

www.fpcberlin.org
November 2018



The Record

Newsletter

First Parish Church in Berlin

A federated church, gathered 1779

United Church of Christ and Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
24 Central St. Berlin, Massachusetts 01503

Friendship Village Fair
Shopee
Sat. Nov. 3 8 am – 3 pm
Sun. Nov. 4 11 am – 2 pm
Breakfast sandwiches, lunch
court, handmade goods, Yard
Sale

From the Minister

Life is not what one lived, but what one remembers and how one remembers
it in order to recount it. --*Gabriel García Márquez*

Greetings, beloved church --

Pizza
Nite
Friday,
Nov. 9
5 – 7
pm



Meeting House
Eat-in or take-home

Dogtown Excursion
Sat. Nov. 10
9 am – 3 pm
all are invited!

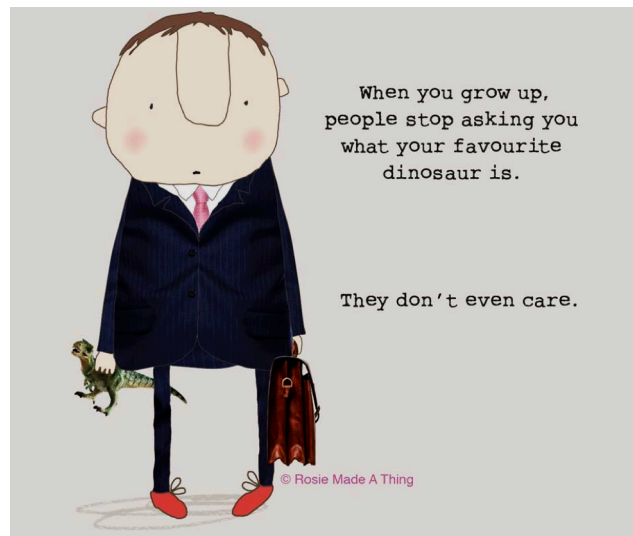


Unitarian Society Annual
Meeting
Sunday, Nov. 11
(following morning
worship) lunch too



*"We have all known
the long loneliness
and we have learned
that the only solution
is love and that love
comes with
community."*

--Dorothy Day



A recent image a friend posted on-line laments: "When people grow up, they stop asking what your favorite dinosaur is. They don't even care."

There followed a long string of responses wherein many "grown-ups" shared their favorites, from: "Pterodactyl, because...flying;" to "Stegosaurus. I loved the aesthetics when I was little, and the detail down to the tail -- it still catches my eye to this day;" and "I was born an ankylosaur fan and I'll die an ankylosaur fan."

The conversation brought to mind an experience I had when I was about 6 years old. I, along with my next-door neighbors and my brother (all older) spent the afternoon digging pumice rocks out of the steep walls of the arroyo in our backyard. Each rock was about the size of an adult fist, pocked with tiny holes where gas escaped as they formed in the cauldron of volcanic activity. These rocks resembled the interior of a bone with its marrow cavities, which must have prompted my oldest neighbor -- he was probably about 10 at this time -- to encourage us to spread out these stones into the shape of a

Continued on page 2

From the Minister continued

stegosaurus dinosaur. He had my six-year-old-self convinced that we had really found the bones of an ancient reptile, and I was eager to contact the newly-opened museum of Natural History in Albuquerque to let them know of our exciting discovery. Less naïve heads prevailed, so no dinosaur scientists ever came calling.



Interestingly, my ringleader neighbor went on to become a paleontologist (sadly I don't think he's ever found a stegosaurus). And I hadn't really thought about dinosaurs since my childhood until my daughter brought them back into my life, because if you are learning to love language, all the best words are dinosaur names: Triceratops. Diplodocus. Pachycephalosaurus.

All of which is to say: memory is so powerful, right? From the words my daughter memorizes to the remembrances I carry with me of a fun afternoon playing dinosaur digger, our memories carry with them our sense of identity: who we are, and what we value or hold most sacred.

And the stories and memories we carry with us – of childlike wonder and appreciation of our world, of connection with people we looked up to, of times when people asked us odd questions (what's your favorite dinosaur?) and actually waited to hear the answer – these experiences formed us and convey who we are as individuals and as a community. If we listen.

So I wonder: how do we invite our stories and memories into this community? How do we convey who we are as individuals to our fellow members – and how do we share the beauty of our church community to Berlin as a whole?

Is it as simple as an invitation? You're invited this month to think about the question of memory: What does it mean to be a people of memory? This is part of our new experiment in themed ministry, where we'll be asking and answering this question throughout our worship and church activities, from the pulpit and through explorations together. See our "Soul Matters" page for some suggestions on how you can draw questions of memory into your spiritual life for the month.

Additionally, on Saturday, November 10, we are inviting all – and encouraging you to invite your friends – to an adventure that also features rocks. We'll be heading out to Dogtown, on Cape Ann, together, for a hike through the ghost town and the Babson boulders, large erratics carved with words that speak to the carver's hopes for meaningful living. We hope you'll join the fun and spread the word. Look for more information elsewhere in this Record.

Blessings, friends. May we remember, share, listen and honor the fullness of one another's lives and loves.

In faith,
Janet

Kindness in words creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profoundness. Kindness in giving creates love.

--Lao Tsu





Spiritual Exercises on our Monthly Theme: Memory

You are invited this month to ponder the question: What does it mean to be a people of memory?

Here are some spiritual exercise ideas to help you navigate the question. As we dig deeper into this theme, you're encouraged to bring the ideas that emerge from these exercises into our church community through informal conversations throughout the month.

Option A: The Memento That Matters

We all have one: a memento that holds one of our favorite memories. The physicality of these objects somehow gives our memories more "substance" and staying power. But they also have a way of getting knocked off the mantle or tucked away in a dusty closet. We lose them. And in doing so, we forget.

So you are invited this month to spend some time dusting off one of your treasured "memory objects" and getting it back into clear view. What value, relationship, aspiration needs to return to the center of your life? What object symbolizes this for you? Maybe it's a picture of your family that needs put back on your office desk to remind you that your heart lies somewhere other than that desk. Maybe it's the peace sign t-shirt from your "radical days." Maybe it's that old pair of pointe shoes that used to hang by your dresser. Maybe it's that old train car—the first one your dad bought for you and soon became part of that miniature railroad you and he built together. Whatever it is. Find it and return it to its central place, so it can return those memories back to you.

Option B: Your Earliest Memory

What's your earliest memory? Spend some time this month not only remembering it but exploring why you remember it. A simple way to do this is to ask: Why have I held on to this memory for so long? Why has it been holding on to me? What it is trying to give me? Who helped me remember it? Keep in mind that you're not trying to remember your most profound memory; just your first.

Option C: The Memory Shared at Your Funeral

Our dance with memory is about looking forward as well as looking back. Our life is driven not just by the desire to collect good memories, but also by the hope that we will be remembered well. Memory's question is not just "Do you remember?" but "How do you want to be remembered?"

So this month, you are invited to become a bit more aware of how you want to be remembered. Here's your focus question:

If you had to limit the memories shared at your funeral to three, what would they be?

And here's the additional twist: before you answer that question, make room for three





conversations:

1. Ask your spouse or life-partner what three memories they would to tell
2. Ask your child or parent which three they'd pick.
3. Ask your newest or oldest friend what'd they'd choose.

After comparing the results of all three conversations, make your three picks. Of course, the exercise is less about what you pick and more about the similarities and differences between everyone's selections. Think about what surprised you about the conversations and how they shaped your final three picks.

HELLO
my name is

A SPECIAL REQUEST FROM JANET:

Please remember to wear your nametag at church! It helps me get to know you...and helps newer people feel connected. If we want to be welcoming, we say "Hello, My Name Is..." If you need a nametag, there will be a sign-up at coffee hour following worship.

Property Committee Update

The new boiler for the Children's Church/Parish Hall is in place and being calibrated. The new pipes in the boiler room are beautiful sculpture--and functional. Energy Efficient Systems has done a wonderful job of organizing and improving the boiler room layout as well as installing the new equipment. The total cost of the installation is \$19000. Letters of request are being mailed to parishioners; contributions of any size are most welcome.

The booster heater for the Meeting House kitchen dishwasher died a messy, leaky death just before October Pizza Nite (yikes!) but Chef Stan (Stan Rogalinski) was able to call a repair person who came on Pizza Nite to replace the unit (in time for us to wash all the pizza dishes....) The cost of that repair is \$2300.

The well water situation at the Meeting House is still under investigation. The most recent water test showed elevated levels of nitrates, which makes the water unfit for infants and children to drink (adults can process the nitrates, while children cannot). The well has been "scoped" with a camera probe, and the property committee is exploring possible solutions.

Are you willing to get dusty and dirty for a good cause?? Can you run an electric disc sander?? Want to put in some volunteer hours??

If you answered yes to those questions, Joni Bergen is anxious to connect with you! I am working hard to get some more finish paint on the Sunday School building, and the PREP WORK is the killer. Call me: 508-380-7168 ...and hope for some warm(ish) November days.



Musical Matters

Last month I wrote about our Lulu Fite's moving up North to New Hampshire, and how we in the choir would be lacking a soprano. Well, Beezy asked a neighbor of hers, and now Kay Skoog is a member of the soprano section of the Choir. It was like a mini-miracle right here in Berlin!! ("**Ask and you shall receive**") We are thrilled to have another soprano for balance of voices, and say "Welcome!" to Kay. We hope that she enjoys singing and stays with us for a good long time!

The month of October found the choir singing a number of new anthems, and Janet Newton, our new minister, has called on the choir to learn a few more new hymns found in "*Singing The Journey*", an accompanying hymnal to our gray hymnal, "*Singing the Living Tradition*". We'll also begin to learn music for Thanksgiving Sunday and the upcoming Advent and Christmas seasons. If you have the time and would like to join us in rehearsal for these seasonal celebrations, please speak with any of us in the choir, either before or after the Sunday Service, and we can give you more information.

And speaking about Advent and Christmas, a time for which some of our greatest and most popular choral music has been written, there will be many Choral Evensongs and services of Lessons & Carols being performed within a half hour's drive from Berlin, many of them in Worcester. I will list a number of these in the next issue of "The Record".

Finally, during the next few months, I'll be writing about some of the reasons **why** the church choir exists, and, also, what role does the choir play in the church and here at FPC Berlin.

Bob Specian, choir director

Ministry Matters

Janet has established her office hours:
1-5 on Tuesdays

She is aiming to be there Tuesdays 9-12 as well, but is still working on that aspect of her schedule.

She is also setting up a calendly (on-line calendar) link for scheduling appointments that will allow people to schedule meetings with her on either Monday or Wednesday (that will depend when she is here any given week). Here is the link: calendly.com/janetnewton It should be up and functional by the time you read this.

Money Matters

The end of the year is drawing near, and if you would like to know how you stand on paying your pledge for 2018, you can check in with Dick Mills(collector) at 978 838 2272 or contact Edith Brewer (stewardship committee) at 978 838 2876.



Join FPC Berlin for a Dogtown Hike!

When: Saturday, November 10, 9 AM – 3 PM

Where: Meet at FPC Berlin for Caravan to Gloucester

On Saturday November 10th, First Parish Church of Berlin will be sponsoring a road trip and hike to Dog Town in Gloucester, Massachusetts.

"We found ourselves in the midst of boulders scattered over bare hills and fields. ... This was the most peculiar scenery of Cape Ann," is how Henry David Thoreau described it in his journal when he visited in 1858.

Dog Town is one of the only New England ghost towns filled with stories of witches and the remnants of an abandoned English colonial settlement. Large granite stones left ice age glaciers murmur of ancient and elemental forces. In the 1930's, Roger Babson, the founder of Babson College, hired a number of unemployed stone masons to carve virtues and sayings on many of these boulders.



This is a great opportunity for a family and community-oriented beginning to the Veterans Day holiday weekend.

All are welcome! The event is open to non-FPC members...in fact...we'd love you to join us!



Details: We will meet at FPC Berlin at 9:00 AM to caravan up to Dogtown.

- The trip is about 1 hour 15 minutes each way.
- It involves a hike of about 2 miles on moderate terrain.
- On our way home, we'll stop at one of the fried seafood shacks in Essex for a lunch.
- Expected return approximately 3:00PM.

PLEASE Join US and RSVP by November 7 through email to minister@fpcberlin.org or by calling (505) 670-4157.



Yooahoo! UUs!

The Annual Meeting of the Berlin Unitarian Society will take place on Sunday, Nov. 11 2018 following morning worship. A simple lunch will be provided.

Please let Joni Bergen (joannebergen@charter.net) know if you will attend the meeting.

FIRST PARISH CHURCH'S



ANNUAL **Friendship Village Fair Shope**

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 8AM - 3PM

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 11AM - 2PM.

RTE. 62, BERLIN CENTER

Many handcrafted items, baked goods,
jams/jellies, jewelry,
attic treasures, SERRV items,
YARD SALE, and more!!!

**BREAKFAST SANDWICHES
AND LUNCH WILL BE
OFFERED.**



**MANY HANDS THRIFT
SHOPPE
WILL BE OPEN EXTENDED
HOURS ON SATURDAY**



First Parish Church in Berlin, MA





24 Central St.
 Berlin, MA 01503
 Office 978.838.2575
 Building Use
 Coordinator Email:
secretary@fpcberlin.org

Minster's Office Hours
 Tuesday 1 - 5
 or by appointment.
 Administrator's hours
 are flexible, so please
 call ahead. 978-838-
 2575

**Sunday worship &
 childcare@ 10 a.m.**



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Hurray Hurray for Pizza Friday!

Friday, November 9, 5 – 7 pm is
 Pizza Night at FPC!

All-you-care-to-eat buffet [which
 includes pizza, salad, choice of
 drink, dessert] \$9 adult/\$5 kid 12
 and under/under 3 eat free

Take-out (baked or unbaked) 14" rounds

In addition to the two monthly specials (\$15), we always have

- Very Veggie \$14
- Cheese \$13
- Pepperoni \$14

October Specials \$15

- Meat lovers (as it sounds)
- Potato (mashed, chives, pesto, sour cream)



If the only prayer you ever say in your entire
 life is thank you, it will be enough.

Meister Eckhart

Janet Newton, minister
 Robert Specian, choir director Robert Cunningham, pianist