reminds us that there is nothing in life we have not faced that we did not, through gifts and graces—however unrecognized at the time—survive. Hope is the recall of good in the past, on which we base our expectation of good in the future, however bad the present.

Former Czech president Vaclav Havel said: “Hope is definitely not the same thing as optimism. It is not the conviction that something will turn out well but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out.”

Advent calls us to hope in the promise of the ages which is calling us to greater things.

.....

First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Arlington

www.firstparish.info

First Parish is a liberal religious community working toward another way to be and act in our time. As a Unitarian Universalist congregation (www.uua.org), we are not bound to any statement of belief or creed but to an aspiration to act in love. We believe personal experience, conscience and reason are final authorities in religion.

A religious education program for children meets during Sunday worship. Children are given the tools with which to answer their religious questions of the world.

To learn more, visit the information table after worship. You can sign up for the weekly E-Bulletin there or by emailing churchoffice@firstparish.info

First Parish is self-governing and supported by members and friends who contribute their time, talent and treasure. The elected Parish Committee (“ParCom”) is the governing board. ParCom can be reached at Parishexec@firstparish.info.

Anne Quaadgras, Chair	John Anderson, Vice-Chair	
Joanna Pushee, Clerk	Carolyn Hodges, Treasurer	
Jeff Keffer	Steve McMullin	Susan Moore
Allan Tosti	Kate Tranquada	

Staff serve the members, leaders and mission of First Parish.

Rev. Marta Morris Flanagan, *Lead Minister*

Rev. Erica Federspiel Richmond, *Parish Minister*

Rev. Stevie Carmody, *Minister of Religious Education*

Daniel Parsley, *Music Director*

Kenneth Seitz, *Director of Music, Emeritus*

Rose Sawyer Marsh, *Youth Program Coordinator*

Bella Jaffe, *Religious Education Assistant*

Ebiere Omoregie, *Office Manager*

Allison Sillers, *Office & Communications Associate*

Jaqueline De Jesus, *Sexton*

Rev. Wendy Page, *Affiliate Minister*

A Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation, First Parish warmly and intentionally welcomes gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer and transgender people.