



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

WEST PARISH CHURCH

United Church of Christ
129 Reservation Road
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www.westparishchurch.org

Sundays 9:00 AM
Adult Education

Sundays 10:00 AM
Worship & Sunday School

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WORSHIP HI-LIGHTS

April 29 ~ 10:00 am
Celebrating 50 Year Members
Ruby Easton, Ellen Harmoning,
Phyllis and Dennis Klockow

May 6 ~ 10:00 am
First Sunday Worship
Baptisms, Communion
Rev. Katrina preaching

May 13 ~ 10:00 am
Youth Led Mother’s Day Service

May 20 ~ 10:00 am
Pentecost Sunday
Boys and Girls Club Scholarships
Rev. Katrina preaching

May 27 ~ 10:00 am
Trinity Sunday
Jess Blas preaching

June 3 ~ 10:00 am
First Sunday Worship/Communion
Opening & Affirming Celebration
Rev. Katrina preaching

June 10 ~ 10:00 am
Children’s Sunday and Picnic

June 17 ~ 10:00 am
Prayer Shawl Blessing
Rev. Katrina preaching

June 24 ~ 10:00 am
Last Sunday in Sanctuary
Yoo-Kyung’s Retirement
Celebration
Rev. Katrina preaching

YOO-KYUNG TO RETIRE

Dear West Parish Church friends,

With glorious Easter music still lingering in my ear, and with grateful heart, I am writing to let you know that I am retiring from the West Parish Church Music Directorship as of June 24th.

Over the years, West Parish Church has been an incredibly warm and welcoming home where I could grow and get spiritually nurtured by many inspirational worship services. Best of all, I cannot describe the joy I felt working with choir members who are most open minded, generous and dedicated group of people! I will never forget their friendship and love.

The music committee, the staff members and pastors were extremely patient with my shortcomings and were tremendously supportive through good times and bad. I will miss Rev. Katrina’s awesome sermon as well as her gentle way of caring for those around her.

However, at this stage of my life, I am also looking forward to the next chapter. Ecclesiastes writes that there is a time for everything. It is time for me to explore other meaningful life’s work and most of all; I still have so many things to learn! Of course, sometimes I just want to slow down and listen to God’s words.

I am most grateful that I had the privilege of having known many inspiring church members and will cherish all your Christian love, patience and friendship! I will miss each and every one of you! May God bless West Parish Church!

With fond memories,

Yoo-Kyung

FROM THE SENIOR MINISTER



FROM THE DESK OF REV. KATRINA WUENSCH

Good people of West Parish,

We all know that a church is not a building. A church is not a set of doctrines. A church is a community! A church is a group of people gathered together by something greater than themselves, whether that be a desire for God, a desire for meaning, or a passion to make the world a better place. And West Parish truly is a CHURCH, in the very best sense of the word. We gather on Sundays to sing and pray and center ourselves on the holy. We support one another. We work together to grow food or support young people or knit shawls or offer rides or march for peace. We take seriously the words of Jesus to welcome the stranger and feed the hungry and love our enemies.

Because of this foundation, we are on firm footing as we move through inevitable changes and challenges. One upcoming change will be the retirement of our beloved music director, Yoo-Kyung Kim. How we will miss her! I've only had the privilege of working with her for two years, but I have come to know her extraordinary professionalism, honesty and graciousness. I have come to rely on her as a trusted partner in the worship service.

We will miss her presence, and her music. And we will celebrate her and say goodbye on June 24. But we also know that we shall move through this loss, and move ahead with hope and strength! Please attend one of our music feedback circles to share your experience of our music program: June 3 or June 17. After church on July 8 we'll hold a special circle just for past and current choir members.

So stay tuned as we move through the coming months together. And this Sunday, April 29, we have a special opportunity to remember the incredible blessings of church community. We'll hear from Ruby Easton, Ellen Harmoning, Phyllis Klockow and Dennis Klockow as we recognize their 50 years of membership! Come and be inspired by their stories!

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 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

MAY 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 11:00 - 11:45 AM

We are moving the Sunday 9:00 am Adult Education to more convenient after-church and midweek times. In May, join us for a midweek Bible Study, meeting at 11:00 am on Wednesday mornings.

This is an opportunity to read, contemplate, and apply the scriptures to our lives. Led by Victoria Gaisford, we will examine the cultural and historical context of the lectionary Bible readings and discuss our different interpretations of the sacred words.



NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for the June Newsletter is **May 18th**. Please email your articles or notices to westparishchurch@verizon.net.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS



VICTORIA GAISFORD
DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION

There are so many opportunities to explore ideas and learn at the West Parish Church beyond Sunday mornings. Here are some highlights from last month.

On April 15, a group of community members gathered after church to learn about refugee resettlement efforts in this area from a representative of the International Institute of New England. It was such an eye-opening and inspiring forum that a follow-up meeting is being planned to figure out how this church might be involved in assisting people who have fled their homes to find a safe place in the US. Stay tuned for the next meeting!

Six WPC members and friends travelled to the Prison Book Program in Quincy for an afternoon of volunteering. What a profound experience! We learned how limited the educational opportunities can be for prisoners in this country. Opening letters from prisoners, and reading their requests for books carefully written on slips of paper, brought home the reality of these limited, isolated lives that can be improved with books. Volunteers choose books for prisoners, but every prison has its own restrictions -- some have a 1 pound limit, some only allow paperbacks, some forbid any mention of sex. We debated whether *The Age of Innocence* would be sent back, and decided to choose another just to be safe. Jesus said that we are judged by how we treat the least of our brothers and sisters, including prisoners, and this was an experience that helped us consider how we could live by this guidance.

Our book group read and discussed two culturally significant books: *Hillbilly Elegy* and *Between the World and Me*. Both explore the challenges and strengths of what the authors claim are deeply misunderstood groups - black men in America and the white working class. Our discussion ranged widely, but especially noticed how the authors considered how ideas about God and church affected their identity.

There are always opportunities for education at WPC -- please consider attending a program or, if you have something to share, leading one!

YOUTH GROUP ACTIVITIES

HIKE AND GEOCACHING

May 6, 4:30—6:00 pm

Geocaching is like a treasure hunt—we'll be hunting for the cache in the conservation land next to the church, enjoying the beauty of nature. All 6-12th graders invited!

OVERNIGHT LOCK-IN AND YOUTH-LED MOTHER'S DAY SERVICE

May 12—13, 6:00 pm—11:00 am

Join us for our overnight lock-in as we prepare for the youth-led Mother's Day service.



CHILDREN'S CHOIR MAY 13, 11:15 – 11:45 AM

All kids welcome to join – we meet every 2nd and 4th Sunday after church in the music room with Victoria. New children are welcome!



SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:00 AM

April 29: Knowing Jesus in a New Way

May 6: No Sunday School

May 13: Paul's Journey

May 20: Pentecost

May 27: One Room Schoolhouse

WPC ANNOUNCEMENTS

MAY OUTREACH MISSION

Ministry of Outreach Supports ACT/ Habitat Partnership Project

Our Mission of the Month for May and June is the 6 unit affordable housing development being planned for Lupine Road in Andover by Andover Community Trust and Merrimack Valley Habitat For Humanity. The three duplex project will be built on a lot owned by South Church in Andover, given to the church in 1938 by Mary Byers Smith. At a Congregational Meeting in May of last year the church voted to sell the land to ACT for the six permanently affordable ownership unit project. One duplex will be built for ACT by students and teachers at the Greater Lawrence Technical School. Two will be built by Habitat volunteers. The ACT homes will be the 8th and 9th built by ACT. The Habitat homes will be their first in Andover, following over 90 homes built over the last 30 years in the Merrimack Valley.

ACT president and member of West Parish Church John Pearson said "I'm thrilled to be a part of this community partnership creating permanently affordable homes. The collaboration between ACT, Habitat, South Church and the Greater Lawrence Technical School is making possible affordable homes for six deserving families."

Other ACT board members are Joan Johnson and Blake Martin, and formerly, Norm Viehmann.

Watch for a date in May when ACT board members will present the Lupine Road project after Sunday worship.



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.



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 at illsergeant@comcast.net or Larisa Henderson in the church office at westparishchurch@verizon.net.

WPC ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUMMER BOOK GROUP

Would you be interested in a couple summer meetings to discuss a book after church on Sundays? What are you interested in reading? Some ideas are:

**The Heart of Christianity: Rediscovering a Life of Faith* by Marcus Borg

**The Gift of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are* by Brene Brown

**Dancing with Elephants: Mindfulness Training For Those Living with Dementia, Chronic Illness or An Aging Brain* by Jarem Sawatsky

**Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life* by Richard Rohr

**Why I Wake Early: New Poems* by Mary Oliver

Please be in touch with Katrina if you're interested in a summer book group, and if you have a preference for a book.



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.

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 21st 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. We'll be meeting at the end of May.



COFFEE HOUR

May's after Worship fellowship hour is sponsored by the Nominating and Collectors Committees and volunteers.



UCC NEW ENGLAND'S WOMEN'S CELEBRATION

Five WPC women attended the UCC New England's Women's Celebration A Seat at the Table. We shared learning and love and leadership with over 400 woman from around New England and are excited to share what we have experienced with WPC. We return with ideas and courage ready to continue WPC's importance work of extravagant hospitality!

Sam, Jenn, Kathy, Kate, Karen



WPC UPCOMING EVENTS

CELEBRATING OUR 50 YEAR MEMBERS

APRIL 29, 10:00 AM

Join us for worship when we'll hear Ruby Easton, Ellen Harmoning, and Phyllis and Dennis Klockow reflect on the impact and meaning of their decades at West Parish Church. After worship, we'll move to Fellowship Hall for cake and coffee hour.



FEEDBACK CIRCLES

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

Our Feedback Circles have begun! 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 in the Smith Purdon Room from 11:30am-12:30pm on the following Sundays: April 29, May 6 and May 20. We are limiting each circle to 12 participants. Please note that the circle on May 6 will be about First Sunday Worship.



FIRST SUNDAY WORSHIP

MAY 6, 10:00 AM

Our First Sunday Worship with communion will be on May 6 – join us for this spirited service for all ages! We'll enjoy upbeat music with Eunhye and Diana, and reflect on Jesus' commandment to love one another as he loved us. As always, the nursery is open for the entire service for little ones.

MINI-WALK FOR HUNGER

MAY 6TH, 9:30—11:00 AM

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. 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



WOMEN'S EVENING CIRCLE

MAY 10, 7:15 PM

Join us for Bunco night! Don't worry if you have never played. It's not hard to learn and is a very sociable game. There will be refreshments! The amazing Kathy Vano will be our leader in a great night of laughs and friendship.

All women 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.

WPC UPCOMING EVENTS

MOTHER'S DAY SERVICE

MAY 13, 10:00 AM

Join us for a special youth-led service on Mother's Day, May 13. The youth will be "locked in" at church the night before, to enjoy community building, and creating and planning this service.



MENS GROUP SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

MAY 20, 10:00 AM

During the Sunday service on May 20th, the Men's Group will award college scholarships to deserving members of the Lawrence Boys and Girls Club. Please join us as we celebrate how these young adults have overcome obstacles to graduate high school and move on to college. This will also be our second year to award scholarships in memory of Steve Vano to current college students who have little to no help from home to pay for college. Since 2013, we have awarded 35 scholarships to rising college freshmen and 8 scholarships to current college students. Two from our first group in 2013 have graduated, Briyith Betances from Fitchburg State and Alejandra Torres from Framingham State. Eight of the nine students from the group of 2014 will be graduating in May. The scholarships have been well invested.



OPEN AND AFFIRMING 15th ANNIVERSARY

JUNE 3, 10:00 AM

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.

PIZZA PIG OUT

MAY 20, 11:15 AM

Remember how much fun you had a year ago, stuffing your face with hot, delicious pizza in Fellowship Hall after church? Remember the smiles on every face?

Get ready to smile again and pig out on more pizza. Can you ever have too much pizza? I think not!

On May 20th, our Sunday school children will be serving pizza during coffee hour. We will have our BIG PIGGY donation jar with all the money collected going again to "Happy Hands", the after school/summer program for children (age preschool thru 5th grade) at Hancock Courts in Lawrence (a program through Communities Together).

The Sunday school kids and adult "chefs" will be busy making pizza during worship. Maybe, the smell of it baking will waft its way to the Sanctuary. YUM! How can you possibly resist?

You won't have to go home and cook; no dishes to wash; and you will have the best company there is - your fellow parishioners.

This will be our 6th PIZZA PIG OUT!!!

Please mark your calendars, plan to attend the service and then join us at the "Triple P" (Pentecost Pizza Parlor). Let's fill Fellowship Hall with smiles, feed our tummies and "stuff" our donation PIGGY!

Thank you, as always, for your support!

Bev Smith



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, you are invited to meet in the Smith Purdon Room at **9:00 am on Sunday, May 13**. If you're not able to attend this meeting, just speak with Katrina before May 23.

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.



COMMUNITIES TOGETHER ANNUAL MEETING

MAY 5, 9:30 AM

Mark your calendar for a special Annual Meeting! Join with us in giving thanks for 70 years of ministry together! Over the years we have worshipped together, served together and addressed families in need by supporting Happy Hands After School Safe Haven, Vacation Bible Schools, Diaper Collections, Hospital Visitations, and Community-wide services during Lent, on National Day of Prayer, Annual Clergy Breakfast and "Prayer Shawl Tea".

To register call (978) 686-4012 or email office@communitiestogetherinc.org. Your registration fee of \$12, which covers Continental breakfast and lunch, may be paid in advance or at the meeting.

Held at First Calvary Baptist Church in North Andover, 586 Massachusetts Avenue.



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY BUILD DAYS

MAY 5 & 19, 11:30 AM

We are invited to join a Habitat Build Day in Lawrence! Merrimack Valley Habitat for Humanity shares a global vision where everyone has a decent place to live. We bring people together to build homes, communities and hope.

You can sign up as an individual or a small group. A standard build work day begins at 8:15am with registration and ends at 4:00pm.

For more information on Habitat for Humanity, how to volunteer, and their Volunteer Handbook visit:

<http://www.merrimackvalleyhabitat.org/volunteer/>

<https://tinyurl.com/HabitatRegistration>

https://volunteerup.com/Waivers/Merrimack_Waiver.pdf

UPCOMING EVENTS

DEFENDING TRANSGENDER EQUALITY**WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 7-8:30PM**

This November, Massachusetts will become the first state in the country forced to defend dignity and respect for our transgender neighbors at the ballot box.

Join Freedom For All Massachusetts in partnership with Welcoming Faiths, a coalition of LGBTQ welcoming congregations of faith promoting equality and inclusivity within our greater communities, for our Merrimack Valley Community Meeting. We'll discuss the ballot issue, and you'll learn how you can play an integral role in upholding Massachusetts' non-discrimination law. Our new Faith Organizing Director, Taj Smith will also be there to introduce himself!

RSVP: <https://bit.ly/2K3rEZp>

Held at South Church in Andover, 41 Central Street.



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**LAZARUS HOUSE
ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
MAY 16, 5:00 PM**

Lazarus House Ministries will celebrate their 35th Anniversary with an Ecumenical Service at St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Lawrence. All are welcome to attend. After the service there will be a candlelight procession to Central Catholic High School where a light dinner will be served followed by a musical presentation by The Choral Majority Gospel Choir which is a community choir based in the Merrimack Valley. Rob Surette will be performing; he is a speed-painter, and one of the world's most amazing artists with an equally big heart. All of his work is powered by his desire to uplift humanity. Please RSVP to events@lazarushouse.org by Wednesday, May 9th.

**BOSTON PRIDE:
MARCH WITH OTHER UCC CHURCHES**

JUNE 9

We invite you to march with the Mass Conference ONA churches in the 48th annual Boston Pride. Spectators enjoy cheering for our marching group, with our 100 participants, rhythm instruments, chanting and dancing. Our message of Extravagant Welcome for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions is always well-received. Our presence makes a real difference.

To march with the UCC group, you DO NOT need to register with Boston Pride or pay a fee. Our ONA Ministry Team registers all the ONA churches as a group. We are many churches, but are considered one marching delegation. Our delegation is allowed 1 large parade banner, but we provide each ONA church a small, professional sign bearing the name of the church. To sign up to march with the UCC group, one person from your church willing to be the contact should email kacarp@comcast.net no later than Wednesday, May 2. More information on Pride week can be found at: bostonpride.org/parade.

If you are interested in being the contact for West Parish, or marching with a West Parish sign, please speak with Katrina!

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**CAMP PRIDE
JULY 29—AUGUST 4, 2018**

Camp Pride, a week-long residential camp for LGBTQ youth and their allies, exists as a space for LGBT youth to explore their identities, their faiths, and themselves, in addition to all the regular summer camp activities like swimming, hiking, boating, arts & crafting, and enjoying the beautiful shores of Lake Cobboosecontee.

This is an interfaith camp hosted by Pilgrim Lodge, a camp of the Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ (UCC). Learn more at: www.pilgrimlodge.org.

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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