



The First Parish in Portland, Maine Unitarian Universalist

A Welcoming Congregation in the Heart of the City



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

Sunday Bulletin

December 18, 2011

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

425 Congress St. Portland, Maine 04101 207-773-5747 www.firstparishportland.org office@firstparishportland.org
First Parish & You

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 11, 2011

Attendance: 218 Religious Exploration: 34

Share the Plate: \$348.02

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

**Thanks to Laura Sewell, Wendy Stanley,
and Stone McFarquhar who contribut-
ed food for fellowship hour today, and
any others who kindly brought in re-
freshments 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. We would love to
acknowledge you in the bulletin!

**Our appreciation goes to Linda Blue
for her donation of flowers for today's
service.**

Information on Staffing Between Christmas and New Years

All First Parish staff wish you a happy and healthy holiday season. Please note that in order to allow First Parish staff to celebrate the holidays with our families as well, we will be implementing a partial closure 12/26/11 through 1/2/11. All scheduled meetings will take place (unless specified by the meeting coordinator in advance).

Staff, including Reverend Christina Sillari, Emily Brocks, Deirdre McClure, Allison Gammons, and Moe Blanchard may visit the church building during the time between Christmas and New Years, but will not maintain typical office hours. In addition, Emily will be traveling and will not monitor church email or voice-mail. Reverend Christina will be available by cell phone (207)807-9232 and by email at cmsillari@gmail.com throughout the week.

Calling All Children and Youth!

There is Children's Chapel this week. All children will meet in the Children's Chapel at the top of the stairs at 10am.

Please Turn in Your Mystery Pal Forms! (see Allison with questions)

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

Chalice Group Experience on Sunday December 18th at 11:30am

If you are interested in Chalice Groups, but would like to learn more about what they are like, join us **Sunday December 18th at 11:30am in the Children's Chapel** to experience a Chalice Group facilitated by Reverend Christina Sillari. Information on the Chalice Groups that are forming now, and their meeting time is on the reverse of this page. Take a look and call the office to register. Also check out the December Stone Soup for more information about Chalice Groups.

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. An informal Christmas worship service led by Allison will begin at 1:30pm, and will be followed by festive holiday food, socializing and a Yankee swap. Children are welcome! Call the Armstrongs at 774-1682 to let them know you'd like to participate.

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/ 773-5747.

Newcomer Luncheon

Sunday December 4th 11:30am-1pm

On the first Sunday of the month, newcomers are invited to join Rev. Christina Sillari for a light lunch and conversation about First Parish and the meaning of membership.

Next First Parish Neighborhood Dinner is New Year's Day (1/1/12). Will You Help Us?

Volunteers are sought for our January Neighborhood Dinner on 1/1/12. Shifts are meal prep and cooking (2-5pm); or serving and clean-up (5-7pm). Contact Marge Stockford, mstockford@maine.rr.com, 619-7133 to get involved. It's a great way to be in true community, and it will be a lovely way to spend the first evening of the New Year. We will celebrate with our neighbors.

Sunday December 18th Service

Jesus

Reverend Christina Sillari

Sunday December 18th

Pageant of the Nativity and Vesper Service

4:45pm

Saturday December 24th

Christmas Eve

Candlelight Worship Service

5:30pm

Sunday December 25th

Christmas Worship and

Christmas Dinner

Worship service will begin at 1:30pm

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

Sunday January 1 Service

Beginnings

Reverend Christina Sillari

Thursday January 5th Noonday Concert

Chiharu Naruse, piano and Robert Dan, viola

**FAITH IN ACTION MEETING • Sunday January 8th 11:30am-1pm • Basement Community Room
Learn about the progress of our efforts in our Neighborhood • Find out how you can get involved!**

PLEASE NOTE:

**First Parish will NOT be
holding a 10am worship
service on Christmas Day,
Sunday December 25th.
We invite you to join our
afternoon worship and
Christmas dinners.**

**Calling All Volunteers Interested in Assisting
with the New Center for Restorative Justice at First Parish!**

The newly formed Center for Restorative Justice at First Parish is looking for several new volunteers, as screeners and greeters, to join the already committed team of eleven volunteers. Screeners will check for messages daily on a designated telephone line, contact the caller, victim, and offender for details and to evaluate the action needed, and schedule a restorative justice team for the RJ session. Screeners can work from home (or some other location). Greeters will work at the church during the RJ sessions to set up the space and to greet and support all parties prior to the RJ sessions. In-depth training will be provided for both of these volunteer opportunities. **If you are interested in either of these important jobs within the Center for Restorative Justice at First Parish, contact Elizabeth Chapman at Eliza.Chapman177@gmail.com.**

FIRST PARISH & COMMUNITY NOTICES

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 connections to beloved friends and family remembered each year when the 'suits' appear. Read more about the story in the December issue of Stone Soup or ask one of the wearers—each one has a story.

Garden Clean-Up Completed

The First Parish Memorial Garden Committee would like to thank all those who lent a hand and helped us to get the garden cleaned up for the season! The garden is now closed for the winter, and will reopen for the spring in May. You will see an invitation to join in the work party at that time, and we hope you will consider joining us!

Embrace the Dark and Welcome the Return of the Light

On Wednesday December 21st, the Worship Committee of Allen Avenue UU Church will present two Winter Solstice worship services: 6:30pm and 8:30pm. Both will include performers in masks, music, chant and readings reflecting both pagan and modern approaches to the turning of the year. You are invited to join them in experiencing the nourishing dark of the longest night, and welcoming back the life-giving sun.

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

Chalice Group Sign up begins now!

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

Group options:

Daytime group: 1st Tuesday of each month 11:30am -1pm.

Evening group: 1st Wednesday of each month 6:30-8pm

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

Couples' group: 3rd Sunday of each month 7-8:30pm

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

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

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!

Help Comes in Many Forms

Members of First Parish come together to offer assistance to our community in many ways. Whether a ride or a meal would make a difference in your life, or you are in need of spiritual support, or help through a crisis, the First Parish Pastoral Care Team is available provide help along the journey. Contact the Team at 773-5747 or office@firstparishportland.org.

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 for more information. Thank you for considering this most important ministry at First Parish.

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.

The Coming Weeks at a Glance

For Complete Calendar visit

www.firstparishportland.org

Sunday December 18th

Young Adults Brunch 11:30am

Pageant of the Nativity 4:45pm

Monday December 19th

Pageant Clean-Up 7am

RE Cluster Meeting 10am

Memorial Svc for Marvin London 11am

Mindfulness Meeting 6pm

Wednesday December 21st

Tai Chi 9am, 6pm

Thursday December 22nd

NO NOONDAY CONCERT

Choir Rehearsal 7:10pm

Saturday December 24th

Christmas Eve Candlelight Svc 5:30pm

Sudanese Christmas Eve Service 10pm

Sunday December 25th

NO 10am WORSHIP SERVICE

Christmas Worship and Dinner 1:30pm

Monday December 26th

FIRST PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

Mindfulness Meeting 6pm

Tuesday December 27th

FIRST PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

Preble Street Soup Kitchen Volunteering

4:15pm: meal prep

5:45pm: serve dinner and clean-up

Finance Council Meeting 7pm

Wednesday December 28th

FIRST PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

Tai Chi 9am, 6pm

Thursday December 29th

FIRST PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

NO NOONDAY CONCERT

Friday December 30th

FIRST PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

Saturday December 31st

New to UU Class, 9am

Sunday January 1st

Worship Service 10am

Youth Choir 11:20am

Newcomer Lunch 11:30am

Neighborhood Dinner 5pm

Monday January 2nd

FIRST PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

Mindfulness Meeting 6pm

Tuesday January 3rd

Pastoral Care Team Meeting 6:30pm