FIRST PARISH NEWS
UU Church of Kennebunk

LIGHTING THE WAY FORWARD

September 17, 2026

I would love to live like a river flows, carried by the surprise of its own unfolding.
John O'Donohue

Photo by Allegra Highsmith

"The Promises of Beginning"

Sept. 20, 2026, 10 a.m.

Worship Leader: Rev. Tori Rosati

Come in person or click below to join the service!
https://uukennebunk.org/Sunday-Service-Access
Or by cell phone (audio only) 929-205-6099, meeting ID 734 887 010,
Password: 02448

upcoming EVENTS

September Theme: Beginnings

- Every Thursday, 4-5 p.m. Demonstration, Kennebunk
- Sun. Sept. 20, 10 a.m. Religious Exploration begins
- Sun. Sept. 20, 11:30 a.m. What Now? Social justice discussion
- Sat. Sept. 26, 10 a.m. Creative Resilience Retreat**
- Tues. Oct. 13, 5:30 p.m. Family Matters*
- Wed. Oct. 14, 5:30 - 6:30 pm Vespers*

* See below for more information
** See Community for more information

This Sunday: The Promises of Beginning

Beginnings can be full of excitement and anticipation, and they can also be times of vulnerability and fear. In our faith tradition, our covenants are one way we promise to each other that we need not begin alone. Join us Sunday as explore how these sacred promises can open us to the greater truth of our interconnectedness and give us the chance, in every moment, to begin in love. Rev. Tori leading with Ted Trainer, and music from Mary Kennedy, Brian Kaufman, and Merideth Norris, and guest musician Gus Hedden.

Building Closed: Updated Days

Due to the forecasted rain this evening, the Kennebunk Free Library will be re-paving and painting the parking lot on September 18th and 19th. Therefore, our building will be closed and inaccessible on those days. If all goes according to plan, the building will re-open on Sunday, September 20th. If you have any questions, please email or call the office. Thank you for your patience.

Religious Exploration to begin Sept. 20

Registration
If you have children participating in our 2026-2027 RE year, please register HERE.

Volunteers
Dear parents and friends
We are looking for volunteers to help our children in Religious Exploration this fall. Please let us know if you might be able to help out on any of the dates below. You will not be alone in class. Jacky or I will be with you. And you might not be called, but we would like to develop a pool so we are not caught short this fall.

We are currently searching for a Director of Religious Exploration (DRE) and hope to hire someone before the end of the year. But we will always need assistants.

Please volunteer to assist us on the dates of your choice: Sunday, Sept. 20, 27, Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25, Nov. 8, 15, 22, 29, Other.

MANY, MANY, thanks in advance,
Your FPRE Team, Gray Hirshfield, Jacky Peters, Rev. Tori Rosati

Update from Your Stewardship Team

The Stewardship Team (Wayne White, Allegra Highsmith, David Terriciano, and Heidi Paramenter) has been hard at work this summer planning our annual fall stewardship campaign that is kicking off October 4th. This is the time of year when we reflect on the gifts we receive from this community and all the ways, from time, talent, and treasure, that we give back.

Below are some important dates to get on your calendar:
Pledge Drive Kick Off: October 4th
Celebration Sunday (with lunch): November 1st

The Team will be around during Coffee Hour this Sunday with brochures, so stop by and say hi!

Vance Gilbert Concert Success

Thanks again to everyone who came out to the Vance Gilbert concert. I had been thinking of easy ways to add some additional fundraisers to the church and I thought that would be a fairly easy one. We sold 87 tickets and netted $1150 for the church!

For anyone interested in more information, here are some ways to keep up with him:

Website: vancegilbert.com (subscribe to his newsletter at the bottom)
Facebook: facebook.com/vancegilbertmusic
YouTube: youtube.com/@vancegilbert1958

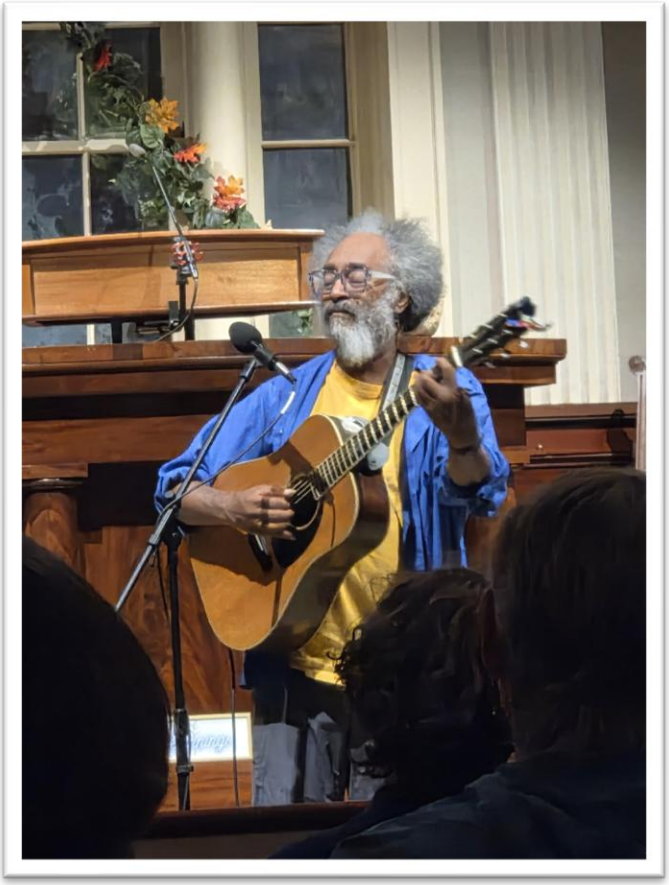

Photo by Kate Howell

His YouTube has archived versions of his Monday night "Acoustic Pajama Party," where he plays live over YouTube for donations, which she shares with local non-profits. He does this almost every Monday night, unless he has some other gig.

Women for All Seasons

Women for All Seasons will meet in the Church Library at **6:30 PM** on **Tuesday, September 22.** We will be honoring the *Autumn Equinox* which is a time of *Balance*. We will call on many female deities and use meditative tools to help us to find our own inner balance.

All women are welcome; anyone who has never been to this group and wants to know about it should reach out to Barbara Connor or Kathe Wright. The leadership of this group is shared by the women who attend. This session has been planned by Sheila and Jeanie. Any questions about this particular ritual may be addressed to Sheila Littlefield (contact information is in the Church Directory.)

It's official: we have non-profit status

The Board of Directors and Finance Teams are more than excited to announce that First Parish has received notice that our application for a 501(c)(3) designation as a non-profit organization has been granted.

This has taken over a year since the start of the application process. Most of this work was done by Chris Wells, Treasurer, with the Board of Directors taking on the role of cheerleaders and support. Other members of the Finance Team who helped are Hervé Lavoie, Barbara Boscia (Bookkeeper), Kevin Flynn, Brook Detterman, and Rev. Tori as an advisor.

Taking us over the finish line was the Congregation who attended the church meeting on August 30, where the amendments to our Articles of Incorporation were approved. Special thanks also to Brook Detterman, Esq. for making certain that the wording in that motion and the articles were stated in terms acceptable to the IRS and the Secretary of the State of Maine.

Many grant applications require that we have that 501(c)(3) designation before donating funds. That will be the next step. If anyone knows of any groups that might be willing to donate funds for Capital Improvement projects please let Chris or Tom know about them. Perhaps you have friends or relatives who serve on such Boards. We will also be looking for volunteers who have had experience writing and submitting grants.

At FPUU, our Teams work together to "Light the Way Forward." Great job everyone!

Tom Veronesi, BOD Team and Chris Wells, Finance Team

Vespers services are a quiet way to gather

Followed by an opportunity to break bread together

Vespers will reconvene on October 14th and meet monthly thereafter on the 2nd of Wednesday of the month. These quiet, contemplative services are followed by a shared soup potluck.

Need a lift up to the Sanctuary?

We suggest that those needing the chair lift on Sunday mornings, or for other events, try to arrive 10-15 minutes prior to the service or event.

Recently, as many as three to five people have used the lift on a single date. The lift is slow, so it takes some time to accommodate everyone. By the time the last person gets into the Sanctuary, they may miss as much as 10-15 minutes of the Sunday service or event and unintentionally disrupt it as they find their seat/s.

We are so fortunate to have this chair lift and appreciate everyone's help in using it efficiently!
Linda and Jim Thompson

Meetings planned especially for families

Family Matters Small Group will reconvene Tuesday, October 13 at 5:30 p.m. and meet monthly on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. This is a space for our families with children to connect, share, and deepen relationships. Childcare is provided. Contact Rev. Tori for more information.

FAMILY MATTERS
DROP-IN FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

A welcoming space to share the ups, downs, and everything in between of family life

The second Tuesday of the month
at 5:30 - 7 p.m.

Oct. 13th

Nov. 10th

Dec. 8th

Jan. 12th

Feb. 9th

March 9th

April 13th

May 11th

5:30-6p.m. fellowship & dinner
6-7 p.m. parent/caregiver discussion, childcare provided

Please contact Rev. Tori for more information at
uukennebunkminister@gmail.com

You may share at a deep level in small groups

Soul Matters Sharing Circles will start again this October. These small group gatherings of reflection and connection are a great opportunity to meet people, ask questions, and deepen your relationship with the church community. If you're interested in participating this fall or in a future round, please fill out the form HERE, or contact Rev. Tori for more information. (uukennebunkminister@gmail.com)

Social Justice Action

"No one can do everything, but everyone can do something!"

Postcards are available with free stamps!

Please help with this important, proven effort to get out the vote in November. Six packets of 25 postcards destined for North Carolina or Ohio are available, with addresses and instructions. Postcard stamps may no longer be available in some post offices, but I have 75 to share. Each postcard is to be handwritten - make it fun and invite a friend to help! Cards must be mailed on October 12 or 21.

A big thank you to those who have already volunteered!
Vicki Adams

Social Justice Advocacy and Resources

For information click here.

If you have an organization or information regarding social justice advocacy that you would like to have included in this link, please send to Allison at uukennebunkoffice@gmail.com

Help keep our church Safe and Welcoming

The Safety and Security Team is looking for volunteers to serve as door monitors during Sunday services. This suggestion came to the Board of Directors from church members during early discussions about the decision to lock the entrance door 10 minutes after the start of services. Presently, members arriving later than 10:10 a.m. can gain admittance by phoning a member of the Board of Directors who will leave the service to let them in. Others may be locked out!

Door monitors will be stationed in the church office and will be able to open the door for latecomers immediately. Monitors can attend the service by video link, which has been set up in the office. We hope to have eight to ten volunteers so that monitors will serve no more than once every 2 months. Anyone interested in volunteering as a monitor may contact Dick Russell, Safety and Security Team at drussell110@comcast.net

LETTERS: If you have a message you'd like to share with our newsletter community, please send it to our editor: vickigatesadams@gmail.com to be placed here.

Classified Notices

It is a very exciting time of growth at First Parish. We currently are seeking to fulfill four positions:

Music Director: uukennebunk.org/music-director

Sunday Accompanist: http://uukennebunk.org/sunday-accompanist

Director of Religious Exploration: uukennebunk.org/director-religious-exploration

Sunday Childcare Support: http://uukennebunk.org/sunday-childcare-support

If you or you know of someone that might be interested, please click on the links above for more information and to apply. If you have any questions, please email the office at uukennebunkoffice@gmail.com.

Submit items, services for sale:

You may list your item or service, its cost, and a contact phone number or email, or if you need an item or service, you may list it including your contact information, with payment to be negotiated. Send your submission to nanawood390@gmail.com.

Community

Creative Resilience: A Saturday Retreat at First Parish

Join us for a day of reflection, renewal, and connection at First Parish Universalist Unitarian Church in Kennebunk, Maine. This retreat is designed to help participants strengthen adaptability, restore balance, and leave feeling more grounded, energized, and supported. Through a blend of spiritual practice, guided reflection, conversation, and meditation, the retreat offers space to pause, reconnect with your inner resources, and explore ways to care for yourself during difficult moments.

Saturday, September 26, 2026
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
First Parish UU Church
114 Main Street Kennebunk
Lunch is included
$30/person and attendance is limited
FMI and to reserve your spot visit:
www.uukennebunk.org/creativeres

Participants will engage in meaningful dialogue, deepen self-awareness, and experience practices that foster emotional strength, imaginative thinking, and a renewed capacity to navigate adversity with confidence and clarity. Together, we will focus on cultivating the ability to meet life's challenges with courage, flexibility, and inspired problem-solving—supporting a more empowered and resourceful way of being.

The retreat will take place on September 26, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at First Parish. Lunch is included.

The cost is $30, and attendance is limited to 30 people to ensure a welcoming and intimate experience. Registration: www.uukennebunk.org/creativeres

- Retreat Facilitators: Tori Rosati, FPUU minister; Carol Morris, Morris Communications President; Dr. Amy Wood, Psychologist; and Reiki practitioners: Susie DeSantis, Deirdre Drennen and Kathleen Marshack.

Are you getting The Local News?

The Local News is a new online newspaper covering Kennebunk, K'Port and Arundel that you can receive free through your email or their website. Go online to **thelocalnewsonline.org** and check out the work they are doing. Once readers are online, they can get regular notifications of new content in their inbox. And it's user-friendly!

Volunteer Staff:
Susan Bloomfield - Kennebunk
Diane Franz - Kennebunkport
Jake Hawkins - Arundel
Joan Hull - Arundel
Carol Morris - Kennebunkport
Betsy Smith - Kennebunk
Nancy Viehmann - Kennebunkport

Sunday Bookcase & Links

- Recommended by Bernie Reim during his Sept. 6 service on our relationship with the cosmos:
- *A World Appears, A Journey into Consciousness*, Michael Pollan

- *Quantum Revelation, Awakening to the Dreamlike Nature of Reality*, Paul Davies
- *The Case Against Reality, How Evolution Hid the Truth from Our Eyes,* Donald Hoffman

Listen Up!

You can listen to entire reflections given at our Sunday services at uukennebunk.org. See Sundays at FPUU– Sermon archive.

Our monthly Soul Matters themes come with a musical playlist to help us deepen into the messages. Playlists are organized as a journey, so you can listen from beginning to end and use them as a musical meditation.

- Click here for the September Spotify playlist on ***Beginnings***
- Click here for the September YouTube playlist on ***Beginnings***

Note from the Editors

What's on your mind or in your camera? Send a picture, write an article or letter, for First Parish News! Email the FPUU Office: uukennebunkoffice@gmail.com

FPUU News Crew:
Vicki Adams, editor
Allegra Highsmith, photo editor
Allison Lazos, production
Susie Desantis, substitute production
Rev. Tori Rosati

First Parish UU Church Kennebunk

SEPTEMBER 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 9-12 Office Open 5:15 p.m. Sangha 7 p.m. Properties Team	2 9-12 Office Open	3 9-12 Office Open	4 9-12 Office Open	5
6 10 a.m. Worship Service Led by Bernie Reim	7 LABOR DAY Office Closed	8 9-12 Office Open 10:30 a.m. Pastoral Care 5:15 p.m. Sangha 6:30 p.m. WFAS 6:30 p.m. MOG	9 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Worship Team	10 9-12 Office Open	11 9-12 Office Open	12 7 p.m. Vance Gilbert Concert
13 10 a.m. Ingathering Water Service Worship Service led by Rev. Tori	14 9-12 Office Open 7 p.m. Finance Team	15 9-12 Office Open 5:15 p.m. Sangha 5:30 p.m. Stewardship Team	16 9-12 Office Open 6 p.m. Board of Directors	17 9-12 Office Open	18 9-12 Office Open	19
20 10 a.m. Worship Service led by Rev. Tori 11:30 a.m. What Now? Social Justice Discussion	21 9-12 Office Open	22 9-12 Office Open 5:15 Sangha 6:30 p.m. WFAS 6:30 p.m. MOG	23 9-12 Office Open 10 a.m. RE Team	24 9-12 Office Open	25 9-12 Office Open	26 10 a.m. Creative Resilience Retreat
27 10 a.m. Worship Service led by Amy Wood & Rev. Tori 11:30 a.m. Worship Reflection	28 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Membership Team	29 9-12 Office Open 5:15 p.m. Sangha 5:30 p.m. Stewardship Team	30 9-12 Office Open			