



First Church Vision

January 2019

Working toward a peaceful and just world, guided by Love

From Our Minister

The ending of a year is not like the closing of a book – it is more like the turning of a page to the next chapter. Our memories of the past year linger on, influencing our hopes and our plans for the coming year.

Some of us make New Year resolutions. This is a time-honored tradition. It is also the butt of a number of jokes: our resolutions don't always produce the desired change. There are many possible reasons. The resolutions may have been more backward-looking than forward-looking. They may have been based on negative rather than positive goals. Or the imperative for change may not have come from the heart, where our most significant questions are ultimately decided.

You cannot impose a specific behavior on you, or anyone else, for very long. Intentional change requires a certain kind of discipline – not the joyless gritting-of-teeth, but patience and persistence, to create the proper conditions. Howard Thurman, the theologian and mystic, offers the analogy of a seed:

There is moving at the center of the life process boundless, limitless energy, power, vitality, creativity. Wherever barriers are removed ... then from the inside, the creative process works. A miracle takes place in the heart of the seed, when the seed opens itself up to the movement of the energy. When the conditions are met in the seed, growth is automatic ...

We cannot make a seed grow. We can select the seed that is likely to grow in the conditions we provide, and we can plant it. The seed will unfold according to its own inner law, as long as we nurture it and remove the obstacles to its growth.

Which seeds would you like to plant this coming year, in your own life? Which seeds would you like to plant, in the life of this congregation? And which seeds, already growing, do you choose to nurture and protect?

In faith,

Rev. Bruce Taylor



Shared Ministry Team

The Rev. Bruce Taylor (Rev. Taylor), Minister

Betsy Moran: Congregation President and Parish Committee Chair

Worship Coordinator: Stephanie Trudel

Minister Emerita:

The Rev. Dr. Susan Suchocki Brown

Upcoming Worship Dates and Sermon Topics



Jan. 6th: "Three Voices, Three Traditions", Rev. Taylor.

Jan. 13th: "A 21st Century Reflection on Martin Luther King's Message"

Jan. 20th: "The Wolf We Choose to Feed", Rev. Taylor.

Jan. 27th: To be determined.



Community Soup Saturdays

For the month of January, we will be hosting a hot lunch program including hot soup, bread, dessert and coffee for everyone who would like to attend. They will be on **Saturdays from 1 to 3 pm** in the downstairs hall. This is a pilot project to gauge the level of interest of the community both recipients and potential volunteers. Jennessa McQuade is getting the word out to the people in the community who most need this kind of service. We have also informed Ginny's and they have indicated that they are willing to support us going forward. We do need volunteers for set-up, serving or clean-up whether it is for a part of or the whole day. We appreciate any time you can give us. Donations of food and supplies will also be welcomed. So please join us if you can!



Guest at Your Table

The Guest at Your Table program is one of the longest running fundraising and educational programs of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, UUSC, that supports and teaches about human rights issues. In the late fall of 2018, the theme of Guest at Your Table was Justice Across Borders.

Many of us collected money in our homes throughout the month of November. We will be gathering the collection boxes and donations during the month of January. We will pool our donations and sent a single check from First Church to the UUSC. If you would like to contribute, it's not too late to do a quick collection of loose change and bring it in to church.

"Three Voices, Three Traditions"

Jan. 6th

Rev. Taylor

How can a progressive church survive and thrive in a changing world? At any given moment, we are one generation away from extinction. Today's sermon considers three distinct, interdependent threads of tradition within the Hebrew Scriptures – wisdom, historic, and prophetic – as a basis for dynamic and resilient faith communities.

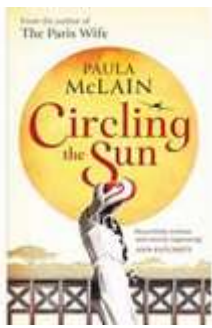
"The Wolf We Choose to Feed"

Jan. 20th

Rev. Taylor

As the story goes, within each one of us there are two wolves locked in constant struggle. The one who wins is the one we choose to feed. How shall we recognize this dynamic in our daily living, and make the right choice?





Book Group Meeting
Friday January 25, 2019 at 7:30pm
in church office

Circling the Sun by Paula McLain

'Circling the Sun' brings to life a fearless and captivating woman--Beryl Markham, a record-setting aviator caught up in a passionate love triangle with safari hunter Denys Finch Hatton and Karen Blixen. An engrossing story of love and adventure in colonial Africa, complete with gorgeous landscape, dissolute British ex-pats, and lots of derring-do with horses, motorcars and airplanes.



The **Grains and Greens Food Pantry** has been selected to participate in the Hannaford Helps Reusable Bag Program again!

The program is simple!

During the month of **February**, every **Fight Hunger bag** sold at the Hannaford store located at:

18 Main Street, Harbor Village, Townsend MA

will generate a \$1 donation to support
Grains and Greens Food Pantry!

Questions? Feel free to contact
Keri-Ann Rugg – Hannaford Program Manager at
603.380.9339 or info@bags4mycause.com
or visit hannaford.bags4mycause.com

1st Church Wish List

SOAP FOR BATHROOMS
MOP HEADS
TOILET BOWL CLEANER
SPRAY DISINFECTANT CLEANER
DISH SOAP (FOR UPSTAIRS AND DOWNSTAIRS)
FOOD FOR HOMELESS (NO KITCHEN REQUIRED)
HAND SANITIZER
TISSUES

All Donations Are Greatly Appreciated !!

First Church Unitarian Universalist
Mission Statement

We are an open and accepting community working for justice and equality for all through nurturing relationships and providing service to each other and in the greater community

Contacts:

First Church Unitarian Universalist
15 West Street
Leominster MA 01453
(978) 537-0310
www.firstchurchuu.org

Minister: Rev. Bruce C. Taylor
minister@firstchurchuu.org

Administrator: Lenore Scully
1stchurchoffice@verizon.net

Newsletter: Chris Uhlig
cauhlig2002@yahoo.com

Web/Emailing: Betsy Moran
bam36uu@gmail.com

Attention!!

Newsletter via E-Mail

We are no longer doing a hardcopy bulk mailing. If you would like to continue receiving a copy or know someone who would like a copy, please contact the office and let us know your email address. Contact Lenore at 1stchurchoffice@verizon.net Subject: add to newsletter email

If you need a hard copy please call the office and give Lenore your address.

Newsletter Contributions

If you want to contribute anything for February's newsletter, please send it to cauhlig2002@yahoo.com by

January 18th.

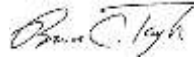
Minister's Availability and Office Hours

I respond promptly to emails and cell phone messages (603-233-3554) between 9:00am and 9:00pm, Tuesday through Sunday. (Monday is my Sabbath). For pastoral emergencies, please call me anytime and I will respond as soon as I can. This month, I will be in the office on the following days:

Wednesdays Jan 2, Jan 16, Jan 23 and Jan 30 from 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Thursdays Jan 3, Jan 10, Jan 17, Jan 24 and Jan 31 from 3:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Since these hours may change due to unforeseen circumstances, I encourage you to call ahead.



Rev. Bruce Taylor

Dates to Remember

January

Jan. 10th: Membership Committee meeting 6pm

Jan. 14th: Lady B's Meeting, 7pm

Jan. 21st: MLK Day Event 11am to 2pm

Jan. 24th: PC Meeting 6:30pm

Jan. 25th: Book Group Meeting 7:30pm



January Birthdays

Kayla Woodward.....Jan. 7
Natalia Giordano.....Jan. 13
Marilyn Murphy.....Jan. 13
Chris Uhlig.....Jan.16
Jennifer Scott.....Jan.18
Paula Murphy.....Jan. 21
Hope Cordio.....Jan. 22
Jenny Flammia.....Jan. 24



MONTACHUSETT MLK
COALITION
20TH ANNIVERSARY

**MLK DAY 2019
EVENT**

January 21, 2019

11 am - 2 pm
First Church Unitarian Universalist
15 West St. Leominster MA
Brunch and Program

Guest Speaker
Professor Lisa Moison
Fitchburg State University

This event is free and open to the public
Donations are welcome



The First Church Christmas Eve Creche



2018 Christmas Eve Choir



Ladies Benevolent Society

We will meet on **January 14th** at 7pm at First Church in the lower level of the building. We will be making Valentine's for some of the local assisted living facilities. No experience or special skills necessary. Coffee and refreshments will be served. Come join in the fun! Questions? Please contact Chris at cauhlig2002@yahoo.com or at church on Sunday.