



# First Church Vision

October 2019

*Working toward a peaceful and just world, guided by Love*

## Member Musings

Recent events have made it clear to me that we ought to reflect on our own Vision Statement. To wit: “We, the Members of First Church Unitarian Universalist, dedicate ourselves to journey together to create an **anti-racist, anti-oppressive**, [bold italics mine] democratic community. We will support each other in times of need and stand in the larger community for justice, equality and love.”

Hold that thought.

Let us also remind ourselves of the Mission Statement of First Church which says: “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.

These are stirring words. What do they really mean? Well, I propose that we will soon have practical ways to find out. Over the weekend of this past July 13<sup>th</sup>, leaflets started appearing all around Leominster advocating the White Supremacist ideals for American society. Thought to be the work of the so-called Patriot Front, these leaflets are blatantly racist in their attempt to convince the public that America is a white man’s nation with no room for “others” including, but not limited to people of color. Not for nothing has the Southern Poverty Law Center classified this organization as a hate group. If you have the stomach to read Patriot Front’s own manifesto, you will see why.

First Church’s partner organization, the Montachusets MLK Coalition organized a public meeting at the Leominster library recently to discuss these events. This meeting brought a considerable turnout of concerned citizens and civic leaders. Evidently, a lot of people consider these actions to be a serious threat to the quality of life in our community.

This behavior is a serious threat to our community. Groups like the Patriot Front, the KKK and others are here, and are not shy about raising their voices in the public forum. If we are serious about our vision including anti-racist and anti-oppressive themes, then we must at every opportunity raise our own voices to point out the moral bankruptcy of groups like Patriot Front and the KKK. Decency demands it. Humanity demands it. Our founding principles that compel us to recognize the worth and dignity of every person as well as our commitment to justice, equality and compassion in human relations demands it.

**Mark Moran**



**Shared Ministry Team**

**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

**Oct. 6th:** "Blessing of the Pets"

**Oct. 13th:** "Indigenous Peoples Day", Rabbi Yaakov Trek Reef

**Oct. 20th:** "Small But Mighty" **Bi-Annual Meeting will follow the service.**

**Oct. 27th:** "Halloween Across Cultures"

### Notes from the Parish Committee

Greetings and Welcome Autumn!



This is a busy time of year for all of us and especially in our church. We've just completed our first month of the new church year, the Johnny Appleseed Festival and Lady B's fundraiser, and now getting ready for October and (hopefully) seasonal temperatures to get those leaves turning their bright Autumnal colors.

As some of you may know, Lenore Scully our longtime office administrator has taken a position in the Leominster School system such that she is no longer able to be in the office during the day. So we have a rotating staff of volunteers in the office from 10 am to 2 pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday maintaining continuity of our past office hours. Lenore has graciously offered to assist in the transition of the office tasks and bookkeeping procedures for the time being. Thank you, Lenore!

The Parish Committee met on September 11<sup>th</sup> for our first meeting of church year. We had a packed agenda. We discussed some issues surrounding building security and making sure the building is secure when left after a group meeting or church meeting. We discussed how to fund the Community Meal in the near term and going forward. Now that both Mark and I are Serve-Safe Certified and our kitchen procedures are up to date, the Community Meal team will start fundraising in earnest.

One item that was brought up to the PC for informational purposes is the recertification of our Welcoming Congregation status. This is a new UUA requirement that Welcoming Congregations recertify annually. Thanks goes to Lynn Radford who will lead this effort for First Church.

There are 5 requirements to be met on a yearly basis:

1. Become a Welcoming Congregation (*We currently are a Welcoming Congregation*)
2. Have a Welcoming Congregation Worship Service (*The Worship Committee has committed to having a Welcoming Service*)
3. Observe dates important to LGBTQ+ communities (*A calendar of dates is available at the UUA website*)
4. Engage in further learning by participating in a UUA webinar/seminar on LGBTQ+ issues
5. Support a Welcoming Project supporting LGBTQ+ needs

If you would like to become involved with this Welcoming Congregation renewal process, please let Lynn know or contact the office and we'll pass your contact information on to Lynn.

All Parish Committee meetings will be held the **second Thursday of each month**. All meetings are open to members and friends of the congregation.

Until next time.....

### **"Blessings of the Pets" (Lay Led Worship) Oct.6th**

This morning we will focus of the bonds we share with our beloved pets! For this service, your pets (as long as they will feel happy and behave) are welcome to come to church! If you don't think your pet would enjoy attending, or if they have crossed the Rainbow bridge, please bring a photograph to share. We will collectively bless our pets and remember those who have passed through readings and songs.

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### **"Indigenous Peoples Day" Rabbi Yaakov Trek Reef Oct.13th**

Let's reimagine Columbus Day as an opportunity to learn truths about the genocide and oppression of indigenous peoples in the Americas and how to organize in solidarity against current injustices as we celebrate indigenous resistance.

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### **"Small but Mighty" (Lay Led Worship) Oct. 20th**

What does it mean to be a Small but Mighty Congregation? Join us, and we'll explore this concept!

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### **"Halloween Across Cultures" (Lay Led Worship) Oct. 27th**

Join us for a Spirited look at how the holiday we call Halloween came to be what it is! We will explore cultural differences as well as some of the similarities we share across cultures.



First Church's booth at the Johnny Appleseed Festival! We are ready for a busy day!

**A BIG THANKS** to Betsy and Mark Moran for earning their **ServSafe** certificates! This is very important step in providing the Saturday Community meal which required that both Betsy and Mark put in many hours of study the week before the 5 hour course and the 1.5 hour examination.

We celebrated their success at the Sept. 22nd fellowship hour by indulging in some chocolate cupcakes made by Marilyn Murphy.



The Dinosaur, Unicorn and Patriot's baskets were among the seven baskets offered in the raffle. Others included Kindness Art, Red Sox, Bruins and Lottery baskets.



**Book Group Meeting**  
**Friday October 25, 2019 at 7:30pm**  
**in church office**  
**Small Great Things by Jodi Picoult**

Ruth Jefferson is a labor and delivery nurse at a Connecticut hospital with more than twenty years' experience. During her shift, Ruth begins a routine checkup on a newborn, only to be told a few minutes later that she's been reassigned to another patient. The parents are white supremacists and don't want Ruth, who is African American, to touch their child. The hospital complies with their request, but the next day, the baby goes into cardiac distress while Ruth is alone in the nursery. Does she obey orders or does she intervene?



**Mark your calendar!!!**  
**The Fall Bi-Annual Meeting is on Oct 20th**  
**after the church service.**



**Ladies Benevolent Society**

The Ladies Benevolent Society will meet on **October 14th at 7pm** at First Church in the lower level of the building. Coffee and refreshments will be served. Ladies, come and join us! Questions? Please contact Chris at [cauhlig2002@yahoo.com](mailto:cauhlig2002@yahoo.com) or at church on Sunday.

At this meeting, we will begin to work on crafts for the Lady B's table at the Winter Stroll in December. We also will have additional crafting nights over the next 2 months as needed. If you enjoy making crafts and are interested, please join us on Oct. 14 or ask a Lady B member when the extra crafting dates are scheduled.

If you can't join us, please save any wine or liquor bottles. They can be colored or clear glass.



**Johnny Appleseed Fair**

We would like to thank everyone who contributed their time, effort and basket item donations to the Ladies Benevolent Society's basket raffle at the Johnny Appleseed fair that was held on September 21<sup>st</sup>. Our volunteers helped with setting up, selling raffle tickets and cleaning up and included Marilyn and Paula Murphy, Betsy and Mark Moran, Christi Grausam, Diane O'Hare, Kristal and Phoebe Truax, Rachel Ardinger, Stephanie Trudel and Sam Sharazi, We were very successful this year and because of your generosity the "Lady B's" are able to contribute to the Grains and Greens food pantry by making personal care bags and non-kitchen access food bags. We also contribute to other charities and help the church by purchasing items that the church needs.

In addition to the basket raffle, Lynn Radford made many beautiful necklaces and bracelets to sell at the fair. All profits of this sale went to the Grains and Greens Food Pantry.

**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

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**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 the office at [1stchurchoffice@verizon.net](mailto:1stchurchoffice@verizon.net) Subject: add to newsletter email

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

**Newsletter Contributions**

If you want to contribute anything for November's newsletter, please send it to [cauhlig2002@yahoo.com](mailto:cauhlig2002@yahoo.com) by

**October 18th.**

## Dates to Remember

### October

Oct. 10th: PC Meeting 6:30 pm

Oct. 14th: Lady B's Meeting 7 pm

Oct. 17th: Membership Committee Meeting 6pm

Oct. 20th: Fall Bi-Annual Meeting after church service

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

Every Saturday: Community Lunches, 1 to 3 pm in the downstairs hall.

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### October Birthdays

- Mickey Guzman..... Oct. 3
- Leigh Pariseau.....Oct. 3
- Jennifer Giordano.....Oct. 4
- Joe Cardone.....Oct. 8
- Clare Johnson.....Oct. 10
- Hayden Greene.....Oct. 10
- Fran Nadeau.....Oct. 17
- Ann Drury.....Oct. 18
- Diane O'Hare.....Oct. 23



### Sharing the Collection Plate

On **October 13th**, any cash that is collected separate of designated pledge money goes towards the Waterkeeper Alliance which is the fastest growing global movement for swimmable, drinkable, fishable water. For more info, see the link [Waterkeeper Alliance](#)



### Grains and Greens Food Pantry

Due to a very successful summer of Saturday Community Meals, we have depleted the shelves of our Grains and Greens Food Pantry. Next time you go food shopping maybe you could add a few "food pantry" items to your cart! Or you can donate by giving a check made out to FCUU with "Grains and Greens" written in the memo area.

### Grains and Greens Wish List

#### *Food pantry items:*

- Pasta Sauce
- Pasta
- Rice
- Mac and Cheese
- Peanut butter
- Canned fruit
- Canned vegetables
- Canned meats and tuna
- Personal care items: combs, brushes, toothbrushes and toothpaste, small bars of soap, razors and shaving cream, mouthwash

#### Food pantry items no kitchen needed:

- Peanut butter or cheese cracker sandwiches
- Granola bars
- Protein bars
- Flip-top cans of ready to eat foods; pasta, soup, meat, tuna
- Small bottles of water

- Plastic cutlery rolled in a napkin
- Gallon sized Ziplock bags

- Socks for both men and women
- Clean new or gently used clothing including summer weight coats, jackets, sweatpants, sweatshirts, tee shirts, etc.
- Pillows and blankets.

**All Donations Are Greatly Appreciated !!**