The Gift of Aging & Years

PRELUDE

WELCOME & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREET YOUR NEIGHBOR

CHALICE LIGHTING: Just Because

OPENING WORDS: An Easy Sell

OPENING HYMN: #114 Forward Thru the Ages

STORY FOR ALL AGES

PARTING SONG/ 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: 34 Bravest Fire

PRAYER: Robert T. Weston

MOMENT OF SILENCE

CANDLES OF JOY AND CONCERN

MUSICAL MEDITATION/INTERLUDE

READING

SERMON: The Gift of Aging &Years

OFFERTORY WORDS: Feeling like a Long Life

CHORAL RESPONSE/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* Elizabeth Selle Jones
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: #311 Let it Be a Dance
**(the hymn is sung facing the world we are about to enter)*

BENEDICTION: by Deborah Haffner

POSTLUDE
*Please stand in body or spirit.
*Please join us for refreshments downstairs immediately after the service

First Parish Church Unitarian Universalist
7 Concord Rd. PO Box 96, Billerica, MA 01821
978-663-2293 uu-info@uubillerica.org
Web Site: www.uubillerica.org
Minister/Worship Leader: Rev. Steve Wilson
Office Administrator: Kerry Anne Kilkelly

-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.

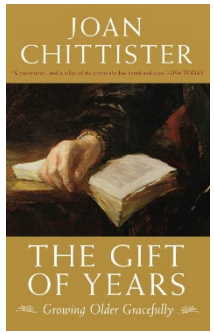
2007- First Parish is recognized as a Welcoming Congregation

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

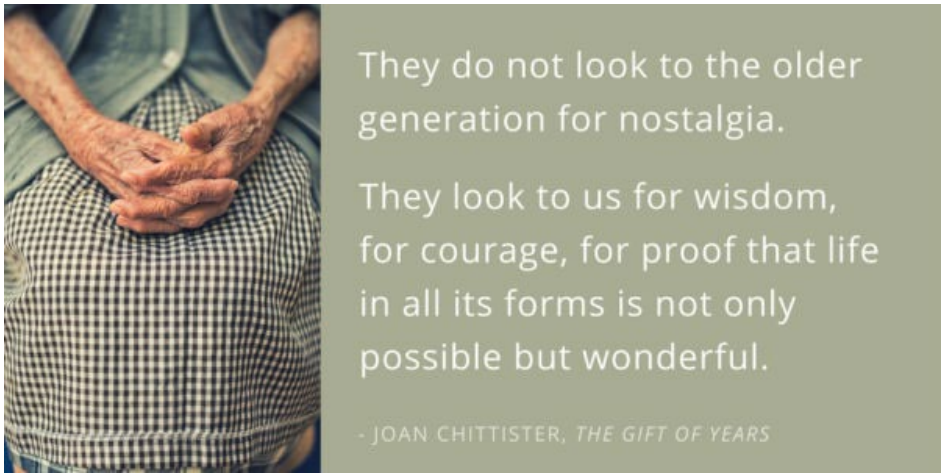
The First Parish Church

The Unitarian Universalist Church

On the Common, Billerica Massachusetts







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November 29th, 2026 11:00am