



Sunday Worship

First Parish

A liberal religious community, welcoming to all

First gathered 1739

June 8, 2025

Worship in the Meetinghouse Sanctuary and Online

The sun rose at 5:08am and will set at 8:20pm *in sh'allah*
bringing us 15 hours, 12 minutes of sunlight,
8 minutes more than last Sunday.

The moon is waxing toward its fullness on Wednesday.

For Christians today is Pentecost,
the commemoration of the coming of the Holy Spirit
upon the followers of Jesus after his death.

Pentecost is considered the "birthday" of the Christian
Church and comes fifty days after Easter.

June is Pride Month for LGBTQ+ peoples.

Thursday is the Pulse Night of Remembrance,
an annual testament to the work still to be done for equality.

It is also a powerful illustration of
hope, resilience, and the healing power of community.

The Pulse nightclub was a known sanctuary
for the LGBTQ+ community in Orlando, FL

On June 12, 2016, a shooting left 49 dead and 50 wounded.

It is the most significant single act of violence against the
LGBTQ+ community in the US.

Today our blue LGBTQ+ chalice is lit for the
Pulse Night of Remembrance, which is today.

Sounding of the Chime

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

Prelude

Preacher Bird
Kenneth Seitz, composer
Kenneth Seitz, piano

*Our chancel is decorated with flowers
brought by each of you.
This is a nod to our annual Flower Communion.
In 1923 in Prague, Rev. Nobert Čapek created this ritual,
symbolizing the gift of our individuality
and the beauty of pluralism.
Though Čapek was killed by the Nazis,
his legacy of resistance lives on.
After our community BBQ today,
you may take a flower home.*

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Erica Federspiel Richmond, Parish Minister

Greeting Your Neighbor

Call to Worship and Chalice Lighting

Loren Gomez, Worship Associate

Congregational Affirmation

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

Hymn 128

For All That Is Our Life

Time for All Ages

Rev. Stevie Carmody,
Minister of Religious Education;
Rev. Marta Morris Flanagan,
Lead Minister and Minister Emerita

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.

Celebrations and Concerns

Carolyn Carlson
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

Stones Music
Kenneth Seitz, piano

Prayer and Silent Meditation

Rev. Marta Morris Flanagan

Musical Response

Amen, Blessed Be
Kenneth Seitz, piano

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

Offering

Benediction: When the Recall Sounds

Jennifer Kobayashi

First Parish Choir

When the recall sounds
and the shadows fall, may we have
hearts unembittered by all we have suffered
and uncorrupted by all we have enjoyed...
and be at the last remembered and
cherished as those who have loved greatly.

- Rev. Dr. Vivien Pomeroy, 1883-1961
Unitarian minister

*This Sunday half of the offering supports
The Boston Alliance of LGBTQ+ Youth (BAGLY).
For nearly 50 years, BAGLY has been a youth-led,
adult-supported social support organization,
committed to social justice and creating, sustaining,
and advocating for programs, policies, and services
for the LGBTQ+ youth community in Massachusetts.*

*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.
If you would like your entire offering to support your
pledge, indicate “pledge” on your check or envelope.*

Song 21

Life Calls Us On

Homily

Rev. Erica Federspiel Richmond
Parish Minister

Anthem

“Bidden or Unbidden, God is Present”

Music composed by Kenneth Seitz
for Marta Flanagan’s farewell from First Parish

Lyrics by Marta Morris Flanagan & Charles R. Duffy
spoken at their wedding August 13, 2023

God Almighty
First and Last
Sower of Grace
We remember!

Arranger of the Heavens
Creator of Stars and Planets
Mover of Tides and Seasons
We marvel!

Ancient Calm
Abiding One
Still, Small Voice
We wonder!

Source of Kindness
Kindler of Strength
Wellspring of Justice
We sing praise!

Father and Son
Mother of God
Abba and Emma
We give thanks!

Shepherd and Midwife
Giver of Breath
Lifegiving Presence
We delight and rejoice!

One who causes waters to flow,
Grass to grow on the mountains,
Love to root in unexpected places
Here I am. Here we are. Hineni!

Notes:

“Bidden or unbidden, God is present” is attributed to Erasmus of Rotterdam, 1563.

“Abba” and “Emma” are Hebrew for “Papa” and “Mama.”

“Hineni” is Hebrew for “Here I am” or “I am ready, willing.” In the Hebrew Bible, it is uttered most often in response to God, but also spoken from one individual to another. When the word “Hineni” is used, it signifies a turning point, a potential life-changing moment requiring decision, action, and resolution.

Farewell Blessing and Release of
Rev. Marta Morris Flanagan
called Lead Minister, 2009-2025
designated Minister Emerita by a vote of the congregation
May 18, 2025

led by
David Whitford
elected Moderator of First Parish (in regular print)

Marie Meteer
elected chair of the Parish Committee (*in italics*)

The life of our religious community is fluid, ever changing, with new lives, new visions and new possibilities. Sixteen years ago, we welcomed you, Marta, as our minister at First Parish. And you, Marta, welcomed us into your care.

Since then, you have guided us with candor, insight and compassion through the many changes in our lives, our congregation, our wider community, our nation and our world.

For the dignity and grace with which you have lived your covenant with us, we are deeply grateful.

You have shared with us your doubts and your convictions.

Your sorrows and your joys.

You have guided us through times of mourning and times of celebration.

Times of uncertainty and times of conviction.

Times of discord and times of harmony.

Times of overwhelm and times of action.

And times of plague!

You have stood up with us, sat down with us, spoken words of wisdom to us and opened your heart to us throughout the passages of our lives. Comforting us in times of sickness, trouble and grief. Blessing our unions. Celebrating the births and arrivals of our children.

Your sermons have educated us, challenged us, inspired us and drawn us into ever deeper communion with the Holy, however we have chosen to define it.

You have cultivated in us capacities we did not know we possessed. For pastoral care. For preaching. For prayer. And for leadership. Capacities we are confident will guide us in this, our time of transition, and sustain us in your absence.

From 3,000 years ago come the words of Ecclesiastes:

*For everything there is a season:
a time to weep and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn and a time to dance;
a time to seek and a time to lose;
a time to keep and a time to throw away;
a time to tear and a time to sew;
a time to keep silent and a time to speak;
A time to be born and a time to die;
A time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted.*

Today we say farewell, Marta, and Godspeed.
To facilitate a gentle and harmonious transition to a new beginning, we have a ceremony of ‘releasing’ for us all.
At this time, I invite those who have served as chair of the Parish Committee during Marta’s tenure at First Parish to join her at the front of the sanctuary.

Michael Friedman, co-chair, 2008-2010

Alan Linov, co-chair 2009-2010

Josh Davis, 2010-11

Anne Goodwin, 2011-2013

Wendy Page 2013-2014

Anne Goodwin, 2015

Julius Pereli, 2015-2017

Steve McMullin, 2017-2020

Marie Meteer, 2020-2022

Sara Galantowicz, 2022-2024

Anne Quaadgras, 2024-2025

Marie Meteer, 2025-

We now invite all past and present members who have served on the Parish Committee, or served as Worship Associates and Lay Ministers, during these past 16 years to stand as you are able.

Those of you who have served on other committees improving the life of First Parish, please stand.

Those of you who have taught in the Religious Education program, please stand; those who have sung in the choir and all musicians who have offered their gifts, please stand.

Those of you who have ever answered a call to help a fellow congregant in need or contributed in any way to the greater good of our congregation, please stand.

If there is anyone present in the sanctuary or online who is not yet standing, please stand now, as you are able - for your very presence enriches us all and strengthens our religious community.

And now, I invite the past and present Chairs of the Parish Committee to form a circle around Marta and place their hands upon her shoulders. And the rest of us, place your hands on the shoulders of the person in front of you.

Together we form a congregational embrace, an echo of the traditional laying on of hands by which ministers are called, as we called Marta by a vote of the congregation on April 5, 2009.

Do you, the members and friends of First Parish, now release Marta from her role as Lead Minister of First Parish?

CONGREGATION: **We do.**

Marta, do you release First Parish from turning to you for ministry and guidance?

MARTA: I do.

CONGREGATION:

**Marta, we, members and friends of First Parish,
treasure poignant memories
of times shared with you.**

May we hold them close in days to come.

We are excited for the leadings that await you.

May they surprise and delight you.

**And we hereby release you
from your sacred charge!**

**We honor you from this day forward
as our Minister Emerita.**

**And while this is a goodbye,
may it not be a final farewell.**

**We look forward
to seeing you again, from time to time,
as the Spirit moves among us!**

Hymn 368

Now Let Us Sing!

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

Beyond Words
Kenneth Seitz
Kenneth Seitz, piano

*Our postlude is the concluding passage
of our common worship.
All are asked to remain seated during the postlude.*

*Today after worship those in the sanctuary are invited
to move into the memorial garden and vestry
for a barbecue picnic lunch!*

.....

*This Sunday is the end of the 2024-2025 program year.
Next Sunday begins summer lay led online worship.*

*We return to the sanctuary for hybrid worship on
Ingathering Sunday, September 8.*

.....

Summer Worship 2025

Sundays 10 am, June 15 through August 31
at First Parish in Arlington MA

www.firstparish.info

Summer Worship is on Zoom only

You may post this page at home for easy reference.

June 15	Lida Junghans	<i>Notes from a Seeker who has Traveled In and Out of Marriage</i>
June 22	Jeanne Feeley	<i>I Am Enough</i>
June 29	Brian Dooley	<i>What (emotional) state are you living in?</i>
July 6	Lyn Fulton Jon	<i>The Middle Spirit</i>
July 13	Melanie Cohn-Hopwood	<i>Credo Reflections: After 10 Years</i>
July 20	Lillian Povey	<i>The Importance of Planning a Vacation</i>
July 27	David Dreyfus	<i>What AI Tells us About Being Human</i>
Aug 3	Anna Callahan	<i>Finding Stability in a Time of Chaos</i>
Aug 10	Julie Garry	<i>What's So Funny 'bout Peace Love & Understanding</i>
Aug 17	Rick Eastwick	<i>My Hindu Conversion</i>
Aug 24	Tish Miller	<i>Listening as Spiritual Practice: Why is it so Hard?</i>
Aug 31	Barbara Ives	<i>Fear</i>

Become a Worship Associate or Lay Minister

The Shared Ministry Committee is seeking several members of the congregation to join the Lay Ministry and the Worship Associates, two important programs serving our community.

Lay Ministers work with First Parish clergy to provide pastoral care for members of the community, 'supporting one another through the changes in our lives.' Lay Ministry applicants have a natural bent for listening and compassion, as well as the ability to maintain professional and personal boundaries and confidentiality.

Worship Associates have a public presence in Sunday services and support the organization of services throughout the year, including facilitating the series of summer services. Those interested in becoming Worship Associates should have a deep interest in worship, be comfortable speaking before the congregation, have good organizational skills, and the ability to speak candidly but kindly.

Lay Ministers and Worship Associates:

- must be First Parish Members
- meet monthly as a group with a minister
- serve two-year terms (starting in the fall)
- may serve for up to three consecutive terms

Application, Training and Installation:

- Online applications are due by Wednesday, June 11
- Applicants will be interviewed and selected by the Shared Ministry Committee in June
- Lay Ministry Training: September 21 (half-day)
- Worship Associate Training: August 9 (half-day); October 18 (full-day training)
- Installations for each group occur during Sunday worship services early in the church year

For more information , see the website at www.firstparish.info, email Shared Ministry at sharedministry@firstparish.info, or speak with a current Lay Minister, Worship Associate, or member of the Shared Ministry Committee.

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 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.

Marie Meter, Chair	Kate Tranquada, Vice-Chair
Joanna Pushee, Clerk	Carolyn Hodges, Treasurer
John Anderson	Susan Moore
Amy Speare	Allan Tosti

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.