

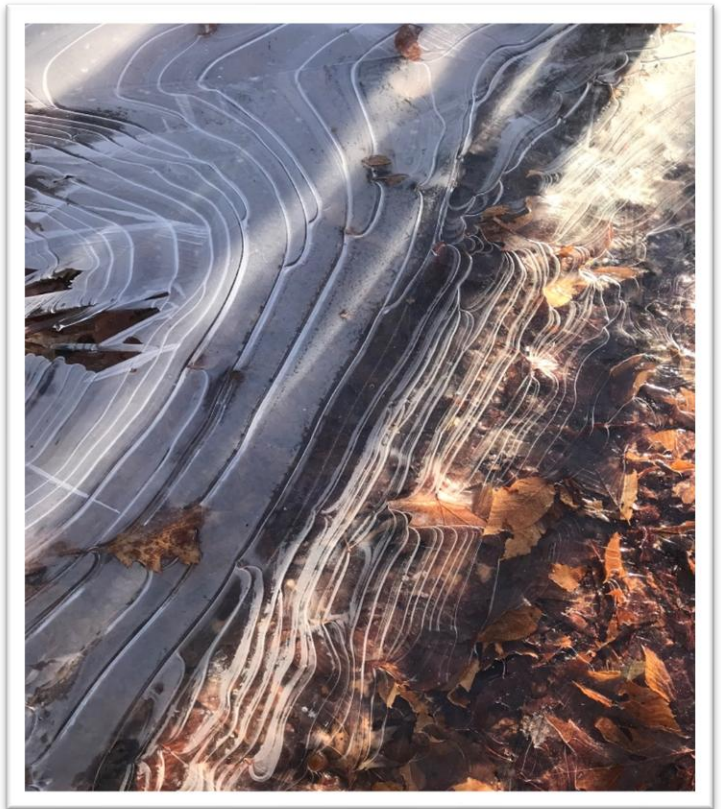


LIGHTING THE WAY FORWARD

December 18, 2025

Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.

Rachel Carson



“Unboxing Hope”

Worship Service: Dec. 21, 2025, 10 a.m.

Led by: Rev. Tori Rosati

Come in person or click below to join the service!

<https://uukennebunk.org/Sunday-Service-Access>

Or by cell phone (audio only) 929-205-6099, meeting ID 734 887 010,

Password: 02448

upcoming EVENTS

First Parish and Community

- Sun. Dec. 21, 11:30 a.m. "What Now?" Social Justice discussion
- Sun. Dec. 21, 5 p.m. Winter Solstice Service*
- Mon. Dec. 22, 10 a.m. Small Group Ministry
- Mon. Dec. 22, 5:30 p.m. Membership Committee
- Tues. Dec. 23, 10 a.m. Small Group Ministry
- Tues. Dec. 23, 6:30 p.m. Men's Open Group
- Wed. Dec. 24, 5 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship Service
- Sun. Dec. 28, 10 a.m. Preparing for the New Year*
- Wed. Dec. 31, 9 p.m., 12 a.m. Blueberry Ball Drop*

*See newsletter for more information

The First Parish office will be closed on the following dates: 12/25, 12/25, 1/1, 1/2

This Sunday:



Hope reminds us that sometimes possibility shows up in unexpected places, new insights can be wrapped behind and within the ordinary, and that joy, laughter, and healing can emerge at any time. Join us this Sunday for a fun and lively intergenerational service of story, song, and connection as we experience the surprising things that can happen when we gather. Rev. Tori Rosati leading with Kathe Wright, and music from Chris Staknys and the **Keytones** (Al Adams, Chris Wells, Mary Kennedy, Gerrard Carey, and Jaylene Summers).

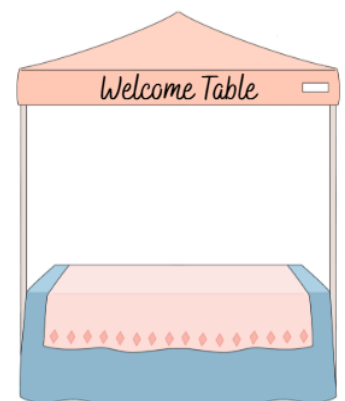


All Are Welcome Table

When: 11:00–11:30 a.m. in the Parlor

Dates: 12/14, 12/21, 12/28

Looking to connect, meet new people, or learn more about what's happening at FPUU? Join Heidi Parmenter, Membership Committee chair, in the Parlor during coffee hour this December for relaxed conversation and community. Everyone is welcome—just pull up a chair! Optional, fun icebreakers will be available. For more information, contact Heidi at uuheidi@gmail.com, or simply stop by—no RSVP needed!



24th Annual MLK Celebration planned

The Social Justice Network has just completed plans for the 2026 Martin Luther King Day celebration. Dr. Lowell "Chris" Matthews of Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester will give the keynote address, *Living Your Purpose*, and Kevin Preval will open the program with piano jazz.

While attending the Black New England Conference in Manchester, NH, SJ Chair Vicki Adams met Dr. Matthews and was very impressed with his speaking style, warmth, and willingness to share his truth. A professor of business management, he is known for his experiential class delivery that allows students to use the community as their textbook. Preval, a graduate of SNHU, is an accomplished pianist and music teacher in Derry NH. Q & A and reception to follow the program.

Our celebration will take place Monday, Jan. 19, 2026, at 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary and Parish Hall. Donation: \$20, 18 and under free, to benefit a Black History Month event for school children in Portland.

More information coming in January including ways to volunteer and make reservations.

First Parish learns about the homeless

Matt Brown of Hope Squad led our worship service last Sunday, telling us about his experience working with the homeless in Portland. Merideth Norris and Brian Kaufman's rendition of "I'm Gonna Walk It With You" by Clafin & Grace, was a perfect accompaniment to Matt's descriptions of walking with those in deep distress, providing hot cocoa and snacks to people living in tents with thermometers dipping below freezing, and providing outdoor meals in the biting wind.



Matt Brown speaks to the congregation about the homeless as Worship Associates Merideth Norris and Susie DeSantis look on. Photo by Bernie Reim.

We may feel helpless to make real change here, but Matt assured us that we don't need to fix anything. We just need to look people in the eyes and be with them as they find their way. If you would like to help go to:
hopesquadmaine.org/donate

Join us this Sunday at 5 p.m.



Preparing for the New Year

Worship Service: Dec. 28, 2025, 10 a.m. Led by: Mary Gelfand and Mark Gallup

After being absent from church life all fall due to Mark's medical issues, Mary and Mark are delighted to be returning to the pulpit to support our spiritual preparation for the coming new year. Please join us!



DECEMBER
31

Count down to 2026 at the
First Parish Bell Tower!

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- ICE SKATING AT THE WATERHOUSE CENTER
- BRICK STORE MUSEUM OPEN 5PM - 9PM
- EARLY BIRD BLUEBERRY DROP AT 9:00PM
- WILD MAINE BLUEBERRY DROP AT MIDNIGHT!

Main Street, Kennebunk
facebook.com/NYEKBK



Congregation Safety: Volunteers Needed

(We have only three volunteer, so far) Our Board of Directors has decided that our entry door should be locked at 10:10 a.m. during Sunday services to promote church safety. Many congregants who attended our listening sessions on this decision have suggested that someone remain downstairs to greet, unlock and re-lock the door for latecomers. They can watch the service via Zoom. As we continue to refine a plan to keep our church safe *and* welcoming, the Board is collecting names of congregants willing to do this door monitoring job. Please speak with Allison at the church office to indicate your interest. And thank you!

Support for Our Trans Beloveds



In this moment, when Trans lives continue to be targeted and threatened, we hold close the resilience and sacred worth of our trans siblings. As we commemorate Transgender Day of Remembrance, and the Trans lives lost to violence this past year, it is important to find support and

ways to connect. The UUA is offering a new, all-ages online pastoral care program for Trans people, their families, and caregivers. Click the link on the picture to learn more. May we hold in our hearts all Trans lives today and every day and commit ourselves to nurturing a world where all can live in safety, dignity and wholeness.

Hotline for immigrants

If you see ICE or Border Patrol in your neighborhood, please call this Hotline: 207-544-9989. bit.ly/MaineICEWatch is monitoring federal agencies that profile, abduct, and detain members of our community, denying due process and threatening our safety.

Letters to the Editor

What's on your mind or in your camera? Write a letter or send a picture to First Parish News! Email the FPUU Office: uukennebunkoffice@gmail.com

Listen Up!

Did you know our monthly Soul Matters themes come with a musical playlist to help us deepen into the messages? Playlists are organized as a journey, so consider listening from beginning to end and using them as a personal musical meditation.



- Click [here](#) for the Spotify playlist on Choosing Hope
- Click [here](#) for the YouTube playlist on Choosing Hope

Sunday Bookcase & Links



- *Book of Hours: Love Poems to God*, Rainer Maria Rilke translated by Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy
- *Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We're in with Unexpected Resilience and Creative Power*, Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone
- [We Are the Great Turning](#), Joanna Macy and Jessica Serrante
- *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith*, Barbara Brown Taylor

Minister's Discretionary Fund

In light of the ongoing delays in programs such as SNAP and other forms of assistance, many in our community are facing unexpected financial hardship. The Minister's Discretionary Fund is available to help members of our congregation and the wider community who are struggling to make ends meet, particularly during this difficult time.

If you, or someone you know, could use some support, please reach out to Rev. Tori. All requests are received with care and handled in strict confidence. Contact: uukennebunkminister@gmail.com or 978-238-8210

FPUU News Crew:

Vicki Adams, editor

Allegra Highsmith, photo editor

Allison Lazos, production

Rev. Tori Rosati, advisor

First Parish UU Church Kennebunk

DECEMBER 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 9-12 Office Open	2 9-12 Office Open 10:30 a.m. Pastoral Care 5:15 p.m. Sangha 7 p.m. Properties	3 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. NPR Potluck 5:30 p.m. Worship	4 9-12 Office Open 5 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	5	6
7 10 a.m. Worship Service led Rev. Tori 11:30 a.m. Worship Reflection	8 9-12 Office Open 7 p.m. Finance Committee	9 9-12 Office Open 5:15 p.m. Sangha 5:30 p.m. Family Small Group Ministry 6:30 p.m. W.F.A.S. 6:30 p.m. M.O.G.	10 9-12 Office Open 5:30 p.m. Soup Vespers	11 9-12 Office Open 5:00p.m. Choir	12 9-12 Office Open 6:30 p.m. Song Swap	13
14 10 a.m. Worship Service led Merideth Norris	15 9-12 Office Open	16 9-12 Office Open 5:15 p.m. Sangha	17 9-12 Office Open 6 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting	18 9-12 Office Open 5:00 p.m. Choir	19 9-12 Office Open	20
21 10 a.m. Worship Service led by Rev. Tori 11:30 a.m. What Now? Social Justice group 5 p.m. Solstice Service	22 9-12 Office Open 10 a.m. Small Group Ministry 5:30 p.m. Membership Committee	23 9-12 Office Open 10 a.m. Small Group Ministry 5:15 p.m. Sangha 6:30 p.m. W.F.A.S. 6:30 p.m. M.O.G.	24 Christmas Eve 9-12 Office Closed 5 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship Service	25 Christmas Day 9-12 Office Closed	26 9-12 Office Closed	27
28 10 a.m. Worship Service led Mary Gelfand & Mark Gallup	29 9-12 Office Open	30 9-12 Office Open 5:15 p.m. Sangha 5:30 p.m. Small Group Ministry	31 9-12 Office Open NYE Blueberry Drop 9 p.m. & Midnight			