

**Spontaneous Questions for the Pulpit
May 5th 2024**

PRELUDE

WELCOME

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREET YOUR NEIGHBOR

OPENING WORDS: Easy and Nerve-racking

CHALICE LIGHTING: Out of the Earth

HYMN: #6 Just as Long As I Have Breath

STORY FOR ALL AGES: Cosmic Sundae

SINGING OUT THE CHILDREN:

“Go Now in Peace, Go Now in Peace, Let the Spirit of Love Surround you, Everywhere, Everywhere, You May Go.”

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

Love is the doctrine of this church. The quest for truth its sacrament, and service is its prayer. To dwell together in peace, to seek knowledge in freedom, to serve humanity in fellowship, to the end that all souls shall grow into harmony with the Divine: thus do we covenant with each other and with God.

CENTERING HYMN: #123 Spirit of Life

PRAYER/MEDITATION: We Turn our Hearts
MOMENT OF SILENCE

CANDLES OF JOY AND CONCERN
MUSICAL MEDITATION/INTERLUDE

READING: #726 Food for the Spirit

**SPONTANEOUS QUESTIONS
FOR THE PASTOR**

OFFERTORY WORDS: Pancakes with Jesus

MUSICAL OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY*:

From all that dwell below the skies

Let songs of love and faith arise

Let peace, goodwill on earth be sung

Through every land, by every tongue. Amen

EXTINGUISHING THE CHALICE*:

We extinguish this flame, but not the light of truth, the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment. These we carry in our hearts, until we are together again.

CLOSING HYMN: #28 View the Starry Realm
*(the hymn is sung facing the world we are about to enter)

BENEDICTION: Procrastinators Club

POSTLUDE

*Please stand in body or spirit.

Please join us for refreshments downstairs immediately after the service

First Parish Church Unitarian Universalist
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Web Site: www.uubillerica.org

Minister/Worship Leader, Rev. Steve Wilson
Office Administrator: Teresa English

-A Brief History-

1653 – The “Shawshin Wilderness” was first settled in 1653 and its inhabitants recognized as the town of Billerica in 1655

1658- Samuel Whiting Jr. was called as the first minister. The first meeting house was built in 1659, but the church could not be formally organized and it’s minister ordained until approval of the “Half Way Covenant” in 1663.

1797- A “new and more commodious meeting house” was found necessary. The fourth meeting house was built at that time, Dr. Henry Cummings was pastor.

1825- The American Unitarian Association was founded.

1828- The “First Church” existed alone in the Town of Billerica for 165 years.

1844- The Meeting House was renovated by adding the Greek portico and interior fittings, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson’s pulpit, and the house was turned 90 degrees to face the east (This was done by jacking up the building, setting it gently on 2 large cannonballs, and carefully pivoting until it faced east).

1967- First Parish Church was destroyed by fire two days after Christmas. Emerson’s pulpit and other First Parish treasures survived the blaze. Many Billerica and area residents and businesses contributed generously to the rebuilding of our church. On November 22, 1970, the fifth and present Meeting House was dedicated.

1990- A Mortgage Burning Ceremony was held to celebrate complete ownership of the fifth meeting house.

1997- A Tree Planting Dedication Ceremony was held to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the erection of the fourth Meeting House on the current site of the church.

2007- First Parish is recognized as a Welcoming Congregation

2008- The Meeting House becomes accessible to all people with a new elevator. First Parish celebrates its 350th Anniversary in Billerica.

The First Parish Church *The Unitarian Universalist Church*

On the Common, Billerica Massachusetts

“Religious Hot Potato”



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