

FIRST PARISH OF WESTWOOD, UCC

Growing Faith + Sharing Love + Grounding Lives



Holy Week at First Parish Westwood

Pastor's Message

Dear Friends,

On **Maundy Thursday**, April 1, 7pm, we will gather together at Table on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/First-Parish-of-Westwood-120302557982716>).

The evening will begin as it did for the initial disciples with the breaking of bread so as you gather have a cup with wine or juice and bread nearby. Following the sharing of the bread and cup, we will hear Mark's account of Jesus' Passion as read by members of First Parish. As your fellow disciples read, listen that your soul may sing, *"What wondrous love is this! that Christ should come in bliss to bear the heavy cross for my soul."*



This service will be livestreamed on **Facebook** from the Sanctuary of First Parish beginning at 7pm.

The evening concludes with the stone being rolled against the door of the tomb. *"Mary*

Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where the body was laid." So be sure to join us also on Easter Sunday when the women return and the story continues anew.

On **Good Friday**, April 2, the Sanctuary of First Parish will be open between 12 pm and 3pm for prayer and meditation. The windows will be opened to keep the sanctuary ventilated and we will continue with the pandemic precautions of being masked, socially distanced, and well.

On **Easter Sunday**, April 4, our Easter Service will be available on **Facebook** when you wake.

At 10:30 am you are invited to join over **Zoom** with your church community for communion on Easter Sunday. Again, please gather with a cup of juice or wine and bread nearby.

Following Communion, we will continue on **Zoom** as we receive five persons (Ned & Laura Hall, Mary Masi-Phelps, and Cedric & Linda Saripalli) into membership at First Parish of Westwood.

And then at 11:30 am, families are invited to an outdoor Easter Egg Hunt. If you have not registered, please do. Again, we will continue with the pandemic precautions of being masked, socially distanced, and well.

Join us as we celebrate the cruciform pattern of Jesus' life and our own as we move through intensifying darkness and constricting fear into dawning light and freeing faith. May it be so again ... and again.

Peace,

Richard and Jill

Holy Week 2021

First Parish of Westwood, UCC
252 Nahatan Street, Westwood, MA 02090
781-326-5344
www.firstparishwestwood.org



Maundy Thursday – April 1, 7:00 pm

Come and gather around the Table as we remember the night Jesus last supper with his disciples. Worship is on-line via a Facebook livestream (at <https://www.facebook.com/First-Parish-of-Westwood-120302557982716>). Please have a cup of wine or juice and bread near by as you gather for worship. Following the observance of the Last Supper, members of First Parish will read Mark's account of Jesus' suffering, death and burial.

Good Friday – April 2, 12 Noon to 3 pm

The sanctuary will be open for you to enter for prayer and meditation. The windows will be open for ventilation, please wear a mask and remain socially distanced.

Easter – April 4

Celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and the rebirth of hope with us on Easter morning. Worship begins on-line via Facebook (at <https://www.facebook.com/First-Parish-of-Westwood-120302557982716>).

At 10:30 join us on Zoom (<https://zoom.us/j/97776095457>) for communion. Please have a cup of wine or juice and bread nearby as you gather for worship.

Following communion, we will receive new members. If you have been intending to join First Parish and have not yet spoken to our pastors, please speak with Revs. Jill or Richard Edens (Jill : 919-357-3914; jillredens@gmail.com; Richard: 919-357-3913; jrichardedens@gmail.com).

At 11:30am we will be hosting a socially distance egg hunt for children of our member families. Please see below for all of the details.

Invite your family and friends to worship with you this Holy Week.

Outdoor Easter Egg Hunt for First Parish Families

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 4TH
11:30AM
LOCATION: FIRST PARISH GROUNDS

First Parish of Westwood is delighted to host a socially distanced egg hunt for children of our member families. Our Outdoor Easter Egg Hunt, which celebrates the reason for the season, will be held on Easter Sunday at 11:30 a.m., rain or shine!*

Egg hunters may bring their own basket/bag for collecting, and all attendees over age 5 must wear masks. Toddlers will enjoy a head start. Further staggered starts may be used, to ensure social distancing.



To register, please click [here](#) to sign up (password is "FPEggs"), or email Darlene Wong Cancell at promodw@gmail.com. Please provide the name of the church member, the age of the egg hunter(s), and the total count of family attending.

We look forward to sharing Easter fellowship with our member families!

*In event of snow, thunder, or other unexpected development, please check email and our Facebook page for updates.

One Great Hour of Sharing



Let Your Love Flow **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering is an all-church offering within the United Church of Christ, but it is also an offering received in multiple denominations. A portion of the offering is held used to address emergencies (floods, hurricanes, war, famine, etc.) and a portion is used for development that can help break the cycle of poverty and misfortune.

This year's theme is **Let Love Flow** as water projects are stressed. You are invited to send an offering to First Parish, 252 Nahatan St., Westwood, MA 02090. OGHS offerings are accepted at anytime. Please write *OGHS* in the memo line of your check.

Sermon Shaping *On the Patio* Sundays, beginning April 11th 10:30AM

Join your pastors and other church friends for *Sermon Shaping* on the Sundays of Easter beginning April 11. Each Sunday we will look at the lectionary reading for the next Sunday.

- **On April 11** we will discuss the readings for April 18, the Third Sunday of Easter: Acts 3:12-19, Psalm 4, I John 3:1-7 and Luke 24:36b-48.
- **On April 18** we will discuss the readings for April 25, the Fourth Sunday of Easter: Acts 4:5-12, Psalm 23, I John 3:16-24, John 10:11-18.



Please note that in the season of Easter, instead of readings from the Hebrew scriptures, we read from the Acts of the Apostles which is the account of the early church.

When we gather on the patio, we need to continue being vigilant: wear masks, stay socially distanced, wash hands. By being outside we are well-ventilated. Should weather drive us inside, we can open all the windows in the Fellowship Hall and spread out. As we move towards May and June, we anticipate that more and more of us will be fully vaccinated.

Patio Discussion: A time for Reflection, Connection and Consideration



APRIL 11TH 11:30AM ON THE FIRST PARISH PATIO

It's been a long winter and way too long since we've been able to gather in person. We are looking forward to Pentecost Sunday when we plan to begin in-person worship once again. But let's not wait until then! Now with the nicer weather upon us, we can use our patio space for socially distant gatherings. Please join moderator Sharon Hobbs, and ONA

Committee Member Barb Worth for a time of re-connection and discussion on Sunday, April 11th at 11:30AM:

- What brought you to First Parish?
- What keeps you at First Parish?
- How do you envision life at First Parish now that we are Open and Affirming (ONA)? How can we help others to know this about us?

As we look to our future at First Parish, a community who embraces **ALL**.....What do we see?

Mark Your Calendar - Pentecost Sunday, May 23rd



“For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face.” I Corinthians 13:12

When Paul wrote this metaphor of how love clarifies our vision, mirrors were polished metal -- and we are not talking about stainless steel -- thus a mirror offered a reflected image but distorted. A community structured through love -- and Paul was referring to a community and not a couple -- is like being known *face to face*.

Living with Covid-19 has meant living a ***“reflected life”*** through Facebook, Zoom, Facetime, Duo, and multiple other platforms that kept life and work going. Now as a greater percentage of people are vaccinated and the virus caseload has been receding, we are able to start planning for community life that will more closely approximate ***“face to face.”***

We are not there yet so we will continue being socially distanced, masked, washed, well and well-ventilated. Just look at the near-zero rate of influenza this year to confirm how well these practices work!

It is time to start planning and practicing life in this next stage of living with Covid-19.

- **On Maundy Thursday** we will live-stream a service on Facebook in which a dozen of us will gather with all the recommended precautions to read the Passion narrative in Mark's Gospel.
- **On Easter Sunday**, our families will have an Easter egg hunt at church. Again, with all the recommended precautions (and if interested, please sign up in advance).
- **On the Sunday after Easter, April 11**, the Pastors will offer a study of the Bible texts recommended for the coming Sunday on First Parish's Patio with the precautions of being socially distanced, masked, washed, well and well-ventilated.
- **On Pentecost Sunday, May 23**, our Worship Ministry is planning to invite us to gather in-person for worship. This date gives us all time to plan and, if necessary, change plans.

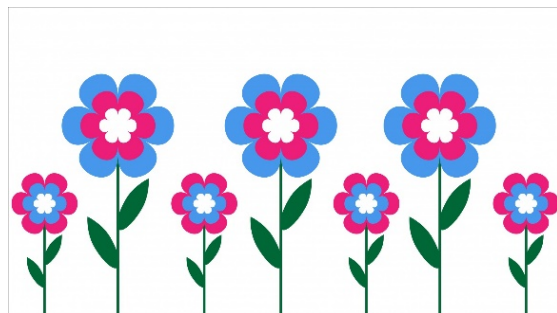
If the vaccination rate continues to climb and the rate of infection continues to plummet, there will be new guidelines over the summer as we move towards a re-opened community. Until then we are in a new phase of this pandemic as we look beyond today's "*reflected life*" to life "**face to face.**"

First Parish Landscaping Fund

Friends of First Parish -

Spring has arrived and planning is underway for cleaning up and maintaining our church property!

After some discussion amongst a few of us who have been volunteering to clean-up and plant garden beds, fertilize and prune shrubs, it is time to hire a landscaper to help us with several of the bigger jobs.



In order to have the necessary financial resources, we need to "grow" and sustain the landscaping and grounds fund. To start, we have set a fundraising goal for this first year of \$5,000.

How can you help? Donations to this fund should be made payable to First Parish of Westwood with a note on the memo line (Landscaping Fund). While donations are welcome year-round, we would like to jump start the fund with donations made by **May 15th.**

Questions? Contact Jim Worth at jworth@opentext.com or Nancy Hyde at nancy.c.hyde@gmail.com.

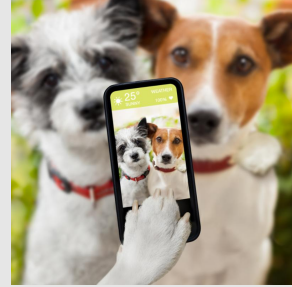
Send a Selfie!

During the year, Meg will be working on compiling a "homemade" pictorial directory as a gift for our new settled Pastor.

Pastors Rick and Jill Edens invite you to email Meg a "selfie" of you/your family. Please send all pictures to:

office@firstparishwestwood.org

Feel free to get creative!



Welcome Videos Requested



We are currently seeking volunteers to do a "Welcome to service at First Parish" video. We encourage you to get creative and have fun.

If you have questions, contact Amie Colcord at amiecolcord@gmail.com. Please submit completed videos to Doug Hyde at dkhydema@gmail.com.

To read our March/April 2021 Spire Newsletter, please [click here](#).

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STAY CONNECTED

