

# FIRST PARISH OF WESTWOOD, UCC

*Growing Faith + Sharing Love + Grounding Lives*



**April 15, 2021**

**Worship this Sunday, April 18**

## ***"WHEN WE RETURN, WE WILL ALL BE NEWCOMERS"***

We just read an article about congregations resuming in-person ways based on the observation and opportunity that *"when we return, we will all be newcomers."*

We will not be returning to pre-March 2020 life once we begin regathering in-person. Sharing life and sharing space will be different. *"When we return, we will all be newcomers."*

Our cultivated practices for welcoming one another (shaking hands?), celebrating, grieving, and inviting one another to share in something larger than ourselves may need to adapt thus *"when we return, we will all be newcomers."*

This is also a great opportunity for new people to engage with First Parish!



When we are all newcomers, we are all cultivating new patterns together, experimenting with what works in 2021/22, and adapting our yearning for community for today! Coupled with the arrival of a new pastor in the near future, a defining time in the life of any community – *when we were all newcomers* – is coming soon.

Join us for worship on Sunday morning. And invite a friend! We are worshipping virtually using the congregation's Facebook page. Even if you are not a Facebook member, when you click on <https://www.facebook.com/First-Parish-of-Westwood-120302557982716> you should be taken to the church's Facebook page. And while on Facebook, please "share" the church's post on your Facebook page.

This Sunday, April 18, **Jesse Aguilar**, assisted by **Fina**, will ring the hour, **Jill Edens** will welcome you, **Richard Edens** will have A Word for All Ages, **Bob Deininger** will read the lesson, the **First Parish Choir** will sing, **Sarah Tocco** will offer music, and **Richard Edens** will preach.

Again, to worship with First Parish this Sunday morning click on <https://www.facebook.com/First-Parish-of-Westwood-120302557982716>.

In faith,  
**Richard & Jill Edens**

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## Prayers for our Faith Community Nurse

Prayers are requested for our Faith Community Nurse, Margery Eramo, who continues to recovering from an intestinal blockage at Newton Wellesley Hospital.

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## Sermon Shaping *On the Patio* Sundays, 10:30AM

Join your pastors and other church friends for Sermon Shaping on the Sundays of Easter. Each Sunday we will look at the lectionary reading for the next Sunday. And, if you want to make an observation about this morning's sermon, we can talk about this Sunday's sermon as well as preparing for next Sunday's worship!



- 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.
- On **April 25** we will discuss the readings for May 2, the Fifth Sunday of Easter: Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31; I John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8.
- On **May 2** we will discuss the readings for May 9, the Sixth Sunday of Easter: Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98; I John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17.

When we gather on the patio, we need to continue being vigilant: (1) wear masks, (2) stay socially distanced, (3) wash hands, (4) be well and (5) stay well-ventilated. By being outside we are well-ventilated but 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.

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## Patio Discussion: Christian Education for Fall 2021

**APRIL 18TH**  
**11:30AM**

## ON THE FIRST PARISH PATIO



For the past 12 months, Christian formation has been primarily a home activity. Just as our public schools are reopening this month, First Parish will begin the conversation for reopening our church school, youth and adult programs in the fall. Like the public schools we can anticipate the protocols of wearing masks, staying socially distanced, washing hands, being well and having good ventilation will continue until everyone including children are vaccinated. **This**

**Sunday, April 18**, you are invited to gather with our Moderator, Sharon Hobbs, and our Interim Pastors, Jill & Richard Edens, to begin planning now for next fall.

### An Announcement from Our Church Administrator, Meg Kara



Meg Kara, our Office Administrator, has some exciting news to share in a letter she submitted to the Pastors this week:

Dear Rick and Jill,

Please accept this letter as notice that I have accepted a new position as an Elementary Librarian with the Wellesley Public Schools. I am excited for this new opportunity to return to a teaching career at the elementary level.

Although I will not be able to be physically present in the office as I have been in the past, I would welcome the opportunity to stay on in some capacity in the role of Office Administrator for First Parish of Westwood. Given that the past year has allowed for us to primarily operate in our roles virtually, I am confident that I can continue to complete most of the tasks of the Administrator position in this way. I will continue to plan on coming into the office on an as-needed basis as my new schedule allows.

For the past five years, First Parish has been like a second home to me. I would like to thank each and every one of you for continuously making me feel welcomed and appreciated. I have truly enjoyed getting to know so many of you and look forward to continuing to be a part of the First Parish family.

Should the need arise in the months ahead to hire a new Administrator, you have my full commitment and cooperation for a smooth transition of responsibilities. Thanks again for your continued support and encouragement.

Most sincerely,  
Meg Kara

### RESPONSE FROM THE PASTORS:

We hope you will join us in offering a hearty congratulations to Meg Kara on her new job with Wellesley Public Schools. Meg spoke with us on Tuesday and reassured us that she would continue to serve First Parish as she has been doing over this past year. Her work is mostly online and has been seamless. She is currently in the office on Tuesdays and this is the only change that we think you will notice. Meg's office hours will shift to an as-needed basis for office specific tasks.

We are so grateful for Meg's service and relieved that she will continue her work with First Parish.

Blessings,

## Nominations for 2021-2022

The First Parish Church Council is preparing for its Annual Meeting in June. They would like to hear from you! Are you ready to step up and serve in this transition year? They are welcoming members who are willing to serve in all areas of ministry and especially Christian Formation and Mission & Outreach. Please contact Barb Worth (1barbworth@gmail.com) or one of the interim pastors (jillredens@gmail.com or jrichardedens@gmail.com).



To learn more about these vital ministries of the church, please join us on the patio:

- On **April 18** at 11:30 for a discussion about the future of Christian Education for children, youth and adults.
- On **May 2** at 11:30 for a discussion of Mission & Service.

We hope that these gatherings will help FP find leadership and direction for the future of these ministries.

## Seeking Volunteers to Lead Worship this Summer

### **while the Edens are on vacation . . .**

It has been the tradition at First Parish to provide lay-led worship while the pastor is on vacation. We want to extend an invitation to anyone at First Parish who would like to lead worship on the following Sundays:

- **June 13** (the Edens will be at the celebration of the life of Jill's brother-in-law in Ann Arbor, MI. Robert Dylenski died in November so the family gathering had to be postponed because of the pandemic).
- **July 4, 11, 18, 25**



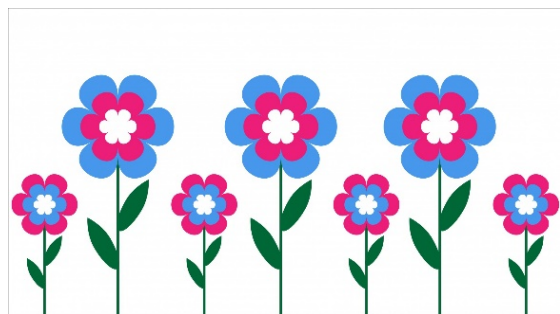
If you are interested, please be in touch with Jill and Richard Edens (jillredens@gmail.com or jrichardedens@gmail.com).

## 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](mailto:jworth@opentext.com) or Nancy Hyde at [nancy.c.hyde@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.c.hyde@gmail.com).

## Patio Discussion: Mission & Service in 2021-2022



**SUNDAY, MAY 2  
11:30AM**

It has been said that the church “*exists for mission as fire for burning.*” As we begin discerning God’s calling to First Parish to engage beyond ourselves in mission & service next year, please gather for a Patio Discussion on Mission & Service on Sunday, May 2, at 11:30am.

Our Patio Discussions promote our living-with-Covid protocols: wearing masks, staying socially distanced, washing hands, being well and having good ventilation that will continue until everyone including children are vaccinated. Gather with us for a Patio Discussion this spring.

## 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.

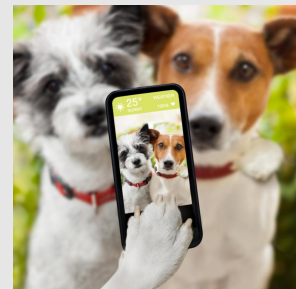
If you have questions, contact Amie Colcord at [amiecolcord@gmail.com](mailto:amiecolcord@gmail.com). Please submit completed videos to Doug Hyde at [dkhydema@gmail.com](mailto:dkhydema@gmail.com).

## 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](mailto:office@firstparishwestwood.org).

Feel free to get creative!



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

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STAY CONNECTED

