



The Monthly Newsletter of the  
West Parish Church of Andover  
United Church of Christ

**WEST PARISH CHURCH**

United Church of Christ  
129 Reservation Road  
Andover, MA 01810-3430  
(978) 475-3528  
westparishchurch@verizon.net  
www.westparishchurch.org

**Sundays 9:00 AM**  
Adult Education

**Sundays 10:00 AM**  
Worship & Sunday School

**IN THIS ISSUE**

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**WORSHIP HI-LIGHTS**

**March 28 ~ 12:00 pm**  
Communities Together Lenten  
Service and Luncheon  
Rev. Katrina preaching

**March 29 ~ 7:00 pm**  
Maundy Thursday Service in Chapel  
Rev. Katrina preaching

**April 1 ~ 7:00 am**  
Easter Sunrise Service in Cemetery

**April 1 ~ 10:00 am**  
Easter Worship  
Rev. Katrina preaching

**April 8 ~ 10:00 am**  
First Sunday Worship, Communion,  
MLK Remembrance  
Second Sunday of Easter  
Rev. Katrina preaching

**April 15 ~ 10:00 am**  
Baptism  
Third Sunday of Easter  
Rev. Katrina preaching

**April 22 ~ 10:00 am**  
Fourth Sunday of Easter  
Victoria Gaisford preaching

**April 29 ~ 10:00 am**  
Celebrating our 50 Year Members  
Fifth Sunday of Easter

**HOLY WEEK SERVICES**

The week between Palm Sunday and Easter contain some of our most rich and moving liturgical occasions. Between these two Sundays we will travel the road to Jerusalem, remember the last Supper, lament the crucifixion, and then celebrate the resurrection! Join us!

**Maundy Thursday:** March 29 at 7:00pm – we’ll gather for Maundy Thursday in the West Parish Cemetery Chapel. This reflective service remembers the Last Supper as we share in communion, and the passion story is read as candles are gradually extinguished. This is a contemplative service that ends in darkness and silence.

**Easter Sunrise:** Sunday, April 1 at 7:00 am – we will be on the hillside just past the cemetery gates for an Easter Sunrise Service! (Yes, we know. 7am is well past sunrise. But we decided that 7am was early enough to feel special, and late enough not to be painful.) We’ll enjoy hot cross buns together after celebrating the new day!

**Easter Worship:** April 1 at 10:00 am – our traditional Easter Worship will be for all ages. Come and rejoice! Please arrive a few minutes early to place a flower in the sanctuary cross.

## FROM THE SENIOR MINISTER



## FROM THE DESK OF REV. KATRINA WUENSCH

Good people of West Parish,

What a glorious month April is going to be! After my hope for more snow a few weeks ago, I am certainly done with winter now – and I feel confident that flowers will soon be appearing! In fact, there are daffodils a few inches up in my front yard, with buds ready to pop!

On Easter morning, regardless of the weather, we will gather here to sing and rejoice. We will decorate the cross with flowers, we will hear the story of resurrection, we will celebrate new life. Children will hunt for eggs, and we will proclaim that no matter what, God's love is stronger than anything!

The rest of the month holds wonderful opportunities for us as a community. April 8 we will remember the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr's death, and reflect on how his words still challenge us today. April 15 brings a long-awaited baptism, and the third Sunday of Easter! (Don't forget that Easter is a season that runs all the way until Pentecost, May 20!) On April 22 we'll have the special opportunity to hear our Director of Christian Education preach - yay Victoria! And on April 29, we'll hear from 50 year members of our community. They will share how West Parish has been meaningful to them over the years – I get teary just thinking about it!

So whether you've been here for a couple months, or a couple years, or most of your life – you are a vital part of this church. Every voice and every perspective matters. Every one of us is God's beautiful creation, born into the resurrection promise.

So come! Come and rejoice with us!

Katrina

## CONTACTING KATRINA

Katrina is at the church Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday. Monday is her day off, and Friday she works at home. You can reach her by email: [revkatrina@yahoo.com](mailto:revkatrina@yahoo.com) or through the church phone (978-475-3528 x201). If you leave a voicemail, she is notified immediately via email, so can respond as soon as possible to a pastoral emergency.



## ADULT EDUCATION

The Lenten series was a wonderful experience! We made beautiful stained glass artwork and got to know each other much better in the process. Look for the completed projects in the sanctuary, where they will stay during the Easter season.

**APRIL 8, 15, 22, & 29, 9:00 AM**

**Book Group:** *Between the World and Me*, by Ta-Nehisi Coates and *Hillbilly Elegy* by J.D. Vance

These books have been widely read in the past couple years, and provide insights on the origins of some of our country's deep divisions. We will read selections in the class for our discussions -- you do not need to read the books beforehand. Copies will be available to purchase and bring home.

We'll meet in the Parlor. Childcare available upon request. Please notify us by Friday before the class.



## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS



**VICTORIA GAISFORD**  
**DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN**  
**EDUCATION**

### Sunday School Report

In March, the Sunday School children learned about the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' greatest series of teachings. Together, they painted a mural to illustrate what stood out to them in the sermon. Many remembered that we should build our lives on a firm foundation -- "upon a rock" -- so that when the storms of life come, we are not washed away. Many appreciated Jesus' reminder that God cares for us at least as much as the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, who are clothed beautifully, so we should not worry about our lives. It is my hope that the children will so internalize the beautiful language of the Bible so that the words and images will return to them when they are in need of wisdom to guide them in their lives.



### CHILDREN'S CHOIR

**APRIL 8 & 22, 11:15 – 11:45 AM**

All kids welcome to join – we meet every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after church in the music room with Victoria. New children are welcome! Children will sing in church on Earth Day, April 22.



### THE PRISON BOOK PROGRAM SERVICE OPPORTUNITY FOR AGES 16+

**APRIL 21, 12:00 PM—5:00 PM**

We often forget the 2.2 million prisoners in the United States, but we are called as Christians to minister to them. Meet at church at 12:00 noon to drive to Quincy. We'll return by 5:30 pm. The PBP receives letters from prisoners across the country who request books to be sent to them. Volunteers read the letters, select books, package them, and send them. If you would like to come, please email [vgaisford@gmail.com](mailto:vgaisford@gmail.com) by April 8.

### EASTER ACTIVITIES

#### EASTER EGG DECORATING PARTY

**March 31, 1:00 – 3:00 pm**

Gather at church on "Holy Saturday" to have fun decorating eggs with a variety of techniques. For all ages! Bring friends! Bring a dozen hard-boiled eggs, and please consider volunteering your time to run a decorating station or bring treats. RSVP to Victoria at [vgaisford@gmail.com](mailto:vgaisford@gmail.com).

#### EASTER EGG HUNT

**April 1, 11:00 am**

After the service on Easter Sunday, preschool and elementary aged children are invited to the Children's Garden to hunt for treat-filled eggs.



### SUNDAY SCHOOL

**10:00 AM**

**April 1:** No Sunday School

**April 8:** Knowing Jesus in a New Way (3rd grade + please remain in the service)

**April 15:** One Room Schoolhouse

**April 22:** Earth Day Activity

**April 29:** Knowing Jesus in a New Way



### YOUTH GROUP

**APRIL 8, 4:30 PM**

All 6-12<sup>th</sup> graders: join us for a movie night! We'll be watching "Signs" a spiritually thought-provoking movie. Popcorn, pizza, and deep discussion! Bring friends! We'll meet in the Youth Room.

## WPC ANNOUNCEMENTS

### APRIL OUTREACH MISSION

#### Samaritans of Merrimack Valley

Family Services' Samaritans of Merrimack Valley strives to reduce the incidence of suicide in the Merrimack Valley and throughout Massachusetts by providing "befriending" to individuals who are lonely, depressed and contemplating suicide or self-injury. Suicide prevention is one of the primary goals of the Samaritans, although services also include postvention services, trainings and seminars, and support groups.

Family Services' Samaritans provides a free and confidential crisis help line to those who are lonely, despairing, suicidal or need someone to listen. This service is provided by trained volunteers who provide unconditional and non-judgmental "TLC" – talking, listening and caring. This service is available 24/7 by calling the Crisis Help Line at 866-912-HOPE (4673).



### NEIGHBORS IN NEED FOOD COLLECTION

West Parish Church collects non-perishable food items the first Sunday of the month for donation to Neighbors In Need. Food donations may also be left in the yellow bin, across from the Nursery, at any time during the month. Thank You all for your contributions.



### CALL TO CARE

Please contact the West Parish Church office at 978-475-3528, with the names of any church member experiencing a life event in which church members may assist, i.e. Birth, funeral receptions, cards, meals, etc.

### INTRODUCING PARISH CLUSTERS

Our church has many members and friends and it is impossible to stay on top of what is going on in the lives of everyone all the time. We don't want to lose touch with anyone, particularly if they are going through a difficult time. To ensure that this doesn't happen, we are going to try out something new.

Parish Clusters will be loosely geographically based groupings of 20 or so people with a Cluster leader. The role of the leader will be to establish initial contact with their cluster members, host occasional gatherings and be a point of contact for members of their Cluster. This doesn't replace people reaching out to Rev. Katrina or other members, but establishes a group who may be able to care for each other during the big and/or little ups and downs of our lives.

Our calling as a church is to extend hospitality and love to each other and this is a way we can more intentionally do that. This might include praying for each other, visiting those who may be lonely or providing a meal depending on what is transpiring in the life of the parish members.

As with everything we do at West Parish Church, we will want to know how this works and will have a Feedback Circle after 6 months or so. Look for more information soon.



### COFFEE HOUR

April's after Worship fellowship hour is sponsored by the Investment Committee and volunteers.

Coffee Hour volunteers are needed every month but especially in April as the committee responsible only has 2-3 members. We'd prefer non-committee members to volunteer, but all are welcome and encouraged to do so.

**To volunteer** email Ed at ep0260@yahoo.com or visit: <https://tinyurl.com/coffeehour>.

## WPC ANNOUNCEMENTS

## COMMUNION SUNDAY IN APRIL AND FIRST SUNDAY WORSHIP

Please note that our First Sunday Worship with communion will be on April 8 (NOT April 1). The Worship Ministry realized that it would be near impossible to serve communion to 250 people on Easter morning, and that First Sunday's special music is better suited to the Sunday after Easter.

But join us April 8 as we recognize the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr's death, and reflect on our calling as God's people in light of his words. We will also enjoy a fun all –ages activity during coffee hour to help us build community.



## NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY

We have a new platform for our church directory! We've just moved our list of members and friends to "Instant Church Directory" which is an easy-to use, easy to edit, web-based directory. You can download the app to your phone or Kindle by searching for "Instant Church Directory" in the app store. With the app, you can email or call church folks with ease! Because you must be IN the database in order to access it, it's also very secure.

**Please note:** this is a work in progress! If you see an error in your entry, prefer a different or no photo, want any changes, just tell us! Email Jill Sergeant ([jillsergeant@comcast.net](mailto:jillsergeant@comcast.net)) or Larisa Henderson in the church office.



## NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for the May Newsletter is **April 19th**. Please email your articles or notices to: [westparishchurch@verizon.net](mailto:westparishchurch@verizon.net).

## BY-LAW AND STRUCTURE REVIEW

Many of us are familiar with our church by-laws, the document that outlines our structure, governance and procedures. Essential things for any organization! Our current by-laws were written many decades ago, when our congregation, the nature of church, and the world were very different! A few years ago, a team began to review our by-laws and imagine a new structure that would better serve us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – we have picked this work up again now that Katrina is settled. If you are interested in joining a small team working on this issue, please contact Jerry Greer or Katrina.



## GREETINGS FROM REV. AMANDA HARMELING

Grace and peace to you all.

I remain eternally indebted to you, my church family, for your guidance and love in shepherding me in my ministry. Since my ordination, I served the UCC Topsfield as Minister for Faith Formation for a year and a half until I was called to chaplaincy at the North Shore Medical Center in Lynn and Salem, MA in March 2014. As an extra-parochial minister, I am in a Four Way Covenant with West Parish Andover UCC, the Mass Conference of the UCC, and Partners Healthcare. One year ago this month, the NSMC began the process of closing its Lynn Union Hospital. This will be completed next year. As this resulted in fewer work hours at NSMC for me, in July 2017, I began as per diem chaplain at the Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospitals in Charlestown and Cambridge. This month, I will begin work as a per diem chaplain at MGH in Boston and also the Elliot Hospital in Manchester, NH. These positions are God-given, and I continue to be full of gratitude for these opportunities for ministry.

You all are often in my thoughts and prayers. With all best wishes to you at WPC UCC,

Rev. Amanda Harmeling

## WPC UPCOMING EVENTS

### WOMEN'S EVENING CIRCLE

APRIL 12, 7:15 PM

#### Life and Work at 6,288 ft.

Join us for a look into the life and work of a weather observer stationed on the Summit of Mount Washington, the Northeast's tallest peak and home to some of the worst weather on Earth! Taylor Regan, Weather Observer, will be our guest speaker. Taylor is the granddaughter of Phyllis and Dennis Klockow.

All women and men who are members or friends of West Parish are encouraged to attend. To RSVP or for more information, please contact Pam Denny at: [andbflo.denny@gmail.com](mailto:andbflo.denny@gmail.com)



### REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

APRIL 15, 11:30 AM

West Parish Church will welcome Cheryl Hamilton, Coordinator of Community Partnerships for the Lowell office of the International Institute of New England. Cheryl will join us for an information session on how we can support the work of the Institute. This is the follow-up to Marcia Hohn's presentations. A quote from the Institute's website: "We build vibrant, inclusive communities in New England by welcoming refugees and immigrants and providing them education and guided pathways to careers and citizenship." (<https://iine.org/>) We will meet in the Parlor.

### CELEBRATING OUR 50 YEAR MEMBERS

APRIL 29

There are a few lucky folks who have been members of West Parish Church for 50 years. Imagine the changes in structure, theology, programming and worship that they have witnessed over the years! Imagine all the prayers and events and outreach in which they have participated! How have these years of faithful church-going shaped their lives and their faith? Join us for worship on April 29 when we will hear four members of our community reflect on the impact of their decades at West Parish.



### FEEDBACK CIRCLES

APRIL 29, MAY 6 & 20, 11:30 AM

Our Feedback Circles are about to begin! We need YOU to come and share your experiences! A Feedback Circle is a process for gathering information about our experiences of the church's worship, programs and staff in a deep and healthy way. We'll begin by gathering in small groups to share our experiences of worship. We'll speak for ourselves, we'll reflect on our feelings, we'll listen to one another and gain a greater appreciation for the diversity at West Parish! And why are we doing this? Because every organization should find out what is working well, what could work better, and how we might make our life together more meaningful and connected. We will be holding feedback circles about worship after church (11:30am-12:30pm) on the following Sundays. Please choose ONE date to attend: April 29, May 6 and May 20.

## WPC UPCOMING EVENTS

### PROGRESSIVE DINNER

APRIL 28, 5:30 PM

Join us as we gather together for fellowship and good food. Below is an introduction to how a progressive dinner works.

- Everyone gathers together at one home for appetizers and refreshments
- People split into groups of 8-10 for dinner at a host's home (assignments done by random drawing at the appetizer home)
- Everyone gathers together again at one home for dessert and coffee
- We will need volunteers to host the dinner portion of the event
- Everyone is asked to bring either an appetizer or a dessert (enough for 10 people) plus a beverage (1 bottle of wine, a 6 pack of beer, or a non-alcoholic beverage)
- The dinner portion will be catered. The expected cost is approximately \$10-\$15 per person
- Sign-up and enjoy!

Sign up in Fellowship Hall or contact Ed Pass at (978) 337-0587 or ep0260@yahoo.com. Questions can be directed to anyone on the Fellowship Committee.



### BECOMING A WEST PARISH MEMBER

JUNE 3, 10:00 AM

Save the date! We will be receiving new members into the West Parish community during worship on Sunday, June 3! If you are interested in joining, or have questions about what it means, just speak with Katrina.

### MINI-WALK FOR HUNGER

MAY 6TH

Join us in the cemetery for our Mini-Walk for Hunger. Children may walk any time from 9:30 AM - 11AM. Parents, please check-in your child just inside the cemetery arch. Youth and adults are welcome to walk and are helpful and appreciated as walking partners with the younger children. For those unfamiliar with this event, there is a marked route. The "long" route is 1/2 a mile with a "short-cut" route that's just under a 1/4 mile. Quite often this becomes a friendly competition to see who can walk the most miles! It is a beautiful walk and a peaceful way to spend a Sunday morning. Water and orange slices provided.

The money raised goes to Project Bread in Boston. Anyone wishing to support the children's effort is welcome to donate. On May 6th, there will be a collection "boot" in Fellowship Hall during coffee hour for checks, cash or change. Or you may place a check in the collection plate during worship or mail a check to West Parish. Please make checks payable to "West Parish Church" and note in the memo line "Mini-Walk for Hunger".

Come join us! Pray for nice weather, please! Thank you so much! Bev Smith



### OPEN AND AFFIRMING 15th ANNIVERSARY

JUNE 3, 2018

It was in June of 2003 that West Parish voted to become an "Open and Affirming" congregation, a UCC designation that means we officially proclaim a welcome to ALL people. On Sunday, June 3, we will celebrate our 15th anniversary of this important vote! So join us for worship that day as we receive new members into our community and re-affirm our commitment to be a witness for justice and extend a welcome for everyone.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

## WEST PARISH GARDEN CEMETERY AND CHAPEL SPRING EVENTS

Join us for any or all of these spring events.

### HISTORICAL WALK

**May 19, 10:00 am—12:00 pm**

Enjoy a beautiful morning walk while learning about the history and notable buried in the cemetery. Held rain or shine, it will be led by Cemetery Board of Directors member Martha Tubinis.

### ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE

**May 20, 3:00 pm**

Our Annual Memorial Service is held in the Chapel with Rev. Katrina. This is a service of remembrance for those who have passed away in the last year. All are welcome.

### CHILDRENS GARDEN PARTY

**June 2, 10:00 am—12:00 pm**

Join us for arts and crafts, spring activities, and a petting zoo. This event is free and is designed for children ages 8 and under.

### FAMILY LANTERN FESTIVAL

**June 9, 7:00 pm—9:00 pm**

Experience this spectacular lighting event based on an ancient Asian ritual. Decorate your lantern to send messages of Faith, Hope, Love and Peace. Free admission. The cost of decorating a lantern is \$10.

## WELCOMING FAITHS OF THE MERRIMACK VALLEY

**APRIL 3, 7:00 PM AT SOUTH CHURCH**

West Parish Church is a member of Welcoming Faiths, a coalition of faith communities in the Merrimack Valley that are intentionally welcoming to folks who are LGBTQ. Welcoming Faiths has a monthly meeting, to which representatives from all member congregations are invited! At these meetings, we support one another, share resources, plan programs and events, and work on advocacy. If you'd be interested in attending the next meeting to represent West Parish, just speak with Katrina!



## NEW ENGLAND YOUTH ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SUMMIT

**APRIL 7, 8:30 AM-4:00 PM IN MANCHESTER, NH**

Sponsored by the Environmental Stewardship Mission Group and the Christian Formation Ministry of the New Hampshire Conference, UCC., the Summit is open to all middle school, high school and college students; as well as teachers, mentors, pastors, lay leaders and advisors: and anyone interested in acquiring tools for facing the pressing moral issue of climate change.

The fee is \$20 and includes breakfast pastries and lunch. Learn more at: [www.cvent.com/events](http://www.cvent.com/events).



## AN EVENING WITH AUTHOR DEBBY IRVING

**APRIL 26, 7:00 PM AT SOUTH CHURCH**

We are invited to South Church in Andover for an evening with Debby Irving, author of *Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race*, on Thursday, April 26 at 7:00 p.m. This evening is hosted by South Church in partnership with the Andover group, Courageous Conversations. The program is called "I'm a Good Person! Isn't that Enough?" Everyone welcome!

GOVERNING BOARD

|                            |               |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| Governing Board Chair      | John Pearson  |
| Governing Board Vice Chair | Deb Schroeder |
| Acting Clerk               | Deb Schroeder |
| Treasurer                  | Jerry Greer   |
| Moderator                  | Blake Martin  |

MINISTRIES

|             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| Education   | Fitz Granger  |
| Fellowship  | Ed Pass       |
| Outreach    | Pat Greer     |
| Stewardship | Chris Swain   |
| Worship     | Jill Sergeant |

COMMISSIONS

|             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| Investments | David Bertetti |
| Operations  | Blake Martin   |
| Collector   | Art Clark      |

COMMITTEES

|                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Flowers                | Abby Martin           |
| Music                  | Ed Pass               |
| Nominating             | Heather Gaspar        |
| Planned Giving         | Frank Hopkins         |
| Smith Purdon           | Lisa Doucett          |
| Women's Evening Circle | Pam Denny & Pat Greer |

CHURCH STAFF

|                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Senior Minister         | Rev. Katrina Wuensch |
| Director of Music       | Yoo-Kyung Kim        |
| Church Administrator    | Larisa Henderson     |
| Dir. of Christian Ed.   | Victoria Gaisford    |
| Sunday School Teacher   | Susan Berube         |
| Sexton                  | Ed Pass              |
| Wedding Coordinator     | Kathy Vano           |
| Cemetery Superintendent | Mark Atwood          |

**WEST PARISH CHURCH, U.C.C.**

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