

Take part in the spiritual formation of our shared community: Lead worship at First Parish this summer!

We want to hear your thoughts, your voice, and your stories THIS summer. Do you have helpful insights to offer others? Have you ever thought of a great topic you wish you could share with the community, but you are just too shy to talk in front of a crowd? Would you share your spiritual truths and experiences if only someone asked you?

NOW is your opportunity! We are asking! Our community wants to hear from people who will share their thoughts, spiritual discoveries, and insights about surviving and thriving in this modern world.

Every summer our congregation offers a handful of lay members the opportunity to lead a worship service. Summer services this year will be virtual—100% online. This means for all those who wish they could share their insights and stories, but fear speaking in front of a crowd or who won't be in town, now is your chance to be heard from the comfort of your own chosen space anywhere in the world (*that has good WiFi*).

We all take part in ministry in a variety of ways during our regular program year. Leading a summer service is a unique opportunity for 12+ people to take part in the spiritual life of our community. Leading summer worship is a gift to our settled ministers. Each volunteer who leads a summer worship service enables Lead Minister Rev. Marta Flanagan, and Parish Minister Rev. Erica Richmond, to receive the gift of a week of rest, study, reflection, and renewal so they may return in the Fall restored in mind, body, and spirit to lead and care for the community. Leading summer worship is a gift to the whole community. Leading summer worship is a gift to the volunteer speakers themselves. The community lifts and honors the shared wisdom and insights of each speaker. Volunteering to speak is a way to share a diversity of spiritual practices and experiences with the congregation. Speaking and sharing a little bit of yourself deepens our connections to each other.

Inviting and empowering members to lead worship services is another way we as a congregation take part in honoring values in our principles of Unitarian Universalism. We celebrate the inherent worth and dignity of every person by welcoming members to use their own voices and lead worship. We build relationships through compassion and acceptance. We create a vibrant congregation when we lead and serve each other to build our spiritual and religious community.

Sharing our stories and insights helps us learn from each other. We want to hear your ideas on what you can speak about this summer. Will you help create a summer of thoughtful, enriching, and enlightening worship services for our congregation?

An application is online at tinyurl.com/summer-form or you can speak with any Worship Associate about your ideas. **The deadline for submitting your proposal is April 21, 2024.**

Practical Details:

1. ALL summer services will be streamed live via Zoom.
2. Summer service leaders need to be available for training online with Marta and the Worship Associates (WAs) on **Sunday, May 5 from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.**
3. In addition to individuals, First Parish members or groups can work together on a service. Groups need to identify one person to coordinate with the WAs.
4. Service themes and sermons/reflections must respect people regardless of our differences (*income, race, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, class, political affiliation, ways of worshiping, beliefs, educational background, etc.*) and offer a message that can speak to people across broad experiences and beliefs.
5. Submitting a proposal for a service is not a guarantee everyone will be scheduled to lead a service. We will work to balance the variety of topics and range of voices from the applications submitted.
6. Those who lead summer services create the entire service and the sermon. Pre-recorded music can be provided. Speakers may also play instruments or arrange music on their own. Each summer service worship leader works with a designated Worship Associate to ensure that all the elements of the service fit well together.

To submit a proposal, complete the form by April 21st: <https://tinyurl.com/3tb37cx9>.

The summer services speakers will meet for online training on May 5th from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. If you have any questions, please email us at WorshipAssociates@firstparish.info.