

# FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF GROTON

December 3, 2017

**Ring of the Bell** Rebecca Pike, Bell-Ringer

## A Thought as the Service Begins:

I tell you, this blazing in you— it does not come by choosing the most difficult way, the most daunting; it does not come by the sheer force of your will. It comes from the helpless place in you that, despite all, cannot help but hope, the part of you that does not know how not to keep turning toward this world, to keep turning your face toward this sky, to keep turning your heart toward this unendurable earth, knowing your heart will break, but turning it still.

I tell you, this is how the stars get in your bones.

This is how the brightness makes a home in you, as you open to the hope that burnishes every fractured thing it finds and sets it shimmering, a generous light that will not cease, no matter how deep the darkness grows, no matter how long the night becomes.

(Jan Richardson)

**Prelude** Voluntary II (John Alcock)

**Call to Worship** Now Let Us Sing (traditional) Open Choir

**Welcome and Announcements:** Carol Swift, Worship Leader

**\*Hymn** I Am Willing (Holly Near)

Chorus: I am open and I am willing  
To be hopeless would seem so strange  
It dishonors those who go before us  
So lift me up to the light of change

There is hurting in my family  
There is sorrow in my town  
There is panic in the nation  
There is wailing the whole world round (Chorus)

May the children see more clearly  
May the elders be more wise  
May the winds of change caress us  
Even though it burns our eyes (Chorus)

Give me a mighty oak to hold my confusion  
Give me a desert to hold my fears  
Give me a sunset to hold my wonder  
Give me an ocean to hold my tears (Chorus)

**Chalice Lighting** Barbara Rich

**Lighting of the Advent Wreath** Meredith Hill

**Response Hymn** *(please remain seated)* #123

Spanish trans. Rev. Lilia Cuervo and Ervin Barrios

Fuente de Amor, ven hacia mí.  
Y al corazón, cántale tu compasión.  
Sopla al volar, sube en la mar;  
Hasta moldear la justicia de la vida.  
Arráigame, libérame,  
Fuente de Amor, ven a mí, ven a mí.

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 Welcome and Celebration of New Members

Steve Boczenowski, Trustees and the Welcoming All Committee

**Welcoming Hymn:** This Little Light of Mine #118

## Singing the Children and Teachers to Religious Education

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

*(If you would like a personal joy or sorrow, prayer, celebration or concern included in today's prayer, please write it down on one of the index cards in your pew with your name on it unless you prefer not to be named. The ushers will collect cards as children and youth are sung from the sanctuary. There is also a basket on the candle table and you can put your card in it any time before the prayer.)*

**Anthem** In the Bleak Midwinter (Rosetti, Storey, Holst;  
arr. McCann) Open Choir

**Reading** How the Light Gets in Your Bones by Jan Richardson

**Spoken Prayer, followed by Silent Meditation**

**Offertory** Allegro in F major (William Hine)

**Offertory Response** (*Words: Melinda Green; Music: Shawn McCann*)

We thank each other for these gifts  
Which makes our giving bless-ed.  
We bless the works our gifts sustain  
And pray they ripple outward.  
With grace and generosity  
We show our faith enacted.

**Sermon** Keep Turning Toward This World Rev. Elea Kemler

**\*Hymn** Give Light (Artzner, Leonino)

1. Give light, and people will find the way (x3)  
People will find the way I do believe
2. Teach peace...
3. Stand together...
4. Sing out...
5. Give light...

**\*Sung Benediction**

#414

As we leave this friendly place,  
love give light to every face.  
May the kindness which we've learned,  
light our hearts 'til we return.

**Postlude** Cornet Voluntary (William Walond)

*(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. Come up one of the side aisles, light your candle and return to your seat by the center aisle. Or if mobility is difficult, just go the shortest route! We ask the congregation to remain seated in quiet until the last candle is lit. If you are not able to stay, please leave quietly.)*

\*Please stand as you are able.

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Today's flowers are given by the Moffat family in honor of grief, the price you pay for love and the only cure, to grieve.

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Greeters: Clio & Eric Fisher, Cindy Boyle, Suzanne Nelson

Ushers: Anne McGinty, Molly McGinty

Coffee Hour Hosts: Dmitri Foster, Jacob Tessier, Kiernan DeMeis-Dullea

# FIRST PARISH CHURCH

Groton, Massachusetts



*Artwork by Tommy Marshall who is 6.5 years old*

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

*For more information Please visit our website: [www.uugroton.org](http://www.uugroton.org) and our Facebook page at First Parish Church of Groton, MA.*

## 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 fabric pouches and picture books in each pew. The service is also broadcast downstairs in the large room beneath us if anyone needs to take a break during the service.