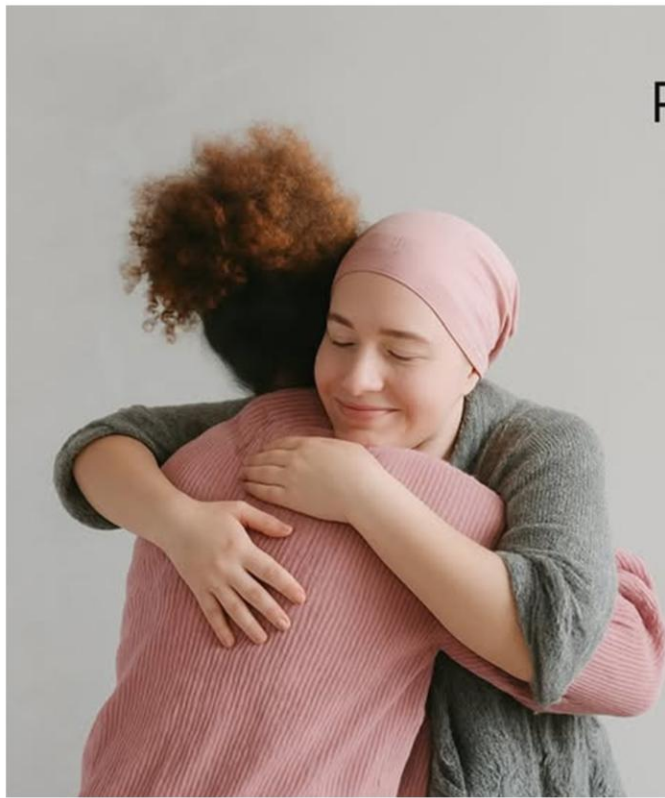




LIGHTING THE WAY FORWARD

Oct. 9, 2025



Pity says, "I see your pain."
Sympathy says
"I understand your pain."
Empathy says,
"I feel your pain."
Compassion says
"I am with you
in your pain
and I will help."

Rabbi Esther Adler



"Autumn Days, Autumn Years"

Worship Service: October 12, 2025, 10 a.m.

Led by: Al Adams

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

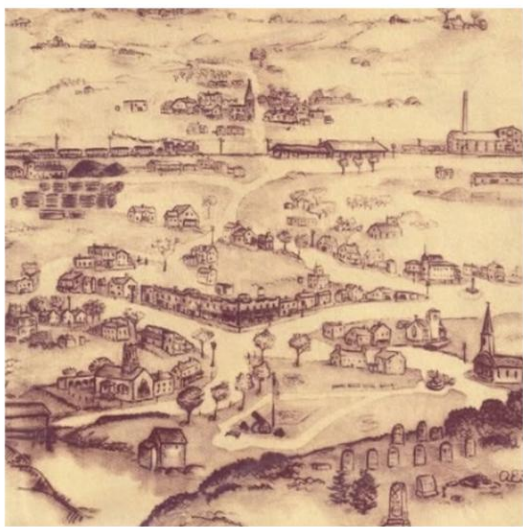
upcoming EVENTS

First Parish

- Fri. Oct. 10, 6:30 p.m. Song Swop
- Tue. Oct. 14, 5:30 Small Group Ministry for families
- Tue. Oct. 14, 6:30 p.m. Women for All Seasons
- Tue. Oct. 14, 6:30 p.m. Men's Open Group
- Wed. Oct. 15, 5:30 p.m. Board of Directors
- Sun. Oct. 19, 11:30 a.m. What Now? Social Justice Group
- Saturday, October 25, 10-11:30, Session on managing uncertainty
Led by Amy Wood, registration info. In article below

Community

- Oct. 11, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Helpsy collection at Quest center (old clothes, shoes, fabric, even in disrepair, etc. are reused or recycled.)
- Oct. 17, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition conversation & light supper (see poster)
- Oct. 18, various times, "No Kings" demonstrations in our area
- Oct. 18, Kennebunk Harvest Festival (No demonstration here)



This Sunday: Autumn Days, Autumn Years

Led by Al Adams, this Sunday's service will pay tribute to elders—past, present and future. Al will illustrate the value elders have contributed to this parish in the past and continue to do. He will share personal reflections garnered during walks in local forests, reading an adaptation from *Our Town* by Thornton Wilder, sharing indigenous, learnings, and making music. As he shares his experience, think of the ways you have seen elders contributing to the life of our church as you take part in our Joys and Concerns ritual.

A message from Rev. Tori

Dear ones,

As we journey together through October's theme: Cultivating Compassion, I invite us to take a deep breath - this may be one of the most challenging and yet most needed practices of our time. I recently came across this short poem that I've been holding close:

How We Survive the World Together, John Roedell

"Please be patient with me.
It's so very hard to be a human
and this is my first time being one,"
we take turns saying to each other
Over and over and over and over...

In that spirit, let us be patient with ourselves and each other these days. Our journey through this time will be shaped by the paths we open for each other to be tired and tender, to stumble and learn, to rest and return, to reach out and begin again. We are all we've got, so let us love each other through our humanness - our messiness, our contradictions, our beauty, our power, and most importantly through our compassionate beating hearts.

If you need a little extra care these days, please reach out to me or one of our Caring Ministry members: Andrea Rhode, Barbara Conner, or Janine Coy (you can email the office at uukennebunkoffice@gmail.com for contact info). We are here to sit with you, listen, and be a companion - over and over and over again, and all along the way.

With love,
Rev. Tori



Small Group for Families

Our first ***small group ministry gathering for families*** will be on **Tuesday October 14th** and then monthly on the 2nd Tuesday each month. We will gather at 5:30 for pizza and fellowship in the Chapel upstairs before adults share some focused time from 6-7 - exploring our monthly themes and how they show up in our lives and in the experience of raising children. Childcare will be provided for children to play and connect.

Please RSVP to Rev. Tori at uukennebunkminister@gmail.com if you are planning to attend and if there are any dietary considerations so we can get numbers for food.

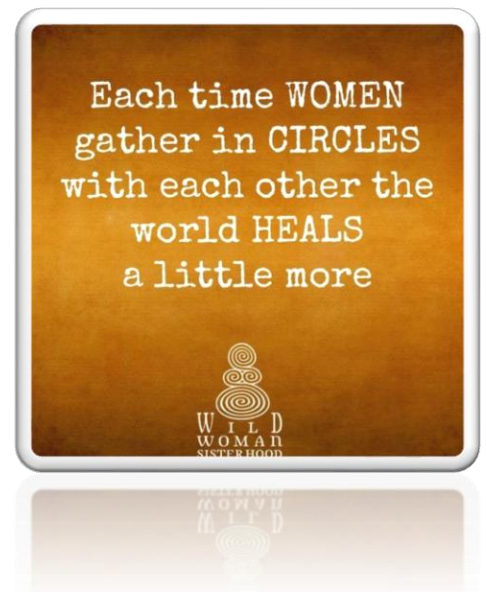
These challenging days we are living through remind us that we need each other - we don't have to go it alone. It takes a village, and we hope this can be an extension of that village for you.



SONGSWOP is scheduled for Friday, October 10th from 6:30-8:30 p.m. It will be held in the Sanctuary at FPUU. All are welcome, singers, poets, story tellers etc. Acoustic instruments only please. Microphones are provided. You may perform or be a part of the audience. Y'all come. You'll be glad you did! For more information contact Bruce Childress.

Women for All Seasons

Come join Women for All Seasons as we gather this coming Tuesday the 14th at 6:30pm in the First Parish parlor. We'll be spending some time getting to know each other better through discussions and games. Please bring a mug if you would like to enjoy some tea. Led by Kathe Wright.



Welcome new photo editor: Allegra Highsmith

First Parish News welcomes Allegra Highsmith as our new photo editor. Allegra, who has submitted many photographs to FPNews, will now accept your photos, as well as taking a few herself, and choose among them to appear in the weekly newsletter.

"I am delighted to be working with Allegra," says text editor, Vicki Adams. "She is a talented photographer and will be happy to receive your photos of church related people and events."

Administrative Assistant Allison Lazos will continue to do the layout of FPNews, supply entertaining graphic art, and make sure each issue is sent to you on time!

Submit your photos by email to Allegra by the Monday before the Thursday issue. Her contact information is in the First Parish Directory.

New Member Potluck



What a joy it has been to have so many new members join First Parish this year! Pictured from left to right are longtime members Bob and Joan Wuerthner, with Heidi Parmenter, Susan Egerton Griggs, Mark Gallup, David and Allegra Highsmith, Wendy Campbell, Ann Funicello, Tom Socha, Mary Gelfand, Patricia Hatch, Betsy Kingsley, and Dave Terriciano.



Social Justice

**Rallies for No Kings Day in Maine
Sat. Oct. 18, but not in Kennebunk**

The second **No Kings Day** is planned for Saturday, Oct. 18. The UUA is encouraging UUs to attend, and if you have one, wear your "Side with Love" T shirt or carry one of our "Side with Love" signs. More than 5 million Americans took to the streets on June 14 to protest the current administration and promote democracy.

Organized by Indivisible and other groups, the country-wide No Kings rallies—with some 2,000 sites in cities, towns, and rural areas—was one of the largest political protest events in American history. Now a second No Kings Day is planned for October 18. “Let’s make this one even bigger,” organizers say.

Because of the Harvest Festival, Kennebunk will not have a rally. Local rallies will take place at Wells Jr. High School 1:30-2:30; Saco Transportation Center 10 a.m. - noon; York Town Hall 10 - 11 a.m.; South Portland Erskine Park, 11 a.m.-noon.



MUUSAN: Defend Your Voting Rights & Safety!

Vote NO on 1, Yes on 2

Vote early or on Nov. 4

QUESTION 1: “Do you want to change Maine election laws to eliminate two days of absentee voting, prohibit requests for absentee ballots by phone or family members, end ongoing absentee voter status for seniors and people with disabilities, ban prepaid postage on absentee ballot return envelopes, limit the number of drop boxes, require voters to show certain photo ID before voting, and make other changes to our elections?”

What would referendum #1 do if it became law?

- It would eliminate ongoing absentee voting for elderly and disabled Mainers and eliminate two of the most popular days for early absentee voting.
- It would require voters to show an approved form of photo ID to obtain their ballot.
- It would allow only one drop-off box per municipality.
- It would second-guess town clerks, requiring a two-person, “bipartisan” team to check ballot boxes daily, which could lead to many towns simply getting rid of their secure drop boxes.
- It would prohibit towns from including return postage on absentee ballots.

- It would prevent voters from requesting a ballot over the phone, making it harder for those without reliable transportation or internet.
- You can read the full draft proposal at <https://tinyurl.com/VoterProposal>.

QUESTION 2:

“Do you want to allow courts to temporarily prohibit a person from having dangerous weapons if law enforcement, family, or household members show that the person poses a significant danger of causing physical injury to themselves or others?”

What would referendum #2 do if it became law?

The Maine red flag law referendum would allow voters to decide whether to adopt a red flag law, which would enable family members to petition a judge to temporarily remove firearms from individuals deemed to be a threat to themselves or others. This initiative follows the mass shooting in Lewiston and aims to enhance the existing yellow flag law, which allows law enforcement to initiate the process. The referendum question, if passed, would not replace the current yellow flag law but add another layer of protection.

What can I do?

Vote absentee or in person Nov. 4

No on Question 1

Yes on Question 2

Talk to your friends and family

Write a brief Letter to the Editor

Put a sign on your lawn

MUUSAN is the Maine UU State Action Network



Click on the picture above to learn more.

First Parish steps up on Democracy

How to Feel in Control When Things
Are Out of Control:
Finding Calm and Community in
Turbulent Times

Member and Board member Amy Wood
to present



As part of the Democracy Cooperative's goal to connect with people outside the Democratic Party, First Parish is collaborating with them in offering a Saturday morning session on October 25, 10-11:30, aimed at helping to manage the uncertainty many are feeling right now. This workshop is free and open to everyone, facilitated by Amy Wood, a Kennebunk psychologist with 30 years of experience helping adults to stay on course and maintain optimism amid overwhelming circumstances.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION:

Does the unpredictable nature of life these days have you feeling unsettled and not in charge? If so, you are not alone. From government decisions and court rulings to the stock market, the weather, or even the behavior of those around us, there are countless things we cannot control. Yet amid uncertainty and division, there are proven ways to steady yourself, reclaim a sense of composure, and strengthen connection with others.

This workshop will give you reliable strategies for grounding yourself and being clear-headed—no matter what is swirling around you. You will also learn how to feel less divided from others and more unified—even in today's polarized climate. As a result of attending, you will be able to:

- Be more at peace with what you can't control
- Zero in on what you can control
- Settle your thoughts and feelings
- Increase your daily patience, optimism, and focus
- Strengthen your sense of connection and reduce feelings of division
- Feel more empowered – regardless of surrounding disorder

Please feel free to forward this invitation to friends, and email cmorris@morriscomm.net to sign up. This session has a maximum of 25 attendees on a first come, first served basis. We are planning another session in early November.



Holiday Food Auction Coming Right Up

It is time to think about what favorite food you can share for our annual holiday food auction. Do you have the best cookies ever, or cake or pie? How about soup, or a meal to go, bread, rolls, quiche, jam and jelly. It is such a treat to get someone's yummy food for the holidays and share your own for the benefit of our UU church. We already have cranberry orange sauce, a collection of herb teas, raspberry jam, and squash carrot ginger soup. Send your contribution to marylyn.wentworth@tnsk.org with a description amount and suggested price. Off you have a photo send that too.

At the Heart of it All

Excerpts from Rev. Tori's sermon Oct. 5

This sermon starts with a hallway. A long corridor that led from the Spiritual Care Office at Holy Family Hospital through office suites, past the cafeteria to the patient wing of the campus. It was the fall of 2020 and I had just begun my chaplaincy internship, and the world was struggling.

We were deep in the pandemic—no vaccines yet. Our political leaders weren't leading so much as fueling misinformation and division. We'd just come through a bruising election and a summer of protests and racial reckoning. Everything felt raw, uncertain, and heavy.

I would ... step out onto that long stretch of linoleum to visit patients through masks, through fear, through so much distance, ... and this was all mixed in with people's hopes and dreams. ... Compassion was at a premium then—stretched thin, worn out, and yet, somehow, still showing up in the small gestures that kept people going.

I know we have folks in this congregation, health care workers and frontline responders, who showed up in even deeper ways that I did—day after day, night after night. ...



So, I think about this path I took down that hallway a lot these days. ... Each walk down that corridor was a chance for me to breathe, to center, and cultivate compassion—for myself, for people, and for our hurting world. I find myself longing for that journey, as it often feel like I am opening the door without any buffer at all. ...

How do we cultivate [compassion] in a world that seems so devoid of it? ... I think we need to start this journey with compassion for ourselves. ... Can we all see that our bodies and spirits were designed to hold the complexity of a small village, not the entire weight of the whole world. And yet our communities, countries, and world are so intimately woven and connected, [that] paying attention to the world ... is vital and necessary. ... It hits us right here (heart). ... So, let's take a breath here and have compassion for ourselves – turn some Love inward. ...

Compassion literally means “to suffer with.” Unlike pity, sympathy, or even empathy, ... compassion for self and other are all bound up together. This is part of our lineage as UUs - Universalists believed in a loving God that was so compassionate that no one was condemned to hell. The Unitarians rooted much of their notion of compassion in the human capacity for love, reason, and conscience. Today we recognize our interdependence and with love at the center. ... It is at the heart of it all and we are all made from that same heart. ...

And here ... some tools of compassion if you will.

First we have the tool of listening ... the deep kind that listens beneath the surface to try and understand –listening that opens dialogue and conversation and our hearts to each other. ...

Next we have the tool of time. ... We are all muddling through – to give ourselves time to catch up, to slow down, to rest for a while along the way.

And lastly, the tool of wonder. ... Wonder that even in the midst of struggle, beauty persists, lives are being born, camaraderie abounds, connection surprises us, and compassion is still possible.

You may have other tools and I invite you share those with us. ...

Friends, may we stay the course. ... We never know where the seeds of our compassion will one day take root or how they will blossom—those shards of our heart always, always, always trying to find their way back together.

Pathways of Compassion

At Sunday's service, we explored ways to open pathways toward deeper compassion — for ourselves, for one another, and for the wider world. I invited you all in the weeks to come to share the tools, teachings, and insights that help you on your own journey of compassion. Below are some reflections that

people have shared so far. If there's something you'd like to add, send me an email -I'd love to hear from you and include it in an upcoming newsletter. Let's continue learning from one another and opening these pathways of compassion together. – Rev. Tori

- Interest, curiosity, not having preconceived notions, and being still – Ginny Lawrence
- Kuan Yin, the Bodhisattva of Compassion – Barbara Conner
- Compassion is the hardest thing and the easiest – Joan O'Hara

Our Religious Explorers enjoy some education outside on a beautiful fall day.



Photos by Crow Lowry



A simple way to help

Greeting congregants and welcoming them to our sacred space is an important job, and an easy one. The commitment is about 90 minutes one Sunday a month. You will have an orientation and be paired with an experienced usher the first couple of times you volunteer. At the end of each month, you will receive an email asking which Sunday of the next month you are available. If you can sign up, great! If not, that's ok, there's always another month with another opportunity. Please consider volunteering for this fun, easy and important job! FMI: contact Tory Leuteman, toryleuteman@yahoo.com—please put "usher" in the subject line. Or call/text: 207-468-9547. Thank you!

Letters to the Editor

Concerns about the decision to lock door

Following the "listening session" held recently about locking the church door 10 minutes after each Sunday service begins, two people who attended the session wrote letters to the editor critiquing the decision to continue locking the door. Let the Board know what you think!

Below is the letter from our Board co-chair that was sent out to members and friends regarding the new policy.

Dear Members and Friends,

The Board of Directors sincerely thank those of you who attended the listening session held on a recent Sunday regarding the safety issues the Board is attempting to resolve in the best interest of our church community. We held a very lengthy discussion (including your input) last week at our meeting and the next step in our process is to post the following sign on the door of the church.

***During the 10:00 a.m. Sunday Service,
this door will be locked at 10:10 a.m.
If you wish to join us after that time, please call 207-985-3700
and someone will let you in.***

We will continue to make adjustments to this policy as we move forward and as the Properties Committee is able to make improvements to our door entry system and as funds become available.

There are many factors to be considered as we bring our church up to code as suggested by the local Fire and Rescue Squad and our local police who have done a thorough study of our building and made several recommendations for our Emergency and Evacuation Plan.

We appreciate your cooperation as we attempt to ensure, to the extent possible, the safety and security of all of our members and friends while keeping the values of our church in mind.

Cordially,
Tom Veronesi,
Vice Chair of the BOD

Greetings to all our friends at First Parish UU,

You may have noticed that we haven't been in church for several weeks now. We miss all of you! I thought some of you might like an update regarding what is happening with Mark and me.

Since mid-July, Mark has been struggling with intense lower back pain and is moving around with a rollator. He has spinal stenosis as well as a fracture in his L-3 vertebrae. In late September, we were making plans for a surgical solution when Mark was admitted to York Hospital with what turned out to be a blood infection. He was in the hospital for 5 nights and is doing much better, although this has delayed the surgical option.

We were planning on being present for worship last Sunday, when Mary woke up to find the room spinning. She was taken to York Hospital, diagnosed with Vertigo, and sent home. She is doing much better.

It seems like we've been dealing with one medical situation after another all summer. We are both exhausted and ready for this all to be over. We have been sustained throughout by the prayers and offers of help from this community. Thank you so much and blessings to all.

Mary Gelfand & Mark Gallup

Our members now in rehabilitation enjoy having people call or visit

Bernie Reim is at Bradford House, Huntington Common Rd. He welcomes visitors following a serious auto accident and faces a long recovery with many challenges ahead. There are a number of ways to support Bernie as he heals—please reach out to Ian Durham for more information. Please call Bernie to find a convenient time to visit.

Rich Gaito at Bradford House, Huntington Common Rd. He is recovering from a stroke and enjoys company. Please call Rich to find a convenient time to visit.

Joan O'Hara is in Bradford House on Huntington Common Rd. She very much appreciates old friends visiting, but since she is blind and has difficulty answering the phone, you may try dropping in early or late afternoon. Be sure to announce yourself and know that she might not always be up to a visit.



Save the Date!

The annual fall rummage sale will take place Nov. 14 & 15. Details regarding drop-offs and ways to help to come.

Listen Up!

Did you know our monthly Soul Matters themes come with a musical playlist to help us deepen into the messages? Playlists are organized as a journey, so consider listening from beginning to end and using them as a personal musical meditation.



- Click [here](#) for the Spotify playlist on Compassion
- Click [here](#) for the YouTube playlist on Compassion

Sunday Bookcase & Links



- [Living Beyond Human Scale Podcast](#), Brené Brown
- *The Spirit and Art of Conflict Transformation*, Tom Porter
- [Centering in Gifts Practices](#)
- *The Healing Wisdom of Africa*, Malidoma Somé
- [Growing a New Heart](#)
- [We the People Are Videos](#)
- [We the People Are Upcoming Trainings](#)

Minister's Discretionary Fund

The Minister's Discretionary Fund is available to help individuals in our congregation and wider community who are experiencing financial hardship. If you, or someone you know, could benefit from this support, please reach out to Rev. Tori. All requests are handled with care and strict confidentiality. (uukennebunkminister@gmail.com or 978-238-8210).

We need your help!



Click "Follow Page" above, help us reach our goal of 2,000 followers

- Help spread the word about our events and activities
- Like, Comment & Share our events and activities.



Maine PRISONER ADVOCACY Coalition



Join us for a Light Supper &
Conversation with the Maine
Prisoner Advocacy Coalition.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17 | 5:30-7:30 PM

Meet the MPAC leadership team: Joseph Jackson- Executive Director, Jan Collins- Assistant Director, and Antonio Cuba Jackson, Jr.- Community Partnerships Coordinator.

Hear how MPAC is working to build safer, healthier, more just communities, and how you can contribute.

Learn about our programs:

- Charles Jordan Reentry House
- Pathways to Promise Youth Mentorship
- And other community-led initiatives!

We'll share updates, ways to get involved, and the path ahead. Bring your questions, your passion, and your ideas! No donation required to attend — but support of any kind is deeply appreciated.

Please RSVP by October 1st

daria.rosario@maineprisoneradvocacy.org

📍 Claudia and Dan Sayre's home in Kennebunk.
Address to be provided upon RSVP.



First Parish UU Church Kennebunk

OCTOBER 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Worship Committee	2 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Choir	3 9-12 Office Open	4
5 10 a.m. Worship Service led Rev. Tori 11 a.m. New to FPUU	6 9-12 Office Open	7 9-12 Office Open 10:30 a.m. Pastoral Care 5:15 p.m. Sangha Group 7 p.m. Properties	8 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Vespers Led by Rev. Tori & Tory Leuteman	9 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Choir	10 9-12 Office Open 6:30 p.m. Song Swop	11
12 10 a.m. Worship Service led Al Adams	13 Office Closed 7 p.m. Finance Committee	14 9-12 Office Open 5:15 p.m. Sangha 5:30 p.m. Family Small Group Ministry 6:30 p.m. WFAS 6:30 p.m. Men's Open	15 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Board of Directors	16 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Choir	17 9-12 Office Open	18
19 10 a.m. Worship Service led by Rev. Tori 11:30 a.m. What Now? Social Justice group	20 9-12 Office Open	21 22 9-12 Office Open 5:15 p.m. Sangha	22 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Small Group Ministry	23 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Choir	24 9-12 Office Open	25
26 10 a.m. Worship Service led Rev. Tori 11:30 a.m. Worship Reflection Circle	27 9-12 Office Open 10 a.m. RE Meeting	28 9-12 Office Open 10 a.m. Small Group Ministry 5:15 p.m. Sangha 6:30 p.m. WFAS 6:30 p.m. Men's Open	29 9-12 Office Open	30 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Choir	31 9-12 Office Open	