

I arrived in America 15 years ago with \$723 in my pocket, no job and no place to live. I came from a poor Tunisian family but I came to America with great hopes for grabbing a big chunk of the American Dream Pie. It did not take long for me to realize that my financial prospects in America were going to be a frustrating uphill battle filled with racism and setbacks. I was lucky though, in that I met good, generous people along the way who would teach me what American generosity really is, despite all the doors that were being closed in my face just because of my background.

In my time in UU communities and especially at First Parish, I have found a true community of kind and generous people who have inspired me to grow in my own generosity. Feeling supported by the love of this congregation has shown me and my family what a church community should really be. We feel lucky to be here and to know you all. When I think of how I should strive to be a generous member of this community, of the town of Groton, of the world at large, I am reminded of this past Fall when my family and I received meals through the First Parish caring committee as we navigated the first few weeks of our youngest son Noah's life and adjusted to the chaos of our now family of five. The generosity of this congregation was reflected in volunteers who made us delicious meals and showed us the support of our Church family through the gift of nourishment.

One of the meals was from Jane Fry. When my wife Lori contacted her to thank her for the food, Jane asked if we would like another meal. And then she cooked for us again, and then another week, and then another. No longer under the direction of the Caring Committee, Jane was still caring for us out of her own good heart and generosity. Those meals in the Fall taught us so much about what it means to receive and how wonderful it is to give. I give to First Parish Church because this is my community and I believe our generosity multiplies through the work of the Church. Please give generously this year so the work of this community is sustained and so it sustains those in need.