

# FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF GROTON

January 10, 2016

## Ringing of the Bell

Rebecca Pike, Bell-Ringer

## A Poem as the Service Begins:

One morning you might wake up  
to realize that the knot in your stomach  
had loosened itself and slipped away,  
and that the pit of unfulfilled longing in your heart  
had gradually, and without your really noticing,  
been filled in—patched like a pothole, not quite  
the same as it was, but good enough.

And in that moment it might occur to you  
that your life, though not the way  
you planned it, and maybe not even entirely  
the way you wanted it, is nonetheless—  
persistently, abundantly, miraculously—  
exactly the way it is. (Lynn Ungar 11/28/15)

*(We ask that you turn off the ringers on your cell phones, beepers  
and electronic devices, and the flashes on your cameras.  
Please join us in a time of quiet during the prelude.)*

## Prelude

Flower to the Sun (Clif Hardin)

## Call to Worship

The Lone, Wild Bird (traditional, arr. Alf Houkum)  
Adult Choir

## Welcome and Announcements

Donna Stram, Worship Leader

## \*Hymn

Morning Has Broken #38

## Chalice Lighting

Barbara Rich, for the Pastoral Visitors Team

## Response Hymn

*(please remain seated)* #123

Spirit of Life, come unto me.  
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.  
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;  
Move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.  
Roots hold me close; wings set me free;  
Spirit of life, come to me, come to me.

**The Dedication of Hannah Catherine Coffee**, child of Rachel and  
Ted Coffee and grandchild of Pat Hartvigsen and Chuck Vander  
Linden

## Singing the Children and Teachers to Church School

Children's Blessing (*First UU Nashville Youth Choir*)

May your mind be open to new learning  
May your lips bring truth into the world  
May your heart know love, and your hands do the work of  
justice  
As you go your way in peace  
As you go your way in peace

## Candles of Celebration and Concern

You are invited to come forward, light a candle and in a  
sentence share a joy or sorrow that has touched your life.

## Anthem

The Gift of Love (traditional, arr. Hal Hopson)  
Adult Choir

## Spoken Prayer, followed by Silent Meditation

Karen G. Johnston, Intern Minister

## Offertory

The Girl With the Flaxen Hair (Claude Debussy)

## Offertory Response

*Words: Barbara Rich; Music: Joshua Rich*

Today we give our time  
Our compassion, wit and song  
Everyday we can choose,  
To begin again in love.

We give what we can,  
Generous as we can  
Opening the doors  
To begin again in love.

## Sermon

Persistently, Abundantly, Miraculously the Way It Is  
Rev. Elea Kemler

## \*Hymn

For All That is Our Life #128

## \*Sung Benediction

Carry the Flame  
Carry the flame of peace and love until we meet again.  
Oh, carry the flame of peace and love until we meet again.

## Postlude

We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder (arr. Clif Hardin)

*(Continued on Back Cover)*

*(Please remain seated during the Postlude. You are also invited to come to the front of the church and light a candle silently during this time. Please place your candle toward the back of the candle table. We ask the congregation to remain seated in quiet until the last candle is lit.)*

**\*Please stand as you are able.**

*Large Print Hymnals, Sunday Bulletins and Assisted Listening Devices are available at the sanctuary doors. If you don't wish to keep your Sunday Bulletin, please place it one of the recycle baskets at the sanctuary exits.*

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*Join us downstairs for good food and conversation immediately following the service!*

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The flowers in church this morning are given by  
Carol Sarasin in memory of Jerry P. Sarasin.

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Greeters: Deb Boczenowski, Pamela Worden and Jessica Liliedahl  
Ushers: Susan Hughes and Holly Estes  
Coffee Hour Host: Austin Edwards

**WELCOME ALL VISITORS.** We are glad you are here. Join us for coffee and conversation after the service where you can meet our minister, Elea. Everyone here is happy to speak with you and answer any questions you may have. Please sign one of the Guest Books on the tables near the front and back entrances so we can know who you are. Be sure to indicate if you want to get emails or newsletters about events in and related to First Parish.

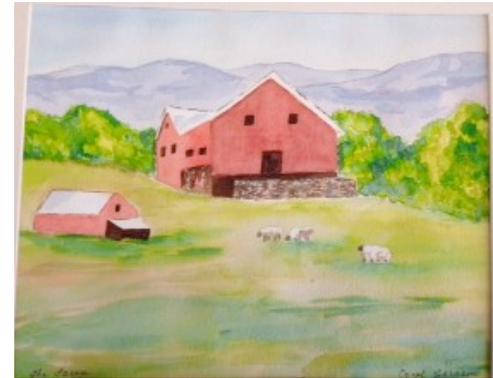
**THE FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF GROTON** was gathered as the town church in 1664. The congregation worships in its fourth Meeting House which was completed in 1755. A town clock and Revere-cast bell rings out our call to service every Sunday. The congregation is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association, a liberal faith that affirms the inherent worth and dignity of every person; justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth; a free and responsible search for truth and meaning; the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large; the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; and respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Membership is open to all age 13 and older. If you are interested in membership, please speak to the minister or any member of the Membership Committee.

*"First Parish is a Unitarian Universalist Association Welcoming Congregation. We warmly welcome members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community."*

# FIRST PARISH CHURCH

Groton, Massachusetts



*Artwork by Carol Sarasin*

## JANUARY - CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

A voice comes to your soul saying,  
Lift your foot. Cross over.  
Move into emptiness  
Of question, and answer and question. (Rumi)

When we embark on an intentional journey like a pilgrimage, we are making a commitment to live in the space of threshold. Threshold is the liminal place, the place of not knowing how things will turn out. I believe it is the place of possibility. (Christine Valter Paintner)

*"We are a community seeking to deepen spiritually, to take care of one another, and to be a blessing to the world."*

### A Warm Welcome to All!

There is childcare for infants and toddlers through age 4 years beginning at 9:50 AM on the second floor of the East Wing and you are welcome to take children there at any time during the service. There are quiet toys in the soft, multicolored fabric pouches in each pew. The service is also broadcast downstairs in the large room beneath us if children become restless.