



# The First Parish in Portland, Maine Unitarian Universalist

A Welcoming Congregation in the Heart of the City

## Sunday Bulletin

December 11, 2011

*The Mission of First Parish:  
Nurture the Spirit, Grow in Community  
and Help Heal the World*



**We worship together  
every Sunday at  
10:00 am Join us!**

425 Congress St. Portland, Maine 04101 207-773-5747 [www.firstparishportland.org](http://www.firstparishportland.org) [office@firstparishportland.org](mailto:office@firstparishportland.org)

Since 1674, we have aspired to be a  
"Warm and Welcoming Place in the  
Heart of the City."

*Welcome!*

Please join us for refreshments and  
conversation in the Parish House following  
our service and sign our guest register.

We are a non-creedal faith community, en-  
couraging folks to explore in their own way  
and at their own pace.

On the first Sunday of the month, we  
invite newcomers to join us after the service  
for lunch with the Minister, conversations  
about membership and First Parish history.

### Rev. Christina Sillari's Office Hours:

Rev. Sillari's office hours are:

Tuesdays, 10am-2pm

Thursdays, 2pm-6pm,

and by appointment.

Please contact the First Parish Office to  
make an appointment with Rev. Christina.

### December 4, 2011

Attendance: 137 Religious Exploration: 36

Share the Plate: \$183.05

**Please keep in mind that we need food  
and flowers throughout the year!**

**Thanks to Allen Greenleaf, Mettie Whip-  
ple, Peter Osman Carin Seadler and  
their family, and Stone McFarquhar  
who contributed food for fellowship  
hour today, and any others who kindly  
brought in refreshments as well!**

It is much appreciated if you can sign up for  
future weeks [at the opportunity table] or  
contact Wendy Stanley at (207) 899-2530  
or [gwsgance@yahoo.com](mailto:gwsgance@yahoo.com). We would love to  
acknowledge you in the bulletin!

**Our appreciation goes to Artha Free-  
bury for her donation of flowers for  
today's service.**

### Sunday December 11th Service

What is a UU?

Reverend Christina Sillari and  
Voices from the Congregation\*

Learn a bit about the speakers—turn the page!

### Sunday December 18th Service

Jesus

Reverend Christina Sillari

### Thursday December 15th Noonday Concert:

Choral Arts Sing-Along  
Robert Russel, director

### First Parish & You

#### Suits for the Season

For perhaps a century, it has been the tradition that 'the Suits' are worn by  
Ushers on Sundays in December and on Easter Sunday. In belated recognition  
of our culture's changed gender expectations, women in long skirts were added  
in 2002. This tradition carries special meaning for many because of connec-  
tions to beloved friends and family remembered each year when the 'suits' ap-  
pear. Read more about the story in the December issue of Stone Soup or ask  
one of the wearers—each one has a story.

#### New Member Conversation, with Chocolate

#### Sunday December 11th following the worship service

On Sunday December 11<sup>th</sup>, immediately following our worship service, join Rev.  
Sillari, and members of the First Parish lay leadership for a conversation with  
chocolate. We will discuss becoming a member of our congregation, touching on  
the benefits of membership, the significance of membership for you and your  
family, and how you can become a member. RSVP to Emily in the office if you  
would like to participate: [office@firstparishportland.org](mailto:office@firstparishportland.org)/773-5747.

#### Calling All Children and Youth!

There are a variety of programming notes for children and youth of First Parish  
this Sunday. **All children** should plan to join in Children's Chapel which will take  
place in the basement Community Room beginning at 10am *unless* they are par-  
ticipating in one of the following events:

All Revelers will be rehearsing in the Children's Chapel on the second floor be-  
ginning at 10 am. Youth Group participants will be meeting in Classroom 3 in  
the back on the second floor, also beginning at 10am.

#### Christmas Dinner at First Parish

If you don't have other plans, please join Elissa and Allen Armstrong, and Allison  
Gammons for a Christmas Potluck at First Parish. Elissa, Allison and Allen will  
cook a turkey or turkeys (depending on how many can come) in the afternoon.  
Timing is still being finalized, but we will begin with an informal Christmas wor-  
ship service led by Allison, and then share a festive holiday meal. Call the Arm-  
strongs at 774-1682 to let them know you'd like to participate. Children are  
welcome, and we will have a Yankee swap!

#### New to UU Class with Reverend Sillari Saturday December 31st 9am

Join Reverend Sillari for a discussion of the history and theology of Unitarian  
Universalism. RSVP to Emily in the office if you would like to participate:  
[office@firstparishportland.org](mailto:office@firstparishportland.org)/773-5747.

#### SIGN UP FOR MYSTERY PALS! (See Allison Gammons with questions!)

#### Chalice Group Sign up begins now!

Call Emily in the First Parish office to sign up: 773-5747

Group options:

Daytime group: 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month 11:30am -1pm.

Evening group: 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month 6:30-8pm

Evening group: 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month 7-8:30pm

Couples' group: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month 7-8:30pm

Young Adults' group: 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month 7-8:30pm

Young Women's group: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month 4:30-6pm

If you are interested in Chalice Groups, but unsure, join us Wednesday

December 14<sup>th</sup> 6:30-8pm to experience a Chalice Group facilitated by  
Reverend Christina Sillari. Check out the December Stone Soup for more infor-  
mation about Chalice Groups. And if you're interested in joining a group but  
the times listed don't work for you, call Emily, and tell her what would work for  
you. Perhaps in the near future, we can make it happen!

Monthly Lunch with the Minister • 12/13/11 12:30pm • Attending? • Let Emily know. 773-5747/ [office@firstparishportland.org](mailto:office@firstparishportland.org)

#### Please Join First Parish in our Winter Holiday Celebrations

#### Sunday December 18th

#### Worship Service

10am

Reverend Christina Sillari will  
preach a sermon on Jesus.

#### Sunday December 18th

#### Pageant of the Nativity and

#### Vesper Service

4:45pm

A First Parish tradition

#### Saturday December 24th

#### Christmas Eve

#### Worship Service

5:30pm

A candlelight service.

#### Sunday December 25th

#### Christmas Worship and

#### Christmas Dinner

Time TBD

Please RSVP to Allen and Elissa  
Armstrong per notice above if you  
plan to attend!

Learn about today's Voices from the Congregation:  
Participants in the Articulating Your UU Faith Class with Rev. Christina Sillari

**Bill Adams** lives in Scarborough. He is the father of three boys—Doug, Rob and Brian (better known as 1, 2, and 3); and grandfather to Kolbey (17) and Bailey (14), who truly keep him going. He recently opened a small business in Scarborough, and most enjoys spending time with his family, especially during weekly family dinner. Bill has been coming to First Parish for 6 months—his first time here was his first time in a Unitarian Universalist church, and about First Parish, he says "I love the welcoming congregation and the fact that my questions are encouraged and not suppressed."

**John Hall** is a retired public housing official from New York City, where he attended a United Methodist church for twenty-eight years. He has been attending First Parish for two years now.

**Debby Breiner** has lived and worked in Scarborough Maine for the past 20 years. Deb started coming to First Parish a little over a year ago and enjoys both the weekly services and the opportunity for personal growth and discovery the congregation provides.

A member of First Parish for 10 years, **Leslie Runser** is active on the Personnel Committee, Safe Congregation Task Force, and Christmas Pageant. A speciality food buyer at Native Maine Produce and Speciality Food, Leslie loves cooking, crosswords, and being active outside. She shares a happy home near Willard Beach with her husband, Tom Rogers; dog, Thea; and cat, Brook.

New England natives **Chris and Nicole McCarthy** recently moved to Cape Elizabeth after 14 years moving around the country. They have been practicing UUs since they married almost 17 years ago in Ipswich, Massachusetts. Chris and Nicole have 2 children Hope, 11 and Madi, 8 who have been raised as UUs. The family looks forward to joining First Parish in the upcoming year.

**Joan Stanton**, a First Parish member for approximately 27 years, has served on a variety of church committees in the past, and is currently active on the Membership Services Committee and the Bylaws Revision Team. Joan has sung in the choir since joining the church. She has a daughter, Heather, and grandchildren Alyssa and William. She lives in South Portland, and enjoys hiking, birding, ocean swimming and bicycling - all at a modest level these days.

#### First Parish Shares the Plate!

Our Share The Plate partner for December will be the "Neighborhood" Faith in Action initiative that the congregation voted to pursue during last May's annual meeting. Neighborhood Faith in Action projects that will be supported by these funds include the restorative justice center we are scheduled to open here at First Parish early in 2012, the monthly neighborhood dinners held in our basement community room, the Portland High School tutoring project, and the Safe Harbor project that supports our Burundian friends who are seeking political asylum. We are thrilled to have so much going on in our neighborhood this year for which these funds will go to great use. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

#### 85<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL NATIVITY PAGEANT AND VESPER SERVICE

*Save the date: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18 at 4:45PM*

**We need cast members, costume assistants! We need YOU!**

*The First Parish Nativity Pageant was first performed in 1926, and has been an annual holiday tradition here in the city ever since. The Pageant itself is an unusual interplay of music, narration, and silent dramatization by a cast of over 80 members and friends of First Parish. We hope you will join our congregation as we bring the tradition to life once again! If you are interested in participating, please contact Laurie Hasty: [laurie@maine.rr.com](mailto:laurie@maine.rr.com) or 797-5661.*

#### FIRST PARISH & COMMUNITY NOTICES

##### Meeting House History Tour Sunday December 11th!

Join Bette Brunswick for a 20 minute tour of our historic Meeting House. The tour will begin promptly at 11:20. After touring the meeting house those who wish may continue with Bette to also tour the Parish House facility (approximately 20 minutes more). First Parish friends, visitors and members are all welcome to attend. FMI contact Bette at [bettejnb@yahoo.com](mailto:bettejnb@yahoo.com).

##### Young Adults Brunch December 18th!

On Sunday, December 18th, the monthly Young Adults brunch will be held at the Public Market House, following the Sunday Service. Meet other young adults ages 18-40 and enjoy coffee, tea or a meal. Walk over together from the Parish Hall following the 10am service or meet on the second floor of the Public Market House, 28 Monument Sq at 11:30am. Questions, please email [carolyn.barschow@gmail.com](mailto:carolyn.barschow@gmail.com)

##### First Parish Book Group

The next meeting of the First Parish Book Group will be on Monday, December 12th at 7pm at First Parish. We will be reading *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith. January's selection is *Night of Many Dreams* by Gail Tsukiyama. All are welcome! FMI: Mary Wheeler, [maryalisonwheeler@yahoo.com](mailto:maryalisonwheeler@yahoo.com).

##### It's Getting Cold Out!

If you or your family are in need of warm layers, contact the First Parish office, and we will get you an application to a local foundation that can provide winter clothing and boots.

##### Consider Participating in This Year's Ferry Beach Retreat!

Plans are being made for the annual Ferry Beach Retreat at the UU campus in Saco. This has been organized by the A2U2 church for a number of years. First Parish has been actively involved the last 2 years. The dates for this are April 20-22, 2012. We are in need of someone—preferably 2 people—to take over First Parish's role in this. We also are interested in knowing who is considering going to this wonderful event. For more information, please contact Wendy Stanley---  
[gwsgance@yahoo.com](mailto:gwsgance@yahoo.com)

##### Help Comes in Many Forms

Members of First Parish come together to offer assistance to our community in many ways. When a ride or a meal would make a difference in your life the Caring Circle would love to help. Contact Pris Nelson at 772-3438 or [pris.nelson47@gmail.com](mailto:pris.nelson47@gmail.com). If the need for help requires spiritual support or involves a crisis the Pastoral Care Team is available to provide assistance along the journey. Contact the Team at 773-5747 or [office@firstparishportland.org](mailto:office@firstparishportland.org).

#### The Coming Week at a Glance For Complete Calendar visit [www.firstparishportland.org](http://www.firstparishportland.org)

##### Sunday December 11th

Pageant Committee Meeting 9am  
Youth Choir 11:20am  
Meeting House History Tour 11:20am  
Worship Committee Meeting 11:30am  
Safe Congregation Meeting 11:30am

##### Monday December 12th

Mindfulness Meeting 6pm  
First Parish Book Group 7pm

##### Tuesday December 13th

Lunch with Rev. Christina 12:30pm  
Governing Board Meeting 6:30pm

##### Wednesday December 14th

Tai Chi 9am, 6pm  
Chalice Group Experience 6:30pm

##### Thursday December 15th

Noonday Concert 12:15pm  
Choir Rehearsal 7:10pm

##### Saturday December 17th

Pageant Dress Rehearsal

##### Sunday December 18th

Young Adults Brunch 11:30am  
Pageant of the Nativity 4:45pm

##### Monday December 19th

RE Cluster Meeting 10am  
Memorial Svc for Marvin London 11am

#### Are UU a Great Communicator?

If you have web-site skills, are willing to help with PR and would enjoy connecting with our wider Unitarian Universalist community, First Parish needs you! We are seeking several people to serve on the **Communications Council**. Please e-mail Bette Brunswick at [bettejnb@yahoo.com](mailto:bettejnb@yahoo.com) for more information. Thank you for considering this most important ministry at First Parish.