



# The Herald

A Publication of the First Church in Salem, Unitarian Universalist

VOLUME 18, NUMBER 4

## DECEMBER 2017

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## Minister's Musings

*Venite Adoramus... (O Come let us adore him...)*

Bethlehem is not how you picture it. I know. I visited the "City of David" several years ago while I was on sabbatical. The place is a less than picturesque, run-down, hardscrabble city - part Middle Eastern bazaar and part non-descript concrete apartment buildings. It is a loud, dusty, Arab city in the hills of the "West Bank," a mere 4.5 miles south of Jerusalem but a whole world away. Just to get there requires passing through large security checkpoints with two-story tall concrete barriers and barbed wire. Once you arrive in the city, you will be accosted by some of the most aggressive street vendors anywhere in the region.

This makes the experience of entering the Church of the Nativity all the more unusual. The large, ancient church complex is situated off of an urban square. Across the way is a good-sized mosque. As you enter the Church through a large, seemingly ancient set of wooden doors, you feel as though you have walked back in time 1,000 years, perhaps longer. And as you stand in line to await your turn to descend the steep, stone steps into "the Cave," you realize what an amazing place this is. From around you everywhere, you hear snippets of various languages: Russian, Filipino, Spanish, Chinese, French, Hindi, Arabic, and a few I did not even recognize. People of all different colors, shapes, and types are all standing in the same line patiently waiting their turn. Some hold crosses or rosary beads. Others have their cameras hanging around their necks, poised and ready. What is remarkable is the diversity of humanity on display and yet all of us are there for a single purpose: to visit the ancient place where it is believed that Jesus was born. But the purpose is more than just to visit; it is to venerate and adore. Somewhere along the line, as the queue slowly inches forward, many of us make the transformation from visitor to pilgrim.

The actual spot is a "cave-like" chamber carved into the foundation of this ancient church. At one end there sits a very ornate and rather ancient granite altar, with the stone rubbed smooth from the action of countless hands touching it. The air is full of incense. On the floor of the altar is a large, many-pointed star seemingly made of inlaid silver or platinum. Candles are hanging from the low ceiling. People descend the steps to this small room and immediately fall on their knees in front of the altar. Others enter quietly in tears uttering what I assume is the Lord's Prayer in their language. Still others quietly sing songs and carols.

What is remarkable about the whole scene is how considerate people are with one another. It could very easily be a mob but it is not. Each person descending those steps is looking for something and coming in peace. While I remain uncertain about whether or not Jesus was really born in Bethlehem, I am clear that all of us are better people for having the opportunity to venerate a special child born so many centuries ago. Adoration as a spiritual practice gets short shrift in our modern-day culture. Maybe that is one of the reasons that this celebration has endured down through the ages. It is one opportunity to remember the possibility for this world being a better place and we being better people - a possibility that is as challenging and fragile as a newborn child. *Venite Adoramus, Venite Adoramus, Venite Adoramus, Dominum...*

"The world is indeed full of peril, and in it there are many dark places; but still there is much that is fair, and though in all lands love is now mingled with grief, it grows perhaps the greater."

- J.R.R. Tolkien,  
*The Fellowship of the Ring*



## December Schedule of Events

### Sat, December 2

9am Choir Rehearsal

### Sun, December 3

9am Choir Rehearsal

10:30am Service

Special Meeting of the Society to Welcome New Members

12pm Pageant Rehearsal

### Sun, December 10

10:30am Service

During Fellowship: Decorating of Meeting House

12pm Pageant Rehearsal

### Tue, December 12

12pm Lunch with Pastor

Hanukkah begins at sundown

### Wed, December 13

7pm HR Committee Meeting

### Fri, December 15

6:30pm Caroling & Holiday Party hosted by Youth Group

### Sat, December 16

9am Choir Rehearsal

10am Pageant Dress Rehearsal

### Sun, December 17

9am Choir Rehearsal

10:30am Service

Christmas Pageant and Multigenerational Holiday Party  
Community Fellowship

4:45pm Lifebridge Dinner Team

### Wed, December 20

7:15pm Standing Cmte Meeting

Hanukkah ends at sundown

### Thu, December 21

4pm Salem Pantry Bagging

### Sat, December 23

9am Choir Rehearsal

9am Salem Pantry Distribution

4:45pm Lifebridge Dinner

### Sun, December 24

10:30am Yuletide Theme Service

5pm Choir Rehearsal

7pm Christmas Eve Carols and Lessons Service

### Mon, December 25: Christmas

### Sun, December 31

10:30am New Year's Eve Janus Ritual Service

## Around the Parish

Congratulations to **Maggie Balz and Adam Breazeale** upon the adoption of their newborn son, Arthur Jack, born last month. Baby Jack is doing great and his parents are learning the fine art of sleeping in increments!



**Bob Walker** was admitted to the hospital just before Thanksgiving. After being stabilized and treated for an infection at Salem Hospital, he is now amidst a stay at Hunt Nursing and Rehab Hospital in Danvers. He is making good progress and hopes to return home sometime this month.

Did you know that **Neil Alsip** is a screenwriter for tv and film? In addition to once being a contestant on Jeopardy when he lived in the LA area, he is now a YouTube video producer. Check out his highly enjoyable and whimsical videos at [www.frogdaughter.com](http://www.frogdaughter.com). Yes, there really are people wired like this!

Speaking of Alsips, **Thomas Alsip**, took a few moments to show case the turkey feather display he and his family had created for Fellowship Hour on November 5. The feathers came from real live wild turkeys who occasionally cross over – and drop feathers on – their backyard. Talk about keepin' it local!



Former Russian Ambassador **Timothy Pickering** held forth in a terrific lecture on Thursday, November 9 at the First Church. Pickering spent 30 years working as a diplomat including serving as a senior US representative in Russia during the George H.W. Bush administration. The former ambassador spoke for 35 minutes about Russia and the

current situation of our own State Department, and did so without so much as a scrap of notes in front of him. He then proceeded to take questions and offer answers for 30 minutes, demonstrating the breadth of his experience and knowledge. It was a fun and informative night.

[continued on page 4]

D E C E M B E R 2 0 1 7						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> 9am Choir Rehearsal
<b>3</b> 9am Choir Rehearsal 10:30am Service New Member Sunday Special Meeting of the Society to Welcome New Members 12pm Pageant Rehearsal	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> 10:30am Service During Fellowship: Decorating of Meeting House 12pm Pageant Rehearsal	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 12pm Lunch with Pastor Hanukkah begins at sundown	<b>13</b> 7pm HR Committee Meeting	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 6:30pm Caroling and Holiday Party hosted by Youth Group	<b>16</b> 9am Choir Rehearsal 10am Pageant Dress Rehearsal
<b>17</b> 9am Choir Rehearsal 10:30am Service Christmas Pageant and Multigenerational Holiday Party Community Fellowship 4:45pm Lifebridge Dinner Team	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 7:15pm Standing Cmte Meeting Hanukkah ends at sundown	<b>21</b> 4pm Salem Pantry Bagging	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 9am Salem Pantry Distribution 4:45pm Lifebridge Dinner Team
<b>24</b> 10:30am Yuletide Theme Service 5pm Choir Rehearsal 7pm Christmas Eve Carols and Lessons Service	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> 10:30am New Year's Eve Service Janus Ritual Burning of Regrets						

**FIRST CHURCH HOLIDAY SCHEDULE**

- |             |  |             |   |
|-------------|--|-------------|---|
| Sun, Dec 3  | 12pm Pageant Rehearsal                                   | Sun, Dec 17 | 8:30a Pageant Call  |
| Sun, Dec 10 | 12pm Pageant Rehearsal<br>Decorate the Meeting House     |             | 9:00a Choir Rehearsal<br>10:30a Christmas Sunday Service<br>11:30a Community Fellowship Hour                        |
| Fri, Dec 15 | 6:30pm Caroling & Holiday Party                          |             | 12:00p Family Holiday Party begins with large red-suited guest  |
| Sat, Dec 16 | 9am Choir Rehearsal<br>10am-12pm Pageant Dress Rehearsal | Sat, Dec 24 | 10:30am Yule Themed Service<br>5:00p Choir Rehearsal<br>7:00p Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols |
|             |  | Sun, Dec 31 | 10:30am New Year's Eve Service—<br>Janus Ritual Burning of Regrets  |





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Did you know that church member **Barbara Maitland** and her husband and family own Maitland Mountain Farm right here in Salem? They have been in the news recently with their petition to the City of Salem to run a commercial farm on their 2+ acres of land on Cedarcrest Ave. just outside of Vinnin Square. Here's to local food and farms!

Those of you present for our Indigenous People's / Columbus Day service on October 8 will no doubt remember the performance of **Alredo and Ambar Villages**. The Mexican natives had moved to Salem last year with their family and their pre-Colombian drums and flutes. (See the largest drum as it was being moved into the Meetinghouse.) Alfredo and Ambar recently decided to move back to Central America for the time being, to a farm they own in Belize. We wish them well!



Congratulations to **Tanya Stepasiuk**, one of the Chairs of our Social Justice Committee, who received the 2017 Changemaker Award from the North Shore Community Develop Corporation, at the end of November. The award was given to Tanya for her leadership and work on the City of Salem's Sanctuary City Ballot Question campaign. Tanya led the charge and provided vital energy and expertise for the campaign that successfully advocated for Salem to be a City that provides services to all residents, regardless of their immigration status.

The church was pleased to welcome **Dr. Alexandre Pineros Shields** as a guest speaker on Sunday, November 12. Alexandre is the Executive Director of **ECCO** and was on hand to thank members of the congregation for our support of Sanctuary City Ballot Question campaign.

Did anyone notice the 'digital illustration' of one of the church's windows on display at the Front Street Coffee Shop this last month? It was based on a photo taken last year and is the work of **Elissa Von Letkemann Art & Design** here in Salem.



Many candles were illuminated in memory of dearly departed loved ones during our **All Soul's Day Candlelighting Service**, held on November 5. It's always a touching and lovely service.

## Religious Education

Happy December! Our annual Christmas Pageant and Family Holiday Party take place on December 17th this year. This production is quite unique and very fun. Max Burbank writes the lines specifically for the child who is playing that character and the result is a pageant that is sweet, funny, touching, and always a beautiful and memorable event. If your child is unsure about participating, see myself or Max Burbank - we are very flexible! Even if you do not have children in Religious Education you will enjoy our unique Pageant! Our Family Christmas party takes place just after Fellowship on the same Sunday. We sing carols, enjoy some pizza and desserts, and best of all, Santa will make a special appearance with a little gift for every child. All families and children are invited!

To celebrate Advent this December students received a First Church Passport to Kindness. Each week students can perform a Random Act of Kindness related to the Advent theme for that week. The themes are Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Below is a short list of some ideas to celebrate each theme. Please share any ideas your family comes up with this Advent season with us. Passports are stamped in class on Sundays as students share and discuss their Random Acts of Kindness.

**Hope:** Write an inspirational quote on a card and send it to a neighbor.

Donate pet toys to a shelter.

Donate a toy to a toy drive.

Write a happy "I hope note (I hope you . . .) for a family member or friend.

Read, watch, or listen to "A Christmas Carol."

Make a special holiday ornament for someone.

Donate items to a homeless shelter or food pantry.

**Peace:** Say you are sorry, even if you still feel mad.

Leave some food out for the birds or squirrels.

Invite someone in your family on a quiet walk outside.

Let someone go ahead of you in line.

Sit quietly and read to a younger child or ask someone older to read to you.

**Joy:** Smile at everyone today.

Give three people a compliment today.

Candy Cane bomb a parking lot.

Write happy messages on the sidewalk in chalk.

Donate books you don't read anymore or give them to a younger child.

Sing your favorite Christmas carols in the car super loudly.

**Love:** Tell your parents something you love about them.

Write kind messages on post it notes and put them up random places.

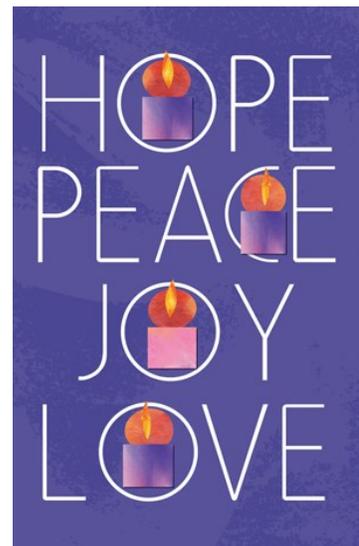
Give someone a hug for no reason.

Draw a special picture for someone and leave it for them to find.

Do a chore without being asked.

Our hope is that by intentionally practicing Hope, Peace, Joy and Love this December we can balance out the commercialism our culture faces and focus on our many gifts and blessings. Let us all spread Hope, Peace, Joy and Love first in our own hearts and families and then into the world.

May love surround you this holiday season,  
Deb DiGiulio





## *In Memoriam: Abby Burns*

Longtime church member Abby Burns died peacefully in her sleep at home on November 13, 2017, with her beloved dog Daisy by her side. Abby was predeceased in 2010 by her husband of 59 years, Jeremiah "Jere" Burns, also a member of the First Church.



Abby was born in St. Paul, Minnesota on March 6, 1930. She attended Macalaster College and afterwards, traveled to Arizona where she met Jere while skiing near Flagstaff. They spent the early years of their marriage in Glendale AZ during Jere's military service and in 1954 returned to Salem where they raised their three children.

As wife, mother, grandmother, friend, neighbor, master gardener, nature lover, lifelong liberal, tireless volunteer and the ultimate hostess, Abby was always a source of warmth and good humor. She enjoyed sailing, travel, bridge, crosswords, garden design, birding, and tennis (where she was infamous for her vicious lob). She brought life to every party with her energetic spirit and wonderful laugh.

Her record of community service is was significant locally. Some of the beneficiaries of her time and heartfelt care included the Samaritan Charitable Society of Salem, Lifebridge, House of Seven Gables, the Hamilton Hall Lecture Series, Historic Salem, Peabody Essex Museum, the First Church in Salem, City of Salem Planning Board and Salem Conservation Commission.

Abby is survived by her 3 children, Pamela B. Burns of Princeton, NJ, Jennifer M. Burns of Sedona, AZ, and Jeremiah S. "Josh" Burns of Falmouth, ME, in addition to 4 grandchildren and several nieces and nephews and extended family.

More than 200 relatives and friends gathered to celebrate Abby's life here at the First Church on Friday, November 17. A reception at Hamilton Hall followed the service. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Lifebridge of Salem and the Fund for Nature of Audubon Society.

## *From the Music Director*

Greetings to all my new and old friends at the First Church! It is hard to believe that I have just played my eighth Sunday and directed the choir in church for the fifth time. Time moves so quickly, but also, in many ways the church feels all so familiar to me. The building itself has been on Stacia and my regular evening dog walk for years and there are so many familiar faces on Sundays that we have gotten to know in our over 25 years in Salem. But more importantly than just the familiarity is the overwhelming welcome that I have received on Sundays and rehearsing the choir on Saturday mornings. The church is so fortunate to have so many dedicated singers in the choir, that give so freely of their time and talent.

As we quickly move towards Advent and the Christmas season, plans are afoot to have a brass quartet on Christmas Eve, playing carols and arrangements as you come in, play on the sung carols during the service and with one of the choir's anthems for that special service at 7:00 on Christmas Eve (FYI – on a Sunday this year!). And, of course, there is the Christmas Pageant on December 17 which I look forward to working on with the staff and organizers as well as practicing the songs with the kids.

Again, thank you all for your generosity of spirit that you share with each other and me in my first months as your Music Director – it is a genuine kindness that will extend our friendships and relationships well beyond the proverbial "honeymoon".

Michael Kraft



## **Garden Committee**

On a chilly Saturday in November, a hardy band of volunteers worked hard enough to shed several layers of winter clothing during the planting of 2,500 small early spring bulbs. This layer of color is Stage Two of the planting of the new berms in front of our building, and next spring we hope to add some low perennials to the mix. The garden plants have been cut back and the beds raked. The intrepid volunteers to whom we will owe a lovely spring display were:

Mary Collari	Duncan Cox	The Eschauziers	Chris Finn
Brenda Marean	Paul Marquis	Andy Schultz	Lynn Taggart
Clementine and Kelly Tyler-Lewis			

We would be remiss if we didn't acknowledge and thank the dedicated folks who cared for and tended our Church grounds last summer. The berms had been newly planted and required daily monitoring to ensure their health and viability. We were fortunate to have a rotating schedule of conscientious volunteers. They include the following:

Mary Collari	Jan Eschauzier	Chris Finn	Mike Giauque
Joanne Jonsson	Brenda Marean	Jo Ann Silva	Lynn Taggart

A special thank you is offered to Christiane Hansen-Mitev for her generous gifts of flowers gathered from her and her sister's gardens, on multiple Sundays last summer. It is always a special pleasure to have freshly cut and arranged flowers from our members' gardens. I might add that both Christiane's and Mark Stevens' dahlias were especially spectacular. Thank you so much.

Now that the garden has been put to bed, we will turn our efforts to creating winter arrangements at our entrances. As the year draws to a close and the daylight diminishes, we need to make bright spots in the landscape and in our Meeting House. If you would like to support our efforts, please use the form below to help us make our beloved church warm and welcoming through the dark months of a New England winter. Potted flowers for the Christmas Eve service must be ordered by the morning of December 1st, but you can donate other funds to help sponsor the containers that have become a seasonal greeting to all who pass by on Essex Street.

Your Garden Warrior co-chairs

Mary Collari, Jan Eschauzier, Brenda Marean, and Lynn Taggart



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## **Stewardship Committee**

### **The Pancakes Were Delicious!**

The Stewardship committee hosted the annual fall pancake breakfast on Sunday, November 12. Due to the Veterans Day holiday, there was a lighter than usual turnout. Those that did show up were treated to sausage, bacon, eggs, and three different kinds of pancakes including some vegan choices of sausage and pancakes. Thanks to our community volunteers for cooking, set up, and clean up. And a big shout out to Lloyd Woodcock for spearheading the event.

If you have not returned a pledge card for Fiscal Year 2018, you should have either received by now a personal plea or a letter requesting that you do so. Even if you continue to give during church services, through the mail, or by electronic funds transfers we would like to receive a pledge card from you. This helps us with planning and maintaining the church's annual budget. As always, thank you for the financial gifts that you share with First Church.

On Sunday, December 3, Stewart's Ship will be back in worship with the next installment in his children's sermon series on Stewardship. It promises to be a fun experience, and is the first Sunday in Advent so we look forward to seeing you there.

The Stewardship Committee

Tommy Leon, Chair; Bob Allen, Joe Bayne, Bill Henning, Jess Kane, Russell Lane, Marlene Warner, Lloyd Woodcock



## ***The New Shed Final Report***

In what might be described as one of my “finer” moments, how well I remember standing up at the end of the annual meeting in May, and announcing I would like to head up a new shed project, but that in order to do it properly, the Linden tree would have to be removed. Little did I anticipate the maelstrom this would create, and the passions I aroused. Leaving the meeting, while explaining my reasoning in the parking lot, I was accused of being arrogant, a term that may have been a little harsh, but perhaps justified when looking at my attitude from someone else’s perspective.

What I had envisioned as a simple shed replacement project, turned into a save the tree movement, and it forced Lynn Taggart, the shed design person from the Gardening Committee, and me to redesign the shed around the tree. Clearly, this would be a huge compromise in terms of shed size, yet necessary if the desire was to keep the tree. I had already gotten an estimate from Dodge Tree Service to remove the tree, which was now moot, and was asked by the Standing Committee to give a status report of not only the rear Linden, but also the one in the front yard, which was in dire need of pruning. The condition of the front Linden had been a matter of concern for some time, having been surveyed and partially pruned by Charlotte Enfield (Spruced Up Tree Company) some time ago, with the suggestion we enlist National Grid to prune the large branch that was hanging over the side walk of Essex Street, and encroaching on some electric wires. But then we were told the city had placed a moratorium on National Grid tree work. Bids were then solicited from Dodge, Mayer and Cicoria Tree Service Companies for pruning both trees. The action required on the front Linden tree was quite obvious, and not in need of further analysis, but the fate of the rear Linden was still in doubt. I had already obtained an analysis from Spruced Up Tree, but decided to also engage the services of Gaffin Tree, a certified arborist recommended by Cicoria Tree Service. Neither of these surveys were conclusive, since a thorough analysis would have required observation from a bucket. Both arborists agreed the tree had been poorly pruned in the past, and in the least, about 25% of the higher branches would have to be pruned. They also observed the large fissure that was visible about half way up the tree, but had no way of determining how far it went down. The first surprise came from Dodge, who refused to prune the tree in view of the possible liability if the tree were to subsequently fail. I received the same response from Mayer and Cicoria, and reported this to the Standing Committee, who unanimously voted to remove the tree. When the tree was felled down to the stump, not one, but two large fissures were exposed, vindicating the necessity for felling this tree.

The least expensive estimate to do the work on both trees was submitted by Cicoria, and a date was set. In the meantime, word got out about this, and Deborah Greel and Charlene Long contacted several wood workers about obtaining parts of the tree for carving. I’m sure you saw the Salem News article about the tree being felled, an event Charlene Long orchestrated, and something that made a sad occasion somewhat more satisfying, in that this graceful old Linden would be preserved for eternity.

I’m sure many of you are concerned about the financial impact the tree removal/pruning/new shed had on First Church. First of all, the cost of the tree work, including the pruning and cabling of two branches of the front Linden and the removal of the rear Linden and stump grinding, came to \$4500. The cost of the new shed and costs related to site preparation and debris removal, have been underwritten by a member of the First Church, who wishes to remain anonymous. The interior materials of the shed have been underwritten by Lynn Taggart and Russell Lane.

I view this undertaking as part of the rear parking lot beautification project, with the new shed the first piece of the puzzle. Next on the list is repaving the rear lot, and digging a trench to electrify the shed. Finally, the chain link fence will be removed and replaced with a wrought iron fence, sections of which are against the east side of the church. I am in process of obtaining bids for both these final projects.

Peter G. Eschauzier

10 November 2017



## Henny Penny

November was a fun-filled month with filled trips to the Salem Public Library, the Salem Council on Aging, the Salem Y, and the Phoenix School. At the library the children played "Mouse in the House", listened to fun stories, and did a bit of singing and dancing! The seniors at the Council on Aging enjoyed songs, stories, and snacks with the preschoolers. At the Salem Y the children spent time in the babysitting room (formerly known as The Children's Museum). Our ten oldest students participated in a series of scientific discoveries during Tinkering Tuesday at the Phoenix School.



Our annual Songfest is scheduled for Friday December 15th. Last year we moved the event downstairs to Wilson Hall to accommodate the expansion in Henny Penny enrollments. As usual, once the children finish their performance Santa will arrive to distribute a photo opportunity and a gift to each child.

Our intern Patty Gomez will implement her planned week December 11th. Patty is finishing up her Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education at North Shore Community College. Interns choose a focus book to anchor their learning experiences for the planned week, and Patty has chosen It Came in the Mail. Throughout the semester Patty has been planning and implementing learning activities for the children, then reflecting on the real experiences versus the intentions put forth in her plans. We are excited to see Patty use her reflections to help her provide an amazing week of learning! We will truly miss her in January!!!

The Henny Penny Teaching Team

Tricia, Barbara, and Stacey

# WARRANT

To the Members of the First Congregational Society:

You are hereby notified that a Special Meeting of the First Congregational Society in Salem will be held in the Meeting House of the church at 316 Essex Street, Salem, Massachusetts,

on **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2017**, directly after the Special Meeting, for the following purpose:

To act upon a report from the Membership Committee regarding inactive members

By order of the Standing Committee.

# WARRANT

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You are hereby notified that a Special Meeting of the First Congregational Society in Salem will be held in the Meeting House of the church at 316 Essex Street, Salem, Massachusetts,

on **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2017**, directly after the morning Service, for the following purpose:

To vote upon and welcome new members into the Society.

By order of the Standing Committee.

## Membership Committee & Clerk of the Society

The maintenance of the membership roll for the First Congregational Society in Salem (Society) is the responsibility of the Clerk with assistance from the Membership Committee. The current by-laws of the Society allows for removal from membership in the Society only if someone dies or makes a written request to the Clerk.

Each year the Society pays an assessment to the Unitarian Universalist Association. This is based on the number of members in our congregation. In an attempt to reflect an accurate count, the Membership Committee is attempting to reach out to individuals for feedback on their membership status and inclusion in the Church Directory.

After the new member meeting on **December 3rd** there will be a short special meeting to vote on changing the status of members who have requested this, and for those who we haven't heard from. The list of individuals will be available in mid-late November and will be printed in the weekly Herald and in the Order of Service.

If you would like to discuss this process with the Membership Committee, please reach out to any one of us. We are certainly trying to err on the side of caution in this process.

Membership Committee: Mary Krigbaum (chair), Eric Kenney, Bill Henning

## Events and Goings on At and Around First Church

### **ECCO Annual Dinner**

**Sunday, December 3 from 5pm-8pm**

UU Church of Greater Lynn  
101 Forest Ave, Swampscott



Join Jeff Barz-Snell and members of the congregation for ECCO's Annual Meeting / Celebration. ECCO is an advocacy and community organization comprised of 34 different churches and synagogues from all over the North Shore. Connect with inspiring people from across ECCO's diverse communities, celebrate our shared successes of 2017, and learn more about their / our work for justice, all while eating delicious food! If you would like to bring a dish to share, please speak with Jeff Barz-Snell or email [minister@firstchurchinsalem.org](mailto:minister@firstchurchinsalem.org).

### **TWO Special Meetings after Church on Sun, Dec. 3:**

On December 3, after the service there will be a Special Meeting to Welcome New Members. Immediately following that short meeting of the society will be another meeting for the purpose of removing names of individuals from our membership rolls who have moved away or with whom we have lost touch. The names of these people are posted on a list on the piano in the Cleveland Room for review and feedback. Periodically the congregation takes this action to update officially our member lists. Since all major decisions are made by a vote of the congregation this brief meeting is necessary. Any questions or comments? Feel free to contact Rev. Barz-Snell, Ben Waxman (the Chair of our Board) or Mary Krigbaum, Chair of our Membership Cmt. Not sure where to start? Call the Church Office.

### **December Holiday and Caroling Party hosted by the First Church Youth Group**

**Friday, Dec 15 from 6:30 -8:30 ish**

The Youth Group of the First Church invites you to join us for a night of caroling, game playing and cider sipping by the fire. We will gather at 6:30 and spend some time caroling in the neighborhood. We will then return for warm cider and stew by the fire, and perhaps a few games. Plan to dress warmly as we plan to be outside for 45 minutes to an hour. All are welcome.

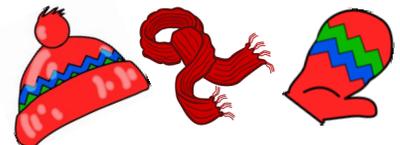
### **The Stocking Project is back!**

Starting Sunday, Dec 3, members of the congregation will once again team up with the Salem YMCA to help provide presents and clothes for 15 local families that are having a hard time. People can team up or "adopt" a family (with one or two kids) on their own. For more information, call the Church Office, or speak with Jim Ognibene of Social Outreach Committee. And look for the Stockings on display in the Cleveland Room.



### **Chase the Chill**

Bring in winter items for this year's Scarf, Mitten, and Hat Drive! Items can be left in the hallway behind the Cleveland Room.



### **Welcome Committee**

#### **NEW MEMBER POTLUCK DINNER**

We would like to invite all new members (children and partners welcome) to join us for a potluck dinner to celebrate your membership to the church and to have fun getting to know each other better.

When: January 12 at 6:30 pm

Where: First Church in Salem

Who: Everyone who became members in December 2016, May 2017, and December 2017.

Please RSVP to Donna Fritz 978-828-5673 (call or text) by January 8th.

The Welcome Committee,

Donna Fritz-Chairperson, Neil Alsip, and Iris Weaver

## Get Involved/Thank You!!!

### Family Promise

In the past year First Church in Salem has hosted Family Promise four times. This would not have been possible without an incredible bunch of volunteers, from dedicated persons who were there from the start, to friends of the church who jumped in as they could. We want to give a heartfelt thanks to all of you, whether you slept over or provided dinner or even did laundry following the hosting session. All of these roles are important in helping to welcome our guests, in nurturing them both physically and emotionally, spiritually. Your contributions are so deeply appreciated. Thank you all!!!



### Lifefridge Dinner Team

**Next Dinners: Sun, December 17 & Sat, December 23 at 4:45pm**



The Lifefridge teams of the First Church serve dinners at 56 Margin Street on the third Sunday and the fourth Saturday of every month. There are THREE ways you can sign up to help; the easiest is to just use the sign-up sheet in the Barnard Room. Alternatively, you can always join our Facebook page, or send an email to Alan Hanscom (alanh1954@gmail.com) to be put on the email list.

Thank you to the following people for volunteering during November: Richard L'Heureux, Susan Engelke, Julie O'Grady, Russell Lane, The Comfort-Salas Family, Alan Hanscom, Alexandra Hamilton, Christine Parsons Booth, Paul and Sara Massari, Holly Chase, Gabe Roses, Jim Ognibene and Pikkup Andropov.

### Fellowship Committee

What a beautiful fall we have had with so many fine foods here at First Church. Thank you to everyone who shared food at the Thanksgiving Potluck Fellowship. No one went home hungry!



Up Coming Potluck Fellowships:

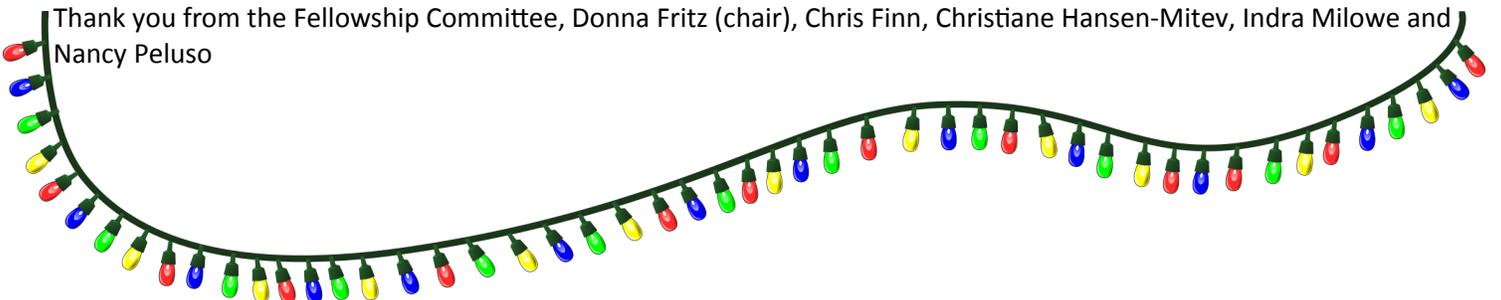
**Sunday, Dec 17-** Christmas Pageant Fellowship (Healthier snacks for the children's table are encouraged due to the Christmas party following Fellowship.)

**Sunday, Dec 25-** Christmas Eve Cookie Fellowship- this tradition of having simple fellowship of cookies and eggnog on Christmas eve is a favorite of adults and children alike. All types of cookies, brownies and chocolates are welcome at our evening fellowship.

Thank you to our October and November Fellowship Hosts:

Mimi Ballou, Ellen Brandenburg, Amy and Sarah Prodanas, Jan and Peter Eschazier, Judy Kearney, Christiane Hansen-Mitev, Nancy Peluso, Neil Alsip & Laura Caron, Jamie Tanch, Sally Millice, and Brenda Marean.

Thank you from the Fellowship Committee, Donna Fritz (chair), Chris Finn, Christiane Hansen-Mitev, Indra Milowe and Nancy Peluso



# THE HERALD



A Publication of

**The First Church in Salem, Unitarian Universalist**

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

*Minister:* Reverend Jeffrey Barz-Snell

*Director of Music:* Michael Kraft

*Director of Henny Penny:* Tricia Pini

*Director of Religious Education:* Deb DiGiulio

*Youth Group Coordinator:* Hannah Peterson

*Administrator:* Catherine Bertrand

*Sexton:* Bill McCarthy

*Chair of the Standing Committee:* Ben Waxman

*Chair of the Deacons:* Mimi Ballou

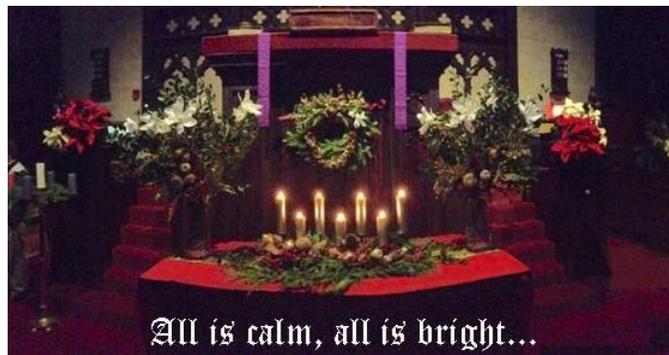


## ***Christmas Eve Services at First Church Sunday, December 24th***

10:30am Yuletide Themed Morning Service full of stories and song

7:00pm Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols Service

Join us for our annual service of festivity and inspiration, with special musicians, the First Church choir, stories and song followed by our annual cookie fellowship.



*All is calm, all is bright...*