

FIRST PARISH OF WESTWOOD, UCC

Growing Faith + Sharing Love + Grounding Lives



We are an Open & Affirming Church

First Parish of Westwood affirms the dignity and worth of every person regardless of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical or mental ability, family structure, education level, economic circumstance and faith or religious tradition.

December 12, 2021

Join us today at 10am. First Parish Church is holding an in-person worship service on this **Third Sunday in Advent**. We continue to live stream worship services every Sunday in addition to having in-person worship.

The service will also be live streamed on our Facebook page. To access the Facebook page, please [click here](#).

Note: To view the Order of Service for this



morning's service, please [click here](#).

Sunday School will be held outside if possible. We will pursue alternative plans if the weather isn't suitable for outdoor activities.

See COVID protocols below.

Illustration by Rev. T. Denise Anderson | A Sanctified Art LLC
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Third Sunday of Advent

A Home for All (Joy)
Luke 3:1-18
Advocating for Home

The following poem will serve as an opening reflection for this Sunday's worship service.

Written with love for all who identify as transgender and/or non-binary

I know you don't feel at home in your body. Your clothes don't feel right.
Your bones don't feel right.
Your name, just a word that people have labeled you with.
I see the way you try on pronouns like I try on clothes, looking for something—anything—that feels right.
And what I would give to build you a shelter— a safe space where you could be, a home where you were safe and free.
What I would give to carve out some room for you to process and grieve and dance and sing your way into your true self.
But I know it's not that easy.
My hands cannot build you safety.
My words cannot give you time.
My heart cannot be home enough.
So until the day when you are truly at home, I will keep marching for you.
I will keep advocating for the home you deserve— the home in your own skin.
I will keep praying.
I will give you my second coat, and the shirt off my back, and the food from my table.
I won't give up on preparing the way.
A voice is calling out in the wilderness.
Do you hear it?
There's more for us here than has been before.

Prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

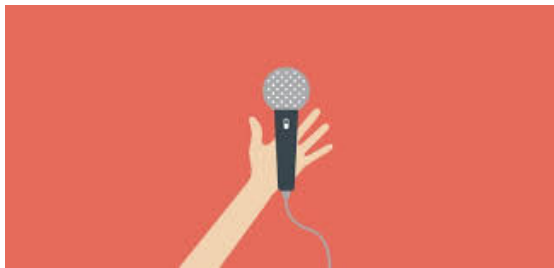
**SIGN-UP for Christmas Caroling
Outing followed by pizza in the
Gathering Hall
Sunday, December 12th**

Meet at First Parish at 4:15PM

Join us for a Christmas caroling outing today. If you haven't signed up already, please add your name(s) in pizza preferences on the list outside the office.

We will meet up at First Parish Church in the parking lot at 4:15pm. The plan is to drive to three locations including the home of one of our parishioners, the Westwood Police Station and the Westwood Main Fire Station. We will have a selection of carols to sing at each stop. Then we will wind our way back to the church where we will have pizza. All (including children) are welcome to join in the fun!

For those of you who would like to join us for pizza in the Gathering Hall after caroling, please know we will ask members of the same family to sit together at a table. Windows in the Hall will be open. Pizza will be served to you by people wearing food serving gloves and masks. If you are not comfortable with this, we understand if you would like to take your pizza slices home with you.



4th Sunday in Advent - Music Sunday (December 19)

Sarah Tocco is looking for two narrators to participate in the Music & Lessons service on December 19th. If interested, please contact the church office by Monday, December 13th.

Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols - Sign-up to prerecord readings

Our second **Christmas Eve** service will be fully virtual and pre-recorded, posted to Facebook and YouTube for everyone to participate with in their own time.

This service will be a full **Lessons and Carols** service, with readers for the various scriptures, a lighting of the Advent wreath, music from the choir and guest musicians, words for the Christmas carols so you can sing at home, a short sermon from Pastor JT, and an opportunity to end our service in candlelight.

To sign-up to be a reader, you can email the church office at office@firstparish.org, sign-up in the church lobby or go to [Sign-Up](#).

Note: The first service on Christmas Eve will be at 5 PM, an in-person family-oriented worship service we are calling **Campfire Christmas**,



by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittmany | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

designed as a more informal gathering that will be outside and shorter. This service will include a few Christmas carols to sing, a family-friendly reading of the Christmas story, an opportunity to end our service in candlelight, and, of course, a campfire.

Christmas Fair and Silent Auction

Thank you to all who made the fair a success!

This year's Christmas Fair and Silent Auction once again turned out to be a great success! Adjustments were made for the indoor/outdoor fair and fun was had by all. A special set of thanks goes out to Pam Kane, Joyce Marsh, Cyndi Gardiner, Jane Howard, Joy Sudduth, Bonnie Blomquist, Kathy Davis, Linda Saripalli, Lloyd Clark, Martha Crawford, Barb Worth, Darlene Wong Cancell, Mary Masi-Phelps, Barb Delisle, Jim & Ruth Aldinger, Nancy Hyde, Shelley Reeve, all the bakers of sweets, helpers with set-up and take-down and others who volunteered their time during the fair!!!!



Silent Auction Donors

2021 Silent Auction Final Donor Recognition

Thank you to our wonderful donors who generously contributed to the First Parish of Westwood's Christmas Fair and Silent Auction. A number of donors made multiple contributions to our auction, and we were able to offer over 30 items this year. With a constricted timeframe for event preparation, and in the midst of a pandemic, we are so grateful for the participation of these businesses, individuals, and families to ensure our auction was yet again a success this year.

Importantly, thank you also to the many shoppers who participated by placing bids on auction items. We wouldn't be successful without you!

Business Donors

Alden General Construction
Bean Farm
Discovery Museums
Dunkin'
Get in Shape for Women
Roche Bros.
Starbucks
Trader Joe's
Westwood Minute

Individuals/Family Donors

Jim and Ruth Aldinger
Anonymous Donors
Dave and Bonnie Blomquist
Cancell Family

Martha Crawford
Rev. Christopher L. Dodge
Peter and Pam Kane
Mary Masi-Phelps
Linda McKenzie
Shelley Reeve
Deanna Salter
Phil and Molly Speros
Judy Thomson



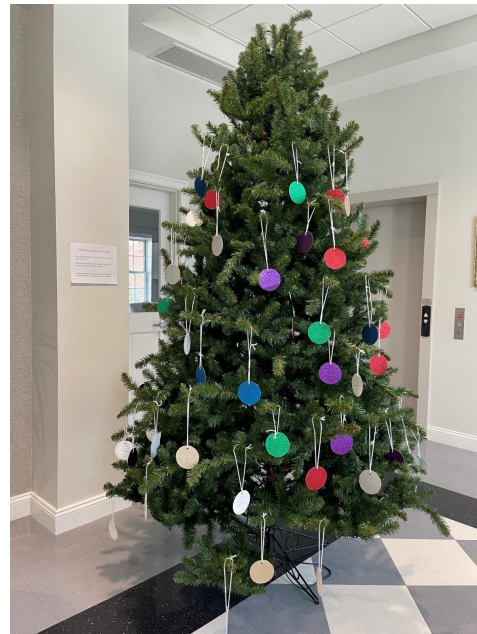
Stewardship 2022!!

Thank you to everyone who has turned in their pledge cards. As of Wednesday, December 8th, the church has received 46 pledge cards, representing pledges of **\$135,905**. This is a great response. We appreciate all who have submitted their pledge cards as this is vital to our preparation of next year's budget.

Lifeworks Christmas Family Gift Tree - Blessing of Gifts today

Today we will be blessing the gifts for this year's Christmas Families. If you have not already done so, please be sure to bring in your wrapped gifts.

Alternatively, you can still donate money so our elves can do the shopping for you! Send your donations to First Parish and indicate Christmas Families on the envelope or memo line of your check. The deadline for submitting monetary donations is December 19th.



Lost and Found

This book, *The Lightning Thief*, was found in church last weekend. It is from the Deerfield School library. Please claim if it belongs to you.

First Parish is a supported charity on AmazonSmile!

You can now support First Parish of Westwood when you shop at smile.amazon.com at no extra cost to you. Simply go to your Amazon account; on the bar on the left - go to **Programs and Features** to find AmazonSmile. There you can choose the charity of your choice (hopefully First Parish of Westwood). 1/2% of your purchase amount will come to First Parish.



amazon**smile**
You shop. Amazon gives.

Electronic Giving - So Easy!

As many of you know, First Parish uses Vanco to implement our electronic giving. It is safe, reliable and flexible and it provides the church with a reliable monthly cash flow. It also helps to avoid the year end rush to find out how much is outstanding on your pledge!

During the month of December, we will be introducing laminated cards in the pews so electronic givers can put a card in the offering plate to indicate they give electronically. If you are not currently an electronic giver, please indicate on your pledge card if you would like to start. The Assistant Treasurer, Barb Delisle, will send you information to make this happen.



Important Dates at a Glance

December

- Today (Meet at 4:15pm)- Fellowship Event. Churchwide caroling outing.
- Sunday, Dec. 19 - 4th Sunday in Advent/Music Sunday
- Friday, Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Services
5PM - In person, outdoor Campfire Christmas
2nd service online - Lessons & Carols
- Sunday, Dec. 26 - At home worship online

COVID Protocols

COVID Protocols:

****We are continuing to open windows in the sanctuary during Sunday services as long as temperatures allow. We have blankets available for anyone who needs one. We also encourage people to dress warmly as we head into late fall/winter.****

Everyone who attends in-person worship should wear a mask and will be asked to sign-in upon arrival. Should it be too cold to have windows open during service, seating in pews will be spaced. The balcony is also available to anyone who would like to be seated there.



Office Hours

Monday 9 am - 1 pm

Tuesday 1 pm - 3 pm

Wednesday 9 am - 1 pm

In order to have everything ready for Sunday's service bulletin each week, all information should be submitted to the church office by Tuesday morning.

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STAY CONNECTED

