



LIGHTING THE WAY FORWARD

January 9, 2025

Do not be dismayed by the brokenness of the world. All things break. And all things can be mended. Not with time, as they say, but with intention. So go. Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally. The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you.
L.R. Knost



*Evergreen Ferns at Wonderbrook Park,
photo by Vicki Adams*

“Once Upon a Time (Unfolding)”

Worship Service, Jan. 12, 2025, 10 a.m.
Worship Leader: Rev. Tori Rosati

Religious Exploration welcomes children ages 4-13.

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

- Fri. Jan. 10, 6:30 p.m. Song Swop
- Sun. Jan. 12, 9 a.m. Semi-annual meeting, Sanctuary
- Sun. Jan. 12 11:30 a.m. Reflection Circle with Rev. Tori
- Tues. Jan. 14, 6:30 p.m. WFAS, *Medicine Wheel*
- Wed. Jan. 15, 5:30 p.m. Board of Directors meeting
- Sunday, Jan. 19, 4 p.m. MLK Concert: Music of Stevie Wonder

This week's Sunday Service

Stories are powerful; they shape our understanding of the world, who we are, and what we value in both life-giving and life-denying ways. Yet, as the storyteller knows, a good story isn't static, it is alive, unfolding, changing, and growing as it is told. Join us this Sunday as we explore our monthly theme: *The Practice of Story* and wonder together how we might approach storytelling as an emergent process – one that co-created as we live the many and varied stories of our lives and time. Rev. Tori leading with Al Adams and music by Chris Staknys.



Worship Reflection Circle this Sunday

Join Rev. Tori after this Sunday's service at 11:30 a.m. in the Parlor to reflect on the message. This is a time for us to gather after the service and deepen our connections and conversation about the ideas explored – sharing with one another our reflections, thoughts, and insights. Whether you have a lot to share or just want to listen, all are welcome!

Member Recognition

This Sunday we will take a moment during our cherished First Parish tradition of honoring and celebrating long-time members of 30-40 years whose dedication and care have shaped the heart and added to the story of this community. Join us as we recognize their contributions with gratitude, present tokens of appreciation, and reflect on the legacy of love and commitment they inspire. Let us come together to celebrate these cherished members of our congregation!

- Dennis Anderson (1985)
- Paul Beach (1984)
- Kevin Flynn (1991)
- Jacky Peters (1986)
- Dan Lyons (1987)
- Vicki Lyons (1987)
- Joan O'Hara (1992)
- Helen Rivas Rose (1980)
- Bob Wuerthner (1986)
- Joan Wuerthner (1986)

Soul Matters Monthly Theme:



As we know, stories are powerful ways of communicating that humans have drawn on since the dawn of our existence. We carry the stories of our ancestors in our bones and are shaping the stories of our decedents every day. This month we are reflecting on the Practice of Story –

how we tell our stories, who gets to tell them, how they connect us, and the dangers of a single story.

During this month, you might reflect or journal on the following questions:

- What story told by or about your ancestors has shaped or supported you the most?

- Twenty years from now, when we tell the story of our current political situation, how do you think that story will differ from the way you are telling it today?
- Have you ever been healed or saved by a story?
- How are we working together to rewrite the storyline of our communities and world?



Dear Ones,

Many post-holiday blessings to you all we turn the year together toward all that lies ahead for us as a people and community. It was wonderful to be together with many of you for Christmas Eve, and I hope this season has continued to offer you all its many gifts - the quiet beauty of winter, the warmth of shared meals, or the flicker of light and hope carried through the celebrations of Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and the marking of another

year.

I am returning this week after some time away. It was spacious and restorative time. We did some traveling and hosting, but amidst the bustle, there was ample time for the blessed ordinary: catching up with old friends, painting our laundry room, reading under the electric blanket across from the twinkling tree, and watching the sun rise in its impossible reds, oranges, and pinks out the living room window over coffee.

There is something grounding in the ordinary – especially in these days when so much is happening, is about to happen, that is destabilizing uncertain. As we step into 2025, I am keenly aware of the road ahead. The moment we are living in calls for courage, creativity, and an active hope that readies us to meet the challenges of our time.

Recently, I came upon this beautiful reflection by UU minister, Ann Tyndall that is speaking to me in this moment and speaks to how we might hold ourselves and each other through the months ahead.

This morning, I walked the dog up the street. It was a perfect winter's morning. An icy breeze was blowing. Clouds were gathered in the sky. As the sun rose the grey-white sky turned to rosy smoke. The sun finally appeared in the east. Nothing extraordinary, but the moment offered a blessing on the new day. Such blessings have been given daily for more millions of years than we can ever imagine.

I am reminded that what will get us through times of rapid change, hard times, times of uncertainty, dangerous times will be our ability to be blessed and fed by abiding things:

*the manifold blessings of the sun rising in the morning
the song of a bird heard as if for the first time
the stillness of the night the smile of a baby offered to you as if she
had been waiting for you the faithfulness of lovers and friends;
the hand outstretched in reconciliation, trembling, touching through
the barriers of estrangement
healing again and again
the persistence of Love
the persistence of Love
the persistence of Love*

In this New Year

- May you know more blessings than curses.
- May your hand reach out more than clench.
- May you be claimed more by love than indifference, more by hope than by fear or cynicism.
- May the creative power rise up in you, grounding you and guiding you to the border of what is yet possible for you, those close to you and the world.

Friends, we are a people who dream together, who hold one another through life's storms, and who believe in the transformative power of community. This year, let us lean into that power –find strength in our relationships, ground ourselves in the ordinary, and have the collective courage to imagine and live into a world we know is possible.

With the blessing of all that abides,
Rev. Tori

Do you agree that our church should have a full-time minister?

The Warrant for our semi-annual meeting, sent to you on Dec. 27, includes the Board's budget proposal for a raise, which would enable us to increase our minister's service to full-time. Many of us discussed this after the Worship Service last Sunday.

Our current minister's contract expires June 30, 2025. The Board has indicated to Rev. Tori that we would like her to stay another year and that she has stated she is willing. This Sunday's vote will determine the congregation's "yea" or "nay." All are welcome to attend, but only church members may vote.

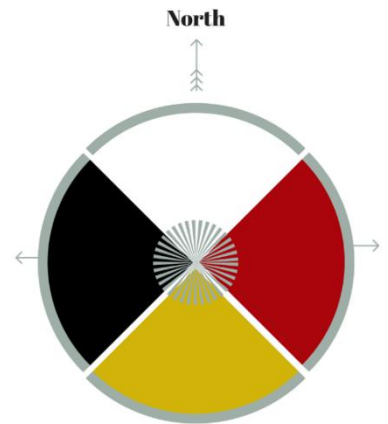
Happy New Year from your Board of Directors



SONGSWOP is scheduled for Friday, January 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, Rich Gaito 207-251-4432 or Jaylene Summers 207-251-3317

Women acknowledge turning of the Medicine Wheel

Please join us as Linda Thompson gives a presentation on the Medicine Wheel, honoring and exploring the seasons and directions. All women are welcome to this meeting of Women for All Seasons, Tues. January 14, at 6:30 p.m. in the church parlor.



Religious Exploration Open House – January 26th

We invite you to join us for an Open House for families in our Religious Exploration (RE) program! This special gathering is a chance to learn more about what our RE program offers for children and youth, while also meeting other families in our community. Childcare will be provided for kids to connect and enjoy social time, while parents share what is important in a

faith community and how First Parish can best support you and your family on the journey.

Lunch will be provided. We hope you will be able to join us as we explore together in community, learning, and love.

- Date: January 26th
- Time: 11:30
- Location: RE Classroom

Please RSVP to either Rev. Tori (uukennebunkminister@gmail.com) or our administrator, Allison Lazos (uukennebunkoffice@gmail.com).



**Our 22nd annual MLK celebration
Features music by Stevie Wonder and
MLK readings by KHS students
Sun. Jan. 19, 4 p.m.**

This year, we are offering an all-new celebration for the Martin Luther King Holiday. The event features a full-length concert of Stevie Wonder's music by Higher Ground and writings by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. read by

students from Kennebunk High School. Everyone will congregate in the Parish Hall for a reception following the concert.

Rev. Tori Rosati will introduce the program, which will take place in the Sanctuary. Higher Ground is made up of 14 terrific singers and musicians from the Portland area. It will be a tribute to MLK and also to Stevie Wonder, who has been very active in the Civil Rights movement championed by MLK. Stevie advocated for the MLK Holiday as well as many social justice issues through his music. Some of the songs to be included are: *Uptight*, *Signed Sealed Delivered*, *Living for the City*, *You Haven't Done Nothing*, and *Higher Ground*, as well as his early love songs. The band will conclude with *Happy Birthday*, a song that promoted the establishment of the holiday.

Notice that this year's event will be on Sunday afternoon before the holiday – a change from our former timing the morning of the holiday itself. We hope this time will be more convenient for working people to attend.

Our Social Justice Network, which organized the event, is expecting this concert to sell out. Tickets are now available online through our website. Suggested donations are \$25 adults, \$10 children and teens. Use this link to make your reservations:

<https://www.uukennebunk.org/mlk25>



Call for Cookies

The MLK concert will be followed by a simple reception of finger foods. The kitchen crew will appreciate donations of cookies to sweeten the table. Seeking 10 bakers/shoppers to bring 2 dozen of your favorite cookies. No cakes, pies, or anything requiring more than a cocktail napkin. Just cookies please!

The MLK Cookie signup sheet will be on the outer kitchen counter. Please indicate what you will bring and if the cookies contain nuts or are gluten free. Thanks, in advance, for dropping off the plated cookies by 3:30 p.m.- just before the concert, Sun. Jan. 19, 4 p.m.

Thank you very much! Cookie coordinator Mary Fortune

Completing our 2024 pledges!

Last year we were able to exceed expectations on our pledged amounts, however, we're still behind on collecting some of those pledges! If you have an outstanding amount, please get that to us as soon as you're able! If you have any questions about what you owe on your 2024 pledge, you can email uukennebunkbookkeeper@gmail.com to receive an up-to-date statement.

What matters to you?

MUUSAN (Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network) is the only UU organization that unites all the UU congregations in Maine. This year there is a new structure that asks: "What matters to you?" regarding social and environmental justice in the legislature. Connection happens through a Congregational Legislative Liaison. That could be you, as FPUU does not have a liaison.



Pride Parade of MUSSAN members

MUUSAN works with many partners, like Maine Equal Justice, League of Women Voters, Maine Housing Justice, Wabanaki Reach, Environmental Priorities Coalition, and many more. It is inspiring to work with committed people all over Maine, mostly via zoom. If you are interested in learning

more about being a CLL, contact marylyn.wentworth@tnsk.org. She is a MUUSAN board member. There are openings for board members too!

MUUSAN operates through donor support and has all volunteer leadership except for a paid administrative coordinator. Your support would be enthusiastically appreciated. Go to MUUSAN.org and push that pretty DONATE button for a one time or monthly donation

Letters:

Our Sunday services this fall and winter have been wonderful. I love the combination of joy, spirituality and out of the box Sundays, like the presents and the hymn singing. Thank you Rev Tori and the Worship Committee for your inspiration and imagination and all you do to make our community strong and full of love.

~ Marylyn Wentworth

Concerned about hunger in our community?



First Parish is searching for a new liaison to keep us in touch with COS (Community Outreach Services). This is a very special organization that offers many services including a Food Pantry with nonperishable foods as well as produce, other household necessities, assistance with energy expenses, and other special needs for residents of Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Arundel. Our liaison will help organize food drives and encourage members to volunteer in the work of COS. It is also important to inform members of our own community how we can benefit from the services COS offers.



Childcare position is *still* open

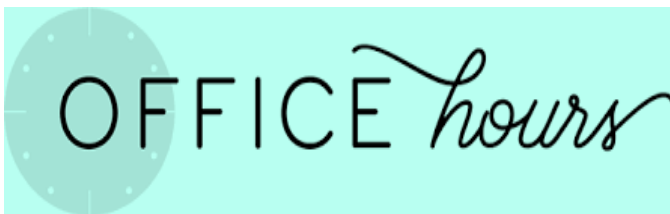
One of our caregivers has stepped aside, leaving a Sunday morning childcare position open. The church has funds budgeted for childcare - two hours per Sunday. All ages and genders are welcome

to apply. A background check will be required. Join the fun in the nursery as you earn a modest stipend. Inquire at the FPUU office.

Sunday Morning Bookcase



- *Finding Beauty in a Broken World*, by Terry Tempest Williams
- *Jesus and the Disinherited*, by Howard Thurman
- *Meditations of the Heart*, by Howard Thurman
- UUA Actions of Immediate Witness: click [HERE](#).



Rev. Tori's office hours are mostly Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Wednesdays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the church.

Due to other obligations her schedule may change. Please email the office

to set a time if you wish to speak with her.

One of the important duties of a minister is pastoral care for those in need. Our minister, Tori Rosati, is available to any congregant in need. Tori can best be reached at uukennebunkminister@gmail.com. For pastoral emergencies, please use Tori's cell: (978) 238-8210.