

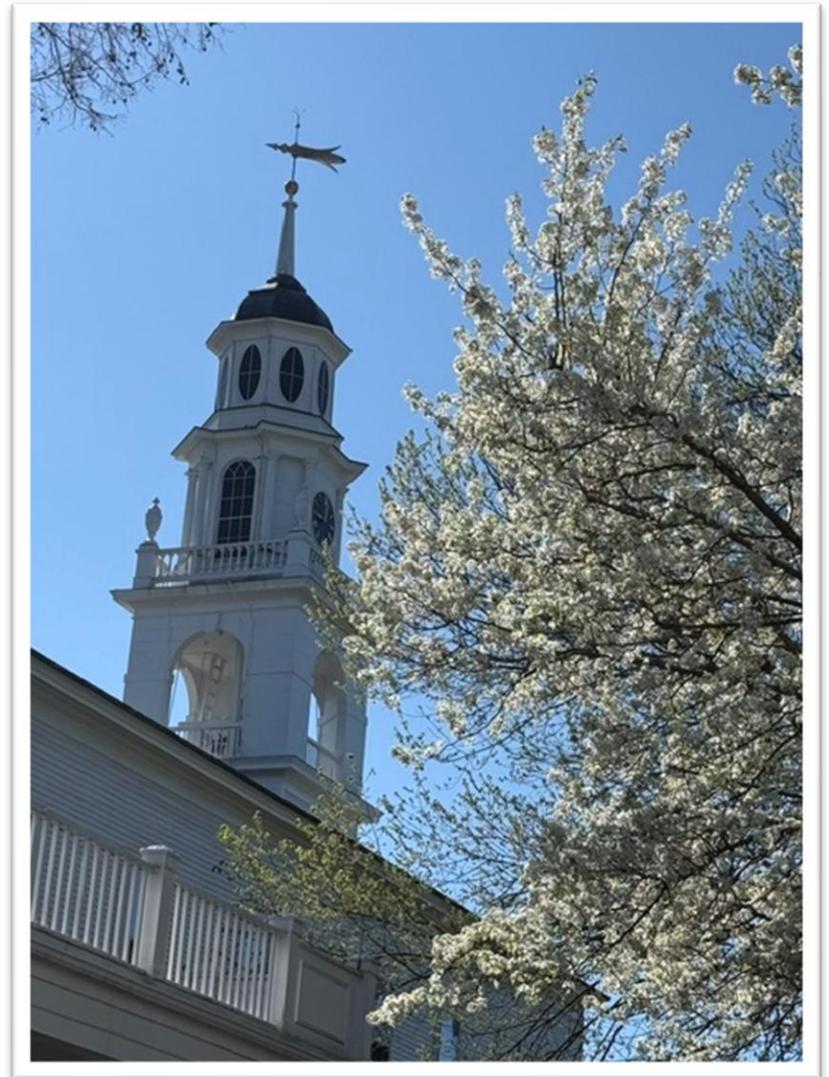


**May 21, 2026**

LIGHTING THE WAY FORWARD

*How many times must the  
cannonballs fly before they're forever  
banned? How many years can some  
people exist before they're allowed to  
be free? How many deaths will it take  
'til we know that too many people  
have died?*

Bob Dylan



*Photo by Allison Lazos*

## **Memorial Day Service**

**May 24, 2026, 10 a.m.**

Worship Leaders: Al Adams and Tory Leuteman

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 and Community

- Every Thursday, 4-5 p.m. Demonstration, Kennebunk
- Sat. May 23, 1 p.m. River Celebration, Rogers Pond, if rain, Sun.\*
- Sun. May 24, 11:15 a.m. Blueberry Festival & Craft Fair meeting
- Tue. May 26, 10 a.m., Small Group Ministry
- Tue. May 26, 6:30 p.m. WFAS and MOG meet
- Wed. May 27, 5:30 p.m. Small Group Ministry
- Sun. May 31, 8:30 a.m. Annual Meeting, Sanctuary
- Sun. May 31, 10 a.m. New Member Ceremony

\*see below for more information

## This Sunday:

We commemorate Memorial Day by paying tribute to those who “gave their last full measure of devotion.” Long-time member, Al Adams, will reflect upon why citizens, throughout our 250-year history, have sacrificed their lives in war. Al not only served in Vietnam but was honored to spend his post-service career counseling military members and their families as a licensed clinical social worker. Al will share what working with traumatized veterans taught him. He’ll offer up questions about our society’s “loss of relationship” with war’s consequences. We’ll ponder what choices those who have fallen offer us.



*Painting by Steve Penley*

# Letter from the Minister:

Dear ones,

It was good to be together this past Sunday as we explored Buddhist teaching and the compassion practice of loving-kindness. In a world that is asking so much of us, demanding laser focus and direct action, practices of presence, compassion and curiosity can feel hard to access amidst the urgency and overwhelm that swirls around us.

I recently watched a video of comedian and author Alok Vaid-Menon (if you have not read/listened to/encountered Alok's work, I strongly encourage you to!). They said, "I think love is the most revolutionary political force that exists." They go on to talk about compassion as a force that has "teeth;" not a weakness, but a strength.

To feel urgency, rage, and overwhelm in this time are all parts of being human. But alongside these inevitable, and sometimes necessary, emotions, sit other features of what it means to be human: compassion, love, joy, connection. So, here, what if we were to think of these as having teeth? As powerful forces of revolutionary change? How do we practice them in ways that focus and direct more humanity into our politics, our communities, and our inner lives? These are some of the questions I am sitting with these days – questions that I am keeping close as beloved companions as I try, however imperfectly, to practice and live them out.

I hope the questions you are asking of our time, can be companions to you as well - sometimes with teeth. And as you hold them close, may you find friends on the journey – people in this community and in your wider lives who are asking their own questions. Share, wonder and answer together. If you feel moved, I'd love to hear them - as always, my door is open.

With every blessing,

Rev. Tori

# Our children explore big questions

This past Sunday the children in the RE program wrote down some big questions they have on their minds. Here are some of them:

How did the universe really start even before the Big Bang?

Is the Big Bang real?

What is the universe made of?

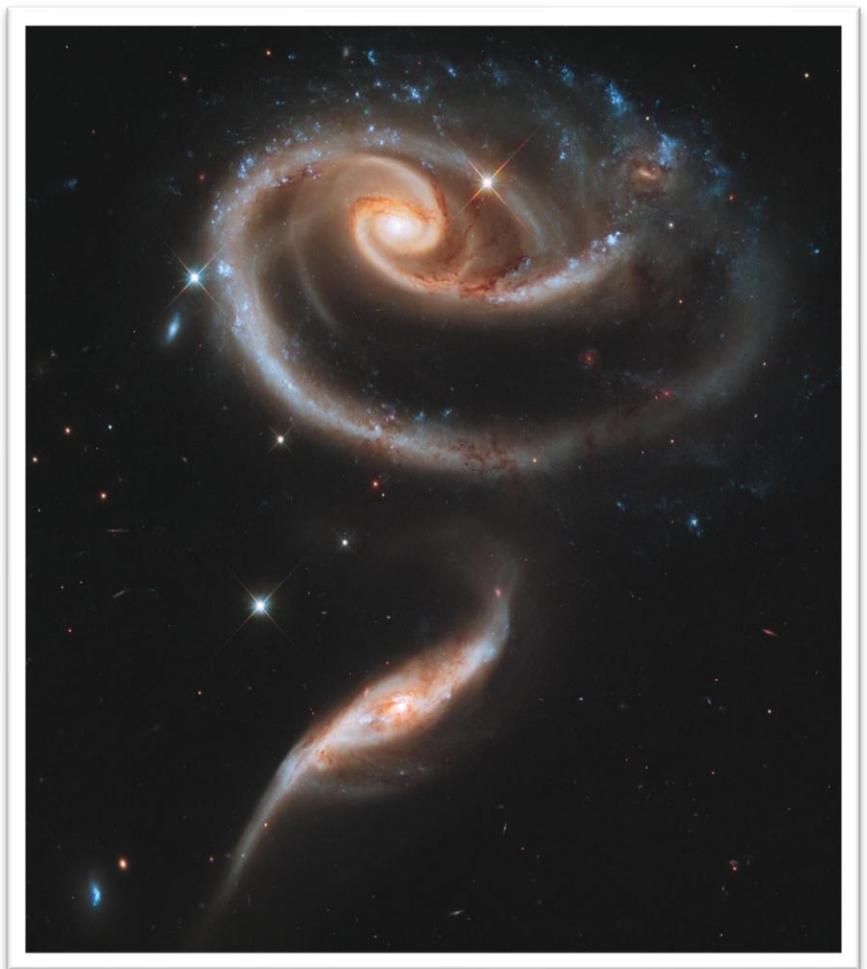
How long does it take for stone to degrade?

Are dreams real?

Was I here before?

What happens when you die?

What is out of outer space?



*Photo from Hubble Telescope, NASA*

**BEWARE OF  
SCAMMERS!**

**Scam emails** targeting faith communities, including ours, are becoming increasingly sophisticated and prevalent. These messages may appear to come from church leaders and might reference real

events, people, or activities happening in our congregation to seem legitimate. They often ask for money, gift cards, payments through Venmo or PayPal, or simply a request to reply.

Please remember: *We will never email you asking for personal financial contributions or payments through these methods.*

Here's how to protect yourself:

- **Look for inconsistencies**—scam emails often contain odd phrasing, spelling errors, or requests that seem unusual.
- **Don't respond** to suspicious emails. If something feels off, pause before taking action.
- **Verify directly** by contacting the person or the church office through a trusted phone number or email address.
- **Be cautious of urgency**—scam emails often try to pressure you to act quickly.

If you receive an email like this, **do not click any links or reply**. Report it as phishing to your email provider and let us know. Your awareness helps keep our community safe.

## New Member Ceremony

On May 31, we will celebrate the joy of welcoming new members during our Sunday service. This is a special moment to honor those who are choosing to take a deeper step in their connection with our community. We invite you to be part of this meaningful occasion, as we continue to deepen into the relationships and values that nurture and enliven our shared spiritual journey.

If you are interested in becoming a member or would like more information, please reach out to Rev. Tori or Heidi Parmenter (Membership Chair)

## Social Justice Action

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

### Opportunity knocks

**What is your vision for social justice? It is time at First Parish for new people and new ideas!**

All of us on the Social Justice Network core committee have "aged out" as Eva has said, and Vicki will not continue as chair, as she has held this position for five

consecutive years as well as serving with the same dedicated people 10 years in all. So, a new committee is needed in 2026-27.

We have simplified our job description to pass along to our successors. The new SJN core committee is not expected to carry out projects, but to encourage and keep track of social justice activities at the church. Others may join task forces to create and carry out projects. We are hoping those projects will arise from the congregation—perhaps through our What Now? discussion group, or perhaps from you!

Thank you to all who have participated through the years, Vicki Adams, Eva Downs, Mary Fortune, Molly Hoadley, Joan and Bob Wuerthner

## **Old-fashioned postcards**

An opportunity to write postcards to get out the vote in swing states will be ongoing this summer and fall for mailing before the election Nov. 9. If you'd like to write postcards, write to Vicki Adams, [vickigatesadams@gmail.com](mailto:vickigatesadams@gmail.com) or Wendy Campbell, [soupfam221@gmail.com](mailto:soupfam221@gmail.com).

## **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](mailto:uukennebunkoffice@gmail.com)

## **Letters to the Editor**

To our beloved church community from David and Allegra Highsmith:

It has been an interesting time in our lives over these last few months. David had his liver transplant surgery on February 28th followed by a second surgery on Wednesday March 4th due to some complications. When we finally came home from the hospital, feeling a little scared and overwhelmed, we were lifted up in the weeks to come by gifts, food deliveries, cards and letters, texts, visits, and well wishes.

We can never quite explain how grateful we are and how much this helped us through some of the darker days. The path for David's recovery is still underway and there are bumpy days, but the big picture shows steady progress, and we are in this for the long game. David's new liver, a truly miraculous gift, relieves us from the worry of returning cancer in the future. We live in awe and amazement at the mixture of joys, sorrows, pain, growth, and love that we have experienced through all of this. It is all part of this beautiful and sacred life we live, which you are all a part of. Thank you to Everyone who even just thought of us or said a silent prayer for David's healing. David is looking forward to coming back to church in person in the next couple of weeks, and we can't wait for the Maine Summer, the Blueberry Fair, and all of the wondrous things yet to come.

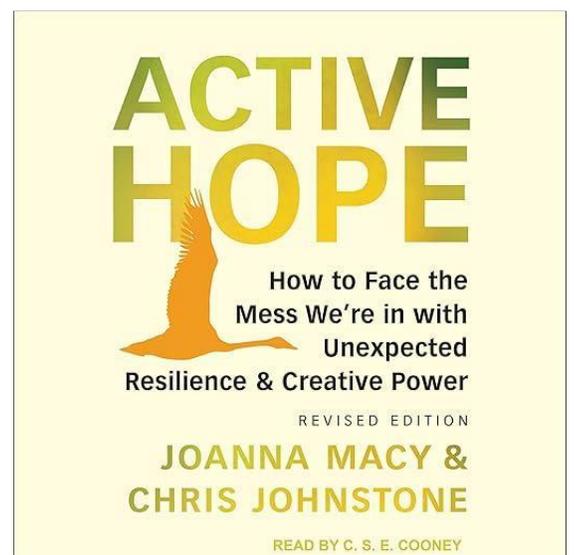
*Love to All! Blessed Be! David and Allegra*

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

## Let's read and learn together

At our What Now? discussion last Sunday, we agreed it would be interesting to read a book over the summer and discuss it in the fall. Rev. Tori suggested *Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We're in ...* by Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone. She referenced it in a recent reflection, and several in our congregation expressed interest at that time.

Available in paperback, this revised, tenth anniversary edition shows us how to strengthen our capacity to face crises so that we can respond with unexpected resilience and creative power. The authors guide us through a transformational process informed by mythic journeys, modern psychology, spirituality, and holistic science. This process equips us with tools to face the mess we're in



and play our role in the collective transition, or Great Turning, to a life-sustaining society.

*Active Hope* can be ordered from local bookstores! Let's resist the temptation to buy it online! If the cost of the book is a concern, please don't hesitate to reach out to Rev. Tori. We want everyone to be able to participate.

Your Social Justice Network and What Now?

## **Classified Notices**

### **Let's support each other!**

When Lynn DuPont moved here from Massachusetts, she had to find a new dentist, electrician, plumber, lawyer, handyman, etc. What if there was a Yellow Pages of people from the church? She would like to give our congregation a way that we can sell items or services to each other at reasonable prices—a win-win for all!

Lynn considered printing a pamphlet of "Yellow Pages" for our church community, but only a few have expressed interest so far. She and Vicki Adams, editor of First Parish News, decided that a "Classified" section in FPNews might be a good way to start. This would be practical, but also community-building!

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](mailto:nanawood390@gmail.com).



## **Save the Date**

Our beloved Joan O'Hara's memorial service has been scheduled for June 13<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m.

# Community

## World Fish Migration Day May 23, 1-4 p.m.

Come Celebrate Our  
**FISH AND RIVERS!**



 World Fish  
**MIGRATION DAY**

**Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> • 1-4 pm**  
Rogers Pond, Kennebunk

*All ages are welcome to join!*  
*Free fly tying and casting demos and lessons!*  
*Family activities!*

**RAIN DATE:** Sunday, May 24th  
Extra parking is available across the street beside  
and behind the Kennebunk Sewer District offices.

**Presented by:**



## Migrating alewives

During the celebration at Rogers Pond, people will be encouraged to walk up the street from the pond to Rotary Park between 2 - 4 p.m. We may be able to see alewives in the river!

For complete information, please visit [yorkcountyaudubon.org](http://yorkcountyaudubon.org).



*Photo by John Burrows*

# A new newspaper for our towns:

## ***The Local News* now online!**

In case you haven't heard, *The Local News* is a new non-profit independent newspaper for the Kennebunks and Arundel. Started by residents, this volunteer-led publication will focus on local news, events, and issues—detailed, straightforward, nonpartisan information that is available free of charge to everyone.

Almost 10,000 people in our communities will receive a letter this week with more detail. In the meantime, please take a look, share this link with your friends and neighbors, and sign up!

[www.thelocalnewsonline.org](http://www.thelocalnewsonline.org)

It took a lot of people to make this happen. Thanks so much to *everyone* who helped.

Carol Morris

## **Living the Questions**

**Excerpts from the reflection by Rev. Tori Rosati, May 10**

We are a spiritual community of seekers, sharing a common human journey. So reads our First Parish mission statement. ... People come to church, come to faith, come to the spiritual life, because they have questions that don't have easy answers. I know I do. ... Curiosity and the questions it spurs are the foundation of our lives from birth. ... Our curiosity, over time, leads us to try and answer more and more ... solutions, outcomes, and that elusive certainty we all long for in a world that is anything but. ...

And here, I wonder, what if those questions are ... invitations to go deeper, to sit with uncertainty. Places to awaken our curiosity and see what unfolds? In this space, enters the reading we heard earlier from Rainer Maria Rilke, ... part of a correspondence Rilke had with budding poet Franz Xaver Kappus. ...

"I want to beg of you, Rilke writes, as much as I can, dear sir, to be patient toward all that is unresolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves."

That invitation has been a mantra to me over the years. ... And in the opening that comes from slowing down and letting the questions rest with us as beloved companions, we begin to find deeper and more generative ways to be curious, to wonder and to ask. Now of course, ... we want to know the answers, how things will turn out, that peace is possible, and how justice will be restored. But the frustrating, and maybe also hopeful reality is that we cannot know that.

...

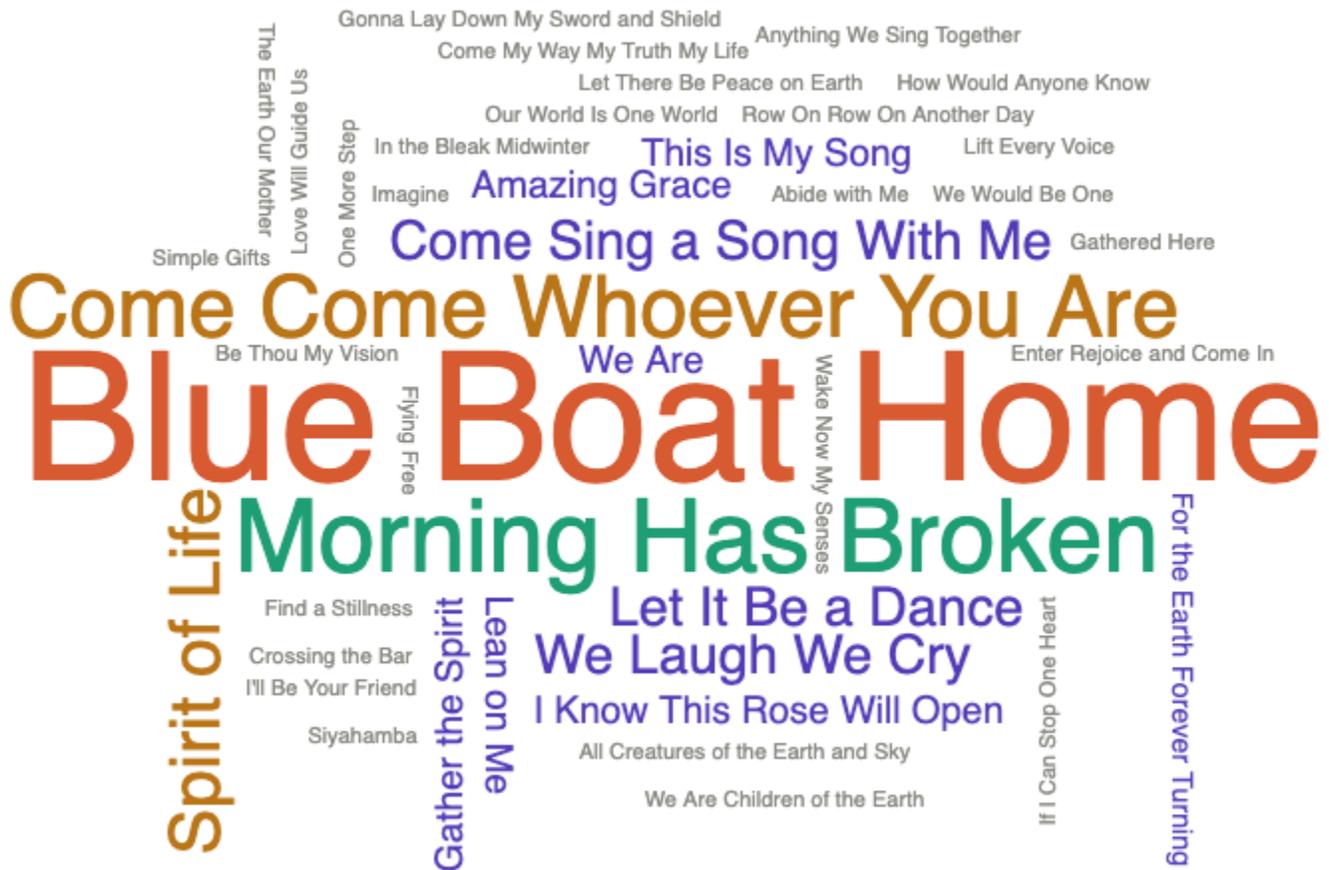
We come from a long lineage of seekers across history, place, and culture: human beings who gathered in temples and meeting houses, around fires and in forests, in cathedrals and in living rooms - not always finding answers, but struggling around their deepest questions.

In this way, our Unitarian Universalist faith has always understood itself to be a living tradition. ... Over time, we complicated the long human habit of reaching for God as a source of certainty rather than an invitation into mystery. We knew how to ask questions and sit with the silence that came from them. Now of course, we have not always done this well. Religion has often forced us ... toward fixed answers, where scriptures and systems of belief become blueprints for how to live, creeds become litmus tests for belonging, and certainty becomes a weapon. And we have all seen where that leads...some of the most painful atrocities of the human experience, enslavement, genocide, and the profound and lasting harm done in the name of religion. ...

But, this is why we gather. ... Because alone, our questioning bends toward fear, isolation, and despair. But together, something altogether different is possible. ... What would it mean for a community to be governed by holy questioning? ...

For my own part, ... What began as a solo quest for truth and meaning brought me instead into the arms of other people sharing that common human journey. ... I hope, in the time ahead, you will share your questions with your companions on that journey, whether here or out in your lives and world. ... until some day, in the far distant future, without even noticing, together, we live into an answer.

**Reflection:** You can listen to the entire reflection at [Uukennebunk.org](http://Uukennebunk.org). See Sundays at FPUU, Sermon archive.



At a recent service you all shared your favorite hymns. Here's what people love to sing - the larger the font, the more mentions the hymn received!

## Ongoing at First Parish

### All Are Welcome Table

Sundays, 11–11:30 a.m. in the Parlor

Looking to connect, meet new people, or learn more about what's happening at FPUU? Join members of the Membership Committee, in the Parlor during coffee hour for relaxed conversation and community. Everyone is welcome—just pull up a chair! For more information, contact Heidi at [uuheidi@gmail.com](mailto:uuheidi@gmail.com), or simply stop by—no RSVP needed!

# Women for All Seasons



Photo by Allegra Highsmith

Women for All Seasons gather for ritual and connection in the church Parlor. Join us this Tuesday, May 26 at 6:30 p.m., where we will spend the evening talking and swapping BOOKS! Bring a favorite novel and an mystical/spiritual/self help book that has made a big difference for you to discuss with the group. Also, bring any other fun books you are ready to donate for a book swap at the end. Tea and light snacks will be provided. Please bring a mug.

## Church Directory

A new church directory will be sent out after our New Member Ceremony at the end of May. Be on the lookout for an email from First Parish with just your contact information to review. If you have any changes to your information, please let Allison know.

# Sunday Bookcase & Links

- *Awakening Loving Kindness*, Pema Chödrön
- [Walking for Peace, Marching Together from Love](#), Bhikkhu Bodhi
- [Living the Questions](#), Krista Tippett
- *The World According to Mr. Rogers: Important Things to Remember*, Fred Rogers
- *Moral Ambition: Stop Wasting Your Talent and Start Making a Difference*, Rutger Bregman



## Listen Up!

You can listen to entire reflections given at our Sunday services at [uukennebunk.org](http://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 May Spotify playlist on **Awakening Curiosity**
- Click [here](#) for the May YouTube playlist on **Awakening Curiosity**

## Minister's Discretionary Fund

In light of rising prices and increased economic pressures, many in our community are facing unexpected financial hardship. The Minister's Discretionary Fund is available to help members of our congregation and the wider community who are struggling to make ends meet, particularly during this difficult time. If you, or someone you know, could use some support, please reach out to Rev. Tori. All requests are received with care and handled in strict confidence. Contact: [uukennebunkminister@gmail.com](mailto:uukennebunkminister@gmail.com) or 978-238-8210

# 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](mailto:uukennebunkoffice@gmail.com)

## FPUU News Crew:

Vicki Adams, editor

Allegra Highsmith, photo editor

Allison Lazos, production

Rev. Tori Rosati, advisor

## First Parish UU Church Kennebunk

## MAY 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
MAY 31 8:30 a.m. Annual Congregational Meeting 10 a.m. Worship Service Led by Rev. Tori 11:30 Special BOD Meeting					1 9-12 Office Open	2
3 8:30 a.m. Bylaws Pres. 10 a.m. Worship Service led Rev. Tori 11:30 Music Team	4 9-12 Office Open	5 9-12 Office Open 10:30 a.m. Pastoral Care 5:15 p.m. Sangha 7 p.m. Properfies	6 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Worship Team	7 9-12 Office Open 5:00p.m. Choir	8 9-12 Office Open 6:30 p.m. Song Swop	9
10 10 a.m. Worship Service led by Rev. Tori 11:30 a.m. What Now? Social Justice Discussion	11 9-12 Office Open 7 p.m. Finance	12 9-12 Office Open 5:15 p.m. Sangha 5:30 p.m. Family Small Group Ministry 6:30 p.m. W.F.A.S. 6:30 p.m. M.O.G.	13 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Vespers	14 9-12 Office Open 5:00 p.m. Choir	15 9-12 Office Open	16
17 10 a.m. Worship Service Led by Rev. Tori 11:30 a.m. Bylaws Presentation	18 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Membership Team	19 9-12 Office Open 5:15 Sangha	20 9-12 Office Open 6 p.m. Board of Dir.	21 9-12 Office Open 5:00 p.m. Choir	22 9-12 Office Open	23
24 10 a.m. Worship Service 11:15 a.m. Blueberry Fair Meeting	25 9-12 Office CLOSED	26 9-12 Office Open 10 a.m. Small Group Ministry 5:15 p.m. Sangha 6:30 p.m. W.F.A.S. 6:30 p.m. M.O.G.	27 9-12 Office Open 10 a.m. RE Team 5:30 p.m. Small Group Ministry	28 9-12 Office Open 5:00 p.m. Choir	29	30

Please note, the calendar is subject to change.