

The Steeple



VOL 2 NO.7 March 1, 2010

First Parish in Framingham
Unitarian Universalist
A Welcoming Congregation

Staying In Touch

Dear First Parish Members and Friends,

These are unsettling times in our common lives. Certainly the recession is having an impact on each of us...some more than others. Our country's political life continues to be perplexing to say the least. Money in the public sphere has become attached to all manner of negative behavior, fear and mistrust.

Church life becomes more precious in such a time as this. There is support here, and laughter and love. There is inspiration and music and connection with that which is larger than any one of us alone. Our Social Action Working Groups continue their programs as we know that the more vulnerable in our world are certainly experiencing great stress. Together we are keeping our beloved community solvent and vital; an antidote to the fear and divisiveness that can arise in anxious times.

Fifty-eight of your fellow First Parish members are preparing to launch the stewardship drive during the first week of March. One of them will be calling you and hoping to meet with you. 78% of our budget is derived from the pledges each of us chooses to make. This part of our church life is no less sacred than our worship on Sunday morning. In this process we are invited to shed the cultural norms of fear and mystery that attach themselves to money and simply be as honest and as generous as we can be.

Even recognizing the nature of these times, your leaders are dreaming a bit beyond the maintenance of what is....

- To bring all of our staff closer to 'fair compensation' guidelines.
- To hire a very part-time youth advisor to support our volunteer advisors and the wonderful youth of our congregation. Our youth program has emerged as a clear congregational priority from the Vision 20/20 process.
- To continue to improve our facilities in as green a way as possible.

Whatever the outcome of the stewardship drive, we will be here: a church with open doors, full of people with loving hearts, searching minds, and serving hands. There is nothing that we can't cope with. This has shown itself to be true for 309 years!

See you in church!
Reverend Kathleen Hepler, Senior Minister

Sunday Worship

MARCH 7TH

9:15 & 11:00 AM Worship

FEAR AND ABUNDANCE, MONEY AND LOVE

Rev. Hepler, Preaching

If each of us were absolutely truthful about our re-

lationship with money, the conversation would likely be quite shocking and sad. We will be right in the middle of our stewardship drive. It seems a good time to speak of liberation and transformation.

Teacher Recognition during the service! Share The Plate: Interfaith Hospitality Network

MARCH 14th

9:15 & 11:00 AM Worship

THIS I BELIEVE

Rev. Hepler and members of the congregation.

We are each free to believe what we find to be true.

Come and hear what Rev. Hepler and two other First Parish members believe about god, death, and the purpose of life.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME SPRING AHEAD!!!!!!!

MARCH 28

9:15 & 11:00 AM Worship

FAITH OF THE FREE

Michelle LaGrave, Intern Minister preaching

An exploration of what it means to be a free and faithful religious people in this season of Pesach (Passover) and Palm Sunday.

MARCH 21

9:15 & 11:00 AM Worship

EVOLUTION'S PROVOCATION

Rev. Hepler, Preaching

A sermon about sex on this second day of spring.

Religious Education

On the Special Sunday in February (which was Valentine's Day), the preschool/kindergartners through sixth graders gathered in the Huntley Room after we were in church. I explained more details about the Standing on the Side of Love campaign; we sang the song with the same name, and then the children made valentines for our new Senator, Scott Brown, asking him to please stand on the side of love. They also made valentines for Congressman Ed Markey, thanking him for standing on the side of love. I was so impressed with our children's deep understanding – they "got it". They already are standing on the side of love! I've sent two bulky large envelopes off in the mail – I'll be interested to see if I get a response!

Our teachers, advisors, and BRE buddies will be recognized and honored in the annual Teacher Recognition Sunday worship service on March 7th. Fall teachers, be sure to attend church on this Sunday so that you can be recognized along with our current teachers, advisors, and buddies. Without these wonderful volunteers, we would not have a religious education program.

Save the date of Saturday, March 13th for a multicultural evening of fun! The Religious Education Council is hosting "Countries on Parade – A Multigenerational, Multicultural Evening". We will have tables representing different cultural heritages. Activities will include games, music, flag-making, and dances from other countries and also a potluck dinner with foods representative of particular countries. Attendees will have "passports" that can be stamped when they visit the various tables. This event is for ALL ages, and we want you to attend! If you have any stories, decorations, costumes, or items representative of your or your ancestors' countries of origin, please share this information at the sign-up table. We'd love your participation and contributions to the evening! Sign-ups will happen during Coffee Hours on February 28th and March 7th. Cost is \$3 per person; max of \$10 per family. Please plan to bring a dish to share that is from your country of origin. Multiculturalism fits in well with our UU values, so come and join in the fun!

If you have any questions about the RE program, please feel free to contact me.

Julie Porter,
Director of Religious Education
dre@uuframingham.org

From the Parish Office

- The dead line for the April *Steeple* is Friday, March 26th.
- Can't access the members page? Call or email the Parish Office for the username and password.

From the Intern Minister

Dear Ones,

In recent weeks and months, many conversations have been in the air here at First Parish about the meaning of membership. What does it mean to be a member of a Unitarian Universalist congregation? What does it mean to be a friend? What does it mean to pledge, either as a member or a friend? What are the benefits of membership and what are its duties?

There are many possible answers to these questions, but what strikes me the most is that these conversations have been happening in the midst of planning for my ordination. Ordination is one of the benefits and duties of membership. Within the Unitarian Universalist Association, the only way a minister can be ordained is by the members of a congregation. The UUA can't do it. The Ministerial Fellowship Committee can't do it. It is only the members of a congregation who can ordain; who can bestow the privilege of allowing a minister to use the title "Reverend"; who can designate a minister's authority to legally perform marriages.

On May 2nd, at 3pm, the members of this congregation will read the act of ordination and ordain me into the Unitarian Universalist ministry. It is an honor and a privilege for me to call First Parish of Framingham my ordaining congregation. Thank you from the deepest part of my being.

In faith,
Michelle

From the Board of Assessors

No matter how long and dreary winter may seem, spring comes every year. And so does the canvass. Right now, I am filled with hope, both for spring and for the canvass. There are so many exciting ideas being conceived at First Parish these days, so many wonderful possibilities that, given funding, could make our church even more nurturing, green, secure and sound. Our canvassers, led by the dedicated and seemingly tireless Rich Lawson, will soon be phoning you to make an appointment to talk. I hope you will make life easy for these volunteers giving so generously of their time; please respond to their call as soon as possible. I think most of us know how discouraging it is to leave message after message and not receive a response from someone you're trying to reach. And please agree to talk with them in person; in addition to receiving information from the canvasser, you have an ideal opportunity to share your thoughts and ideas. I can guarantee from experience that Rich will make sure all comments are taken to the Board of Assessors. (I hope to hear kudos as well as problems!) We hope to make First Parish the beloved community we've been searching for, longing for, all our lives.

As always, we expect that you will give as generously as you are able. If you are unemployed, we understand. In fact, please tell us how we can help you; we would be honored to do so. If you've had a good year, received a raise, won the lottery, we hope that First Parish is an intrinsic part of your life and will receive a share of your prosperity. I hope you will experience power and joy in your giving.

Hopefully,
Janice Knapp-Cordes, Board Chair
508-877-3771
janice.knappcordes@gmail.com

Membership Corner

Is The New UU for you? The New UU is recommended for the newcomer who is considering making First Parish their spiritual home. It includes 3 evening sessions on the following Thursdays from 7-9pm: February 25th, March 4th and 11th. Join Rev. Kathleen Hepler to hear some Unitarian Universalist (UU) history, ask questions and spend time discussing spiritual/ethical issues at the core of all religions from the UU perspective. Sign-up for this

course through the adult RE registration form. Please let Veena Baker, Membership Development Coordinator, know if you have any questions about it.

Membership Matters

Please join me in welcoming **Wendy Hodge** to our membership.

New Member mini-biographies

Adam and Angie Goldberg have lived in Framingham for about 6 years. They have 2 children Jonathan (6) and Aria (3) and an English Springer spaniel, Oly. Angie is a middle school math teacher and Adam is assistant principal at a high school. Their children are their primary hobbies but they also enjoy gardening, hiking and cooking. Carolyn Porter Griffith, daughter of Julie Porter and John Griffith, sister of Marcie and David Griffith, has lived in Natick her entire life. She is currently a second year student at Earlham college in Richmond, Indiana, with a major in human development and social relations and a minor in education. Carolyn enjoys doing crafts, working with children and loves the outdoors.

Newcomer Orientation

All Newcomers are invited to attend the next Newcomer Orientation on Sunday March 14th from 2:30 to 4:30pm in the Huntley room. This is an opportunity to meet Rev. Kathleen Hepler, other newcomers, members and staff of First Parish. Find out more about Unitarian Universalism and First Parish in Framingham. Refreshments will be provided. Childcare is available upon request with RSVP. Please RSVP to Veena Baker, Membership Development Coordinator, by Wed. March 10th.

Photo Directory Update:

We've been taking pictures for just over 3 months now for the photo directory. A huge thank you to Joanne Sarkar, Brett Baker, Ronnie DiComo, Dick Rader, David Moore and Delvan Ramey for their help taking pictures. Between the pictures taken and the photos submitted thus far we have approximately 150 pictures already on our website. If we don't have yours, there is still time to submit a picture or have your picture taken. We continue to take pictures during social hours on Sundays. If you would like to have your picture taken during the week, you may contact David Moore in the office at 508-872-3111 or office@uuframingham.org to set up an appointment. Pictures may be emailed to: pictures@uuframingham.org in jpeg format. Our photo directory is being displayed in the password protected member's only section of our website, www.uuframingham.org/members/main.htm. Families with children under 18 years please be sure to fill out a consent form, available at the welcome table, so that we can include your photo. Please help make this photo directory a success by submitting a photo or getting your picture taken.

Veena Baker, Membership Development Coordinator,
email: membership@uuframingham.org,
phone: 508-872-3111 ext 218

Announcements: Dates & Events

Around the Parish

We note with sadness the death of Mary L. Boas, mother of parishioner Anne Boas.

Parishioners Matt and Rebecca Crawford announce that William James Crawford was "FINALLY" born 2/17/09 7:02 AM 6lbs 15 oz .

Save the date!

On Saturday, March 13th, the Religious Education Council will be hosting a "Multicultural Evening"! We will have a variety of countries represented. Come taste food, play games, get a passport stamped, sing songs, and learn about different cultures that make up our colorful world. Dinner will be potluck - bring a dish from your own heritage. Sign-ups for this event will be this coming Sunday, February 21st during coffee hour in Scott Hall. Sign-

ups will also be on the following two Sundays, February 28th and March 7th. If you would like to help decorate a table or contribute to the program for the evening, please contact the RE Council member at the sign-up table or Julie Porter. This event is for ALL ages!

Autograph Quilt History February 18, 2010

As the First Parish historian, the wonderful current quilt exhibition in Scott Hall reminded me of the long heritage of quilting at both First Parish and at Bethany Universalist Church. For those who may not know, Bethany Universalist Church was located in Framingham and merged with First Parish in Framingham in 1960 to create our present day Unitarian Universalist church.

I have been investigating the background

(provenance for those of you who watch Antiques Roadshow) of what is called an autograph quilt that I found in our archives. The squares included in the quilt were sold to raise money for a new organ for the Bethany Universalist church. Once a person bought a square they could write whatever they wanted on it before it was sewn into the quilt. The quilt was conceived, developed and produced by a Mrs. Linnie Keyes as a fund raiser for the Ladies Association of Bethany Universalist Church. In 1930 a total of \$145.00 was raised through this project, a considerable sum considering that this was the year after the stock market crashed and that the US was at the beginning of the Great Depression. Alma Gould remembers seeing it when attending the Bethany Universalist church as a child.

My first stop, recommended by Pat Walker, was to take the quilt to the New England Quilt museum in Lowell for their quilt registration project. They informed me that it was a historically significant quilt, that I should have it appraised, and that I should be sure to take good care of it. They discovered that two squares look as if they contain the signatures of Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover, something that is possible given that time frame. The quilt is a remarkable snapshot of names, sayings and events both in Framingham and the world in 1930. We have been invited to display the quilt at the New England Quilt autograph quilt show in late spring this year and are currently having the quilt appraised and repaired. I will share more information about the autograph quilt show when I have it.

Janet Nichols
Parish Historian

Share The Plate

Our Share the Plate collection, on March 7, will be for the Metrowest Interfaith Hospitality Network. Many of you have participated in sheltering families at our church in the past year, so you know the faces of the homeless, in particular the children. They are people much like us, who have had more than their share of misfortune. In addition to offering a safe and welcoming place to stay, the Network provides in depth assistance from the Director and Assistant Director. These professionals help the adults to find work, a place to live, and childcare. This professional assistance, personally tailored to each individual, is a standout feature of this organization. Our part, while different, is no less important. We provide a safe place to stay, nutritious food, and home-cooked dinners. Your generous contributions will help buy food and other supplies for the week that the families are with us.

Save The Date

The First Parish Annual Talent & Treasure Auction will be May 8th.

Roots & Shoots

What's all the Buzz About?

At our next meeting on Sun, March 21st, our chapter of Roots & Shoots will be working on the church grounds. We will learn about bees and their important role in pollination, and we will place beehouses in optimal locations. We will also be learning about native versus invasive plant species so we can check out the plants on our church property and do battle against the invaders! Wear old clothes, bring your digging forks, and get ready to uproot, untangle, and unwind. We will start our meeting in the Huntley Room at 1pm with bagels, fruit and juice, and then work on the grounds until 3pm. This organization is youth-focused, but all events are multi-generational. Please join us if you love kids, animals and the environment and you want to make a difference in our world! RSVP to Aimee Dalrymple at ADalrymple@alumni.duke.edu or 508-652-9946. Visit www.rootsandshoots.org for more information about this organization.

Women's Alliance

March 8, the Women's Alliance will meet in the Huntley Room at noon. Bring a sandwich, dessert and coffee will be served. Deborah Butler will be our guest speaker.

Disclosing traps in consumer ads and solicitations to seniors and boomers sparked the creation of www.DearDeborah.org in 2008. We are unique not only in our mission but also in:

- 1. the way we use educational training techniques to enhance understanding; and*
- 2. how we recruit and train Dear Deborah Detectives to report insider secrets an anti-consumer practices.*

Given that "fine print" ranks among the most dangerous anti-consumer practices Deborah will present "The top 10 Traps Mature Consumers Need to Know and How to Avoid Them"

All are welcome. For more information call Susie Macdonald 508 875-3322

Legacy Planning

Do you love your First Parish family so much that you want to assure its community presence long after you're not here? Then please consider establishing a living legacy by including our church in your estate plans.

Past bequests by generous, forward-thinking First Parishioners have established an endowment that currently permits an annual pledge of more than \$20,000 to supplement our canvass. All these contributors wanted to help preserve First Parish for us, and for generations to come. Any of our three Trustees would be very happy to answer your questions about assigning some future assets to First Parish. Please e-mail or call Charlotte Neagle, Mary Rose Wells, or Pete Allen - and many thanks for your consideration.

Adult Religious Education at FPF

Through Fall and Winter/Spring ARE brochures folks in our First Parish community are offered opportunities to further develop spiritually, mentally, and physically. This also brings a relaxed way to get to know others in the congregation. Courses are brought together by the Adult Religious Education (ARE) Council which is made up of people with a variety of interests. All are part of ARE program decision making and together they create the areas of: brochure design, registration coordination, publicity, Sunday Night Foreign Films, and special programs. Would you like to be part of the Adult RE Council? If so, please contact Linda Schreiber at 508-881-1842.

It is still possible to register for classes which begin in March (Reconnecting with Earth, Parents as Spiritual Guides, Understanding and Working with our Emotions, New UU, and The Tao of Piemaking.) Please check the First Parish website or ARE bulletin board in Scott Hall for complete class information. Registrations may be sent to the church office care of Adult RE.

Rev. Catherine Senghas Installation

at the UU Urban Ministry, Sunday, March 14 at 3:00 PM, UU Urban Ministry at First Church in Roxbury, 10 Putnam Street, Roxbury

You are invited to join the UU Urban Ministry for the installation of Rev. Catherine Senghas as the UUUM's Senior Minister and Executive Director. Rev. Senghas has been serving in this position since June 2009. Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) President Rev. Peter Morales will deliver the installation sermon. If you would like to attend and bring a dessert or finger food, please e-mail Rev. Kate Wilkinson at KWilkinson@UUUM.ORG.

Covenant Groups

Covenant Groups enable participants to develop deeper relationships within the church community and to consider meaningful life topics at the same

time. These are facilitated groups, and ours meets every other Tuesday. We currently have openings and would love to have you join us.

At each meeting our group addresses a new, challenging question together. On occasion the topics run on the lighter side, as they're chosen by the member who has volunteered to lead the next gathering. Note that a leader volunteers for that meeting; there is no requirement that every member lead. The result is that we become more engaged with each other and with the larger church community.

If interested, please contact Jerry Breecher at Jerry@Breecher.com or by phone at 508-330-2833. We look forward to hearing from you!

SACRED CIRCLE DANCE

SUNDAY, March 21st from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
First Parish in FRAMINGHAM - in conjunction with Adult Ed Donation \$5.00. Contact Paula Adelson (FP choir member) for more information: (508) 485-1030 apauladog@comcast.net

The Metrowest Free Medical Program

received \$370 from the Share the Plate collection in January. Metrowest Free Medical Program (MWFMP) provides free medical care to people with limited or no health insurance. In January, MWFMP provided care to more than 100 patients in need. Thank you for your donations.

Donations For Renewal House, UU Urban Ministry When Rev. Sinkford visited our church in November, he spoke about UU Urban Ministry. Renewal House is a vital program of UU Urban Ministry, a shelter for individuals and their children who are victims of domestic violence. It provides emergency shelter for several families as well as support and extensive services enabling guests to become self-sufficient.

On the following Sundays in March there will be a basket in the hallway of the Parish House with a list of suggested donation items: Sunday, March 7th, 14th, and 21st. Each week I will have a new list in the Weekly Update of needed items. Some of the needed items are: twin bed lines (NEW OR GENTLY USED - no stains), new pillows, silverware, brushes and combs, face cream, baby wipes, diaper cream, baby shampoo and soap. Art supplies that can be donated are the following: glue, white construction paper, markers, and colored pencils. Thank you for your help! Contact person: Valerie Waldman FPF delegate for UU Urban Ministry 508-877-7769.

March, 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 3:30pm Brownies 6pm - Parent Support/Study 6:30pm - Rounds 7:30pm Church Council 7:30pm Meditation Group VB:	2 7pm - Auction Committee 7pm - Heritage Chorale 7:30pm - Parents as Spiritual Guides	3 9:30am - Yoga III: 11:30am Worship & Arts 6pm Junior Youth Group 7pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal 7pm - Young Adult Group 7:30pm Cakes 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	4 8am - Coffee & Muffins 5pm - MetroWest Free Med. Prg 7pm - New UU 7pm - RE Council:	5 1pm - MetroWest Free Med. Prg 8pm - Uncommon Coffee House	6 11am Brownies
7 9:15 & 11am - Services 1:30pm - MICAH: 4pm - OWL Retreat 7pm - YRUU	8 12pm - Women's Alliance 6pm - Parent Support/Study 6:30pm - Rounds 7:30pm - MeditationGroup VB:	9 7pm - Adult RE Council 7pm - Covenant Group 7pm - Heritage Chorale 7:30pm - Parents as Spiritual Guides 7:30pm - Stitches In Time	10 9:30am - Yoga III: 1pm - Stitches In Time 6pm - FCNS Scott Hall 7pm - Bell Choir	11 8am - Coffee & Muffins 5pm - MetroWest Free Med. Prg 110 7pm - New UU	12	13 11am - Brownies 5pm - RE Multi-generational-Multicultural Evening
14 9:15 & 11am - Services 10am Junior Youth Bake Sale 2pm - New Comers Orientation 7pm PFLAG 7pm - YRUU	15 6pm Parent Support/Study 6:30pm - Rounds 7:30pm Meditation Group VB: 7:30pm - Reconnecting With Earth	16 7pm Heritage Chorale 7:30pm - Parents as Spiritual Guides	17 9:30am - Yoga III: 6pm Junior Youth Group 7pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal 7pm - Young Adult Group 7:30pm - Cakes	18 8am - Coffee & Muffins: 5pm - MetroWest Free Med. Prg: 6:30pm - Parents & Others	19 9am - FCNS Family Fun Day: Scott	20 9am - FCNS Family Fun Day 11am - Brownies
21 9:15 & 11am - Services 1pm Roots & Shoots 7pm - Sacred Circle Dance 7pm - YRUU	22 6pm - Parent Support/Study 6:30pm - Rounds: 7:30pm - Meditation Group VB: 7:30pm - Reconnecting With Earth	23 7pm Covenant Group 7pm Heritage Chorale 7:30pm - Parents as Spiritual Guides 7:30pm Stitches In Time	24 9:30am Yoga III: 1pm Stitches In Time 7pm Bell Choir Rehearsal 7pm Young Adult Group 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal	25 8am - Coffee & Muffins: 5pm MetroWest Free Med. Prg 7:30pm -Woman Circle	26 7pm - Covenant BW	27
28 9:15 & 11am - Services 7pm Sunday Night Film 7pm YRUU	29 3:30pm Brownies 6pm Parent Support/Study 6:30pm Rounds: 7:30pm Meditation Group VB: 7:30pm Reconnecting the Earth	30 7pm Heritage Chorale 7pm - Understanding & Working with Our Emotions	31 6pm First Parish Seder 7pm Bell Choir Rehearsal 7pm Young Adult Group 7:30pm Cakes			

The First Parish In Framingham
Unitarian Universalist
A Welcoming Congregation
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