

# first parish medfield



## First Parish Unitarian Universalist - Medfield March 2009 Newsletter

### "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" Auction, Feb. 28

The First Parish Charity Auction "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" is next Saturday February 28 starting at 7PM.

Have you made your plans? Have you made a donation?

You must purchase or reserve a ticket to get in. Tickets are \$20 for members and *guests are free* IF you arrange for tickets ahead of time.

Buy tickets at on-line from Tracy, by February 24th, at:

[admin@firstparishmedfield.org](mailto:admin@firstparishmedfield.org)



### Church Yard Sale, March 21

Our winter yard sale will be in the vestry on Saturday, March 21. We will collect your donations on Friday the 20th.

So please start putting aside items that you can donate for us to sell. Make sure they are usable and in good "yard sale" condition. Ask yourself - would anyone would buy this or does it belong in the trash/ recycle bin? If you're unsure, feel free to ask us.

### Canvass Dinner, March 28

Saturday March 28, 2009

First Parish Medfield

WE WOULD BE ONE

Canvass Celebration

Wine & Cheese Reception, 6:00 pm

Dinner, 7:00 pm

Please RSVP by March 21, 2009

[duncanglover@comcast.net](mailto:duncanglover@comcast.net)

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## From The Minister

*"An attempt to build one's own theology  
Tends to start on a note of apology.  
But it gets more profound  
As more reasons are found  
To puzzle about eschatology"*

Byron Stephens,  
B.Y.O.T. participant  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Friends:

On Monday March 30<sup>th</sup> I will begin facilitating an eight-week course entitled "Building Your Own Theology" (B.Y.O.T.). The class will run from 7:15-9:15 p.m. in the First Parish vestry. B.Y.O.T. will leave you more confident than ever before about what you truly believe, how you came to know it, and how to express it to others.

The curriculum we will be using was authored by Richard Gilbert and from the introduction of the text I share the following with you:

D. H. Lawrence once wrote, "whatever the queer little word 'god' means, it means something we can none of us quite get away from, or at; something connected with our deepest explosions." I believe that religious education is a life-span process of building our own theology and harnessing those "deepest explosions."

If you have ever wondered why bad things happen to good people, if creation is a "cosmic fluke" or how Unitarian Universalists can behave virtuously without heaven and hell, you are in danger of falling into theology. Somehow we have it in our heads that it is "unUnitarian Universalist" to "do theology," because that is what the orthodox do; and we are, if truth be known, heretics.

Heresy, while commonly understood as deviation from orthodox belief, originally meant choice – the heretic is one who both dissents and chooses.

Unitarian Universalists are very definitely happy heretics. We choose to "do theology" in a liberal religious mode. But if we are living, breathing, hurting, laughing, crying, questing human beings, it is impossible not to be theologians. Theology traditionally has to do with the study of God or divine things, but there is another definition as well: it can mean "field of study, thought, and analysis that discusses religious truth." Theology has to do with the ultimate concern and commitment by whatever names we call them. While theology can be, and often is, stuffy, deadly dull, and unutterably boring, it can be, and often is, exhilarating, exciting, and endlessly fascinating. Why? Because it has to do with the stuff of human experience, the meaning of being and becoming.

How do Unitarian Universalists "do theology"? I submit it is a different "doing" from conventional methods. We do theology, not to become divine, but to become more human.

I encourage you to take this class whether you are new to First Parish or have been here for many years. The class requires nine participants who can make the commitment to be present every week and will be limited to twelve. To enroll or ask further questions about the class, please e-mail me at: [uuketch@gmail.com](mailto:uuketch@gmail.com).

In Faith,  
Bob McKetchnie

# Social Action

## *Guest at Your Table Results*

Thank you, First Parishioners, for participating in this year's Guest At Your Table program. We raised approximately \$1490, somewhat lower than last year's amount, but very good considering the economy and the Sunday service cancellations due to weather. Nine donations of \$100 or more are eligible to be matched by the UU church Shelter Rock in Manhasset, NY. Sixteen donations maintained or initiated UUSC memberships: nine dual memberships, six regular (per person) memberships, at least one youth or student membership. The UUSC will send me an final report of our GAYT results. (Some people have mailed their contributions in directly to the UUSC).

So thank you, and pat yourselves on the back!

Nancy Kingsbury,  
GAYT coordinator

## *Food Cupboard*

For March, the Medfield Food Cupboard has asked our church for *applesauce, canned peaches, canned chicken, canned pasta, and cereal*. Please bring your donations to church and leave them in the basket in the vestibule upstairs. The Social Action committee will deliver the food to the food cupboard, which is located at the UCC church on Main Street. The Food Cupboard is grateful for all of our efforts. They ask for specific items from each church so that people know what they really need, but, as always, any donations are greatly appreciated.

## *March Social Action Committee Meeting*

Our next meeting will be March 4. Please call Helen Beedy at 508-359-2760 if you are interested, and to confirm the time and place of our meeting.

## *March is DIAPER MONTH...Really!*

March is DIAPER MONTH at FPUU. By now everyone has heard about and generously helped with the Social Action Committee's diaper collection for Medway House Family Shelter. During the month of March, we offer this challenge to our First Parish families. We hope to collect one package (any size) of diapers from each family or individual attending First Parish.

In this way, we can make a significant contribution to the shelter and take at least one item off their list of needs!

OUR GOAL IS TO DONATE AT LEAST 50 PACKAGES OF DIAPERS.

So, let's all pitch in to help reduce their "BOTTOM LINE."

The collection basket is in the church entry, let's see if we can meet the MANY DIAPER challenge.

Thank you!

*Framingham Civic League Meals Program Closes - A Letter from Dee Swan*

Dear First Parish Medfield Members & Friends:

There is a huge hole in my heart today as I write this letter. It is Saturday February 21, 2009 and I should be at the kitchen serving lunch to the meals program guests. Locking the door last Saturday, (ironically Valentine's Day), and walking away was one of the most difficult tasks I have ever had to do. Some of you may have read the article in last Sunday's Metrowest Daily News (2/15/09) citing the league's financial difficulties and impending sale of the building to Mass Bay Community College. We were hopeful that Mass Bay would have interest in continuing the program but no commitment has been made.

Regardless, the purpose of this correspondence is to thank you, once again, for the many years of unconditional service and support you have provided to help us, help others. From Louise and Duncan to countless others through the years, we could not have carried out our mission without you. Without asking, you were always there to say "what do you need? What can we do?" There was nothing extraordinary in what we managed to nurture there. I was brought up to believe that this is what one does on this earth; you help out those less fortunate than yourself. And those of you who so generously shared this experience with us are clearly of the same spirit.

It has been an honor and a privilege to work with all of you and the "silver lining" has been the solid friendships we have inherited from the adventure itself. Should there be a food program re-established somewhere down the line, I would be very grateful to have the opportunity to call on you again. But for now, I send this with sincere gratitude and much love,

Deanna Swan & Stephen Joseph.

## Around First Parish

### First Parish Yard Sale - March 21st

Our winter yard sale will be in the vestry on Saturday, March 21. We will collect your donations on Friday the 20th.

So please start putting aside items that you can donate for us to sell. Make sure they are usable and in good "yard sale" condition. Ask yourself - would anyone would buy this or does it belong in the trash/recycle bin? If you're unsure, feel free to ask us!

Here are some rough guidelines:

- books, CD's, small appliances sell well
- games, puzzles, toys in good condition
- kitchenware, knick knacks, etc.
- electronics are OK if they're not too old
- NO clothing, shoes, car seats, bicycles, furniture, or items too big for us to move easily
- Any particularly valuable items left over will live on in our virtual yard sale on ebay!

Experience the joy of clearing out that clutter and simplifying your life while helping First Parish at the same time. What a win - win!

PLEASE NOTE: IN CASE OF SEVERE WEATHER, CHECK THE FIRST PARISH WEBSITE FOR A POSSIBLE DATE CHANGE.

Janet McKetchnie, Karen Wians, and Mary Finlay

**April Newsletter  
Deadline**

**3rd Sunday  
March 21st**

### Take Me Out to the Ballgame Auction - Feb. 28th

The First Parish Charity Auction "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" is Saturday February 28 starting at 7PM.

Have you made your plans?

TICKETS:

You must purchase or reserve a ticket to get in. Tickets are \$20 for members and guests are free IF you arrange for tickets ahead of time. Sorry, but we will be charging \$20 for entry for unannounced "walk-ins". We must have a count of people attending so that the appetizers can be ordered and bidding data prepared. Order tickets on-line from Tracy Buckley at:

[admin@firstparishmedfield.org](mailto:admin@firstparishmedfield.org)

If you order ahead, you can pay at the door Saturday night.

PLEASE LET TRACY KNOW BY TUESDAY FEBRUARY 24th

HELP:

We still need volunteers for the Auction:

1. Is anyone, or any group willing to bring their sports memorabilia to decorate the walls and ceiling of the vestry?
2. We will begin set-up at 3PM on Saturday, so help to clear the vestry and move tables would be appreciated.

TO VOLUNTEER, PLEASE CONTACT FRED BUNGER ([FBUNGER@VERIZON.NET](mailto:FBUNGER@VERIZON.NET)).

Thanks for your help

See you at the auction.

All the best,  
Fred Bunger

## The Bergland's

First Parish welcomes the Bergland's to our community.

John and Michelle

Carolyn, 8, 2nd Grade

Catherine, 5,  
Kindergarten

William, 2.5, Pre-school

John and Michelle Bergland have lived in Medfield for 11 years. They have three children. Carolyn, 8, is in 2nd grade, Catherine, 5, is in Kindergarten and William, 2.5, attends Beginning Years Children's Center in Medfield. John works for IBM out of his home office and Michelle is in Human Resources at EF Educational Tours in Boston. John grew up in Houston, Texas but spent his summers in Westport, MA and Biddeford Pool, ME, which is how they ended up near Boston. He needs to be near the water. John is an enthusiastic sailor and loves to do woodwork. Michelle is from the Albany, New York area. She enjoys wine, knitting, reading great books and spending time with friends.

The Berglands were introduced to First Parish by their close friends the Kornets. It was perfect timing - John was brought up Episcopalian and Michelle was brought up Roman Catholic. Neither church seemed to be the right choice for them any longer, and the open-mindedness and acceptance at FPUU was just what they were looking for. John has volunteered as an RE guide and is working on the auction committee and Michelle has been involved in the Chancel Committee. They have also taken part in some of the pot-luck dinners offered in the past year. The Berglands are also close friends with the Lloyds, who recently joined First Parish as well. FPUU has a comfortable neighborhood and family feel that is really appealing to them.

## Membership Info

For information on joining First Parish contact Membership Chair Barbara Bunger at

[bbunger@verizon.net](mailto:bbunger@verizon.net)

## From the Director of Religious Education

### Who is Our Neighbor?

The parable that Jesus told, known as "The Good Samaritan," answers this question in a way that made it clear—perhaps painfully clear—to the man who asked the question and to some of the other listeners way back then. As our children will learn during Children's Worship on March 1, the question, "who is my neighbor?" is part of the backstory of The Good Samaritan. Hearing the story of the Good Samaritan without hearing what leads up to it is like starting a movie in the middle—you do not get the whole picture.

Children will be exploring the Good Samaritan story and its context during the first four Sundays of March. It is a wonderful story for all age and developmental levels. There is the simple and important message that we are to treat other people (our "neighbors") as we would want to be treated—also expressed in the Golden Rule. There are more challenging and complex notions as well,

which are illustrated by Jesus' ironic choice of a Samaritan as the "good guy" in the story. For those reading this newsletter, the analogous storyline might be to imagine a fundamental Islamic Arab helping out an atheist American. Or if that is too difficult, a Yankee fan helping out a Red Sox fan in need. The point Jesus made is that no matter how different we are from one another, we are all "neighbors."

Martin Luther King, Jr. made at least two references that I know of to the Good Samaritan parable in his famous speeches. In his "I've Been to the Mountaintop" speech\* given in 1968 in Memphis TN, he retold the story in his own powerful way, asking listeners to think through the consequences of their actions or inactions. To my mind, the crucial passage from King's retelling is this (*italics added*):

And so the first question that the priest asked – the first question that the Levite asked was, "If I stop to help this man,

what will happen to me?" But then the Good Samaritan came by. And he reversed the question: "*If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?*"

There are many, many references and allusions to the story of The Good Samaritan and other biblical stories in our present day society and culture. However, the main reason why we Unitarian Universalist religious educators want to teach about stories from the Bible is the messages they contain. The messages in The Good Samaritan are almost uncomfortably relevant today. I say uncomfortable because we humans, almost two thousand years later, are still in great need of learning to be compassionate with one another. May this workshop rotation be one small step in that direction.

In faith,

Jeanette Ruyle, Director of Religious Education

\*The full text for King's speeches can be found at [www.americanrhetoric.com](http://www.americanrhetoric.com).

## R.E. News

### *Religious Education Thank You's*

- For being Peace Guides for the RE Peace Winterim "Taking Action for Peace" – Thank you to Nancy Kingsbury, Nancy Norris Cusanno, and Frank Cusanno!
- For painting the world map on the wall of the U House "World Around Us Workshop" – Thank you to Greg McKetchnie!
- For all the donated materials of ribbons, cards, and discs – Thank you to you the congregation!
- For the pennies for Pennies for Peace – Thank you everyone!

### *Pennies for Peace Update*

At this writing, we have not yet counted all the pennies and other coins. They are heavy and numerous. We will keep you posted.

Jeanette Ruyle, Kirsten D'Abate, chair of the RE Committee, and Pat Clark, member of the Social Action Committee, were able to attend a speech in early February given by Greg Mortenson, author of *Three Cups of Tea*, and founder of the Central Asia Institute, the beneficiary of Pennies for Peace. He is a remarkable and humble man. As the war in Afghanistan begins (or resumes, or continues, depending on how it is viewed), children and families in this part of the world are at increasing peril. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers.

### *Published in local papers on February 19<sup>th</sup>!*

The following article was just published about our RE program changes, and it is reprinted below in case you missed it....

#### *The WoRM comes to First Parish!*

Well, it doesn't sound like "Sunday School," and they call it 'WoRM'....? This fall, First Parish of Medfield, Unitarian Universalist, launched a successful new model for their K through 7 Religious Education program, and the church is inviting families from Medfield and the surrounding towns to come and check out the program this Spring.

Simple, yet profound stories that focus on compassion and justice are at the heart of this Religious Education

program. Children and Leaders explore story themes through a variety of hands-on activities, or rotating workshops, thus the name 'WoRM' which stands for Workshop Rotation Model. The model nurtures faith development through varied activities and experiences, an approach based upon Howard Gardner's 'Multiple Intelligences' theory of learning.

At First Parish Medfield, children in age-based groups visit a different "workshop" each Sunday. The workshops are Arts & Crafts, Games, Drama/music, and Current Events. Every four weeks a new story is told, and the next "rotation" of workshops begins.

During the winter, between fall and spring WoRM sessions, children participate in a 'Winterim Peace' session. Grades K through 7 come together, complete social action projects fostering peace, and enjoy self-directed activities. This winter's social action project was Pennies for Peace™, a program that builds peace through building schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Other social action efforts during the year benefit the Medway House Family Shelter, and the Framingham Meals program.

Other Religious Education programs are offered for 8th graders and high school students. Toddlers and young pre-schoolers are always welcome at our "Little Lights" childcare.

For more information about religious education, call 508-359-4594 or e-mail the Director of Religious Education at [dre@firstparishmedfield.org](mailto:dre@firstparishmedfield.org). Sunday worship services, along with religious education, begin at 10:30 a.m. First Parish Unitarian Universalist is a welcoming, affirming, and theologically open religious community serving all area towns, and is located in the center of Medfield at 26 North Street. See the website [www.firstparishmedfield.org](http://www.firstparishmedfield.org).

The Girls Request the Pleasure of Your Company at Canvass Dinner.  
You Don't Want to Disappoint The Girls...



*Celebrate Good Times! Come On! Let's Celebrate!!*

**SAVE THE DATE!**

Saturday March 28, 2009

First Parish Medfield

**WE WOULD BE ONE**

**Canvass Celebration**

Wine & Cheese Reception at 6:00 pm

Dinner at 7:00 pm

Please RSVP by March 21, 2009

[duncanglover@comcast.net](mailto:duncanglover@comcast.net)

508-528-8456

**Don't be left out. Come party with The Girls.**

The Canvass Committee: Jeanne Capachin; Louise Rachin,  
Marshall Sugarman, and Duncan Glover, Chair



## Services and Events

March 1st "Where Hate Flourishes...."

Today we will look at an important leader of the civil rights movement, Unitarian, Whitney Young, Jr. Though he lived only 50 years, his contributions were significant as he pursued socioeconomic equality for the disenfranchised.

March 08th "Ethics and the Criminal Justice System"

This sermon will examine the ethics behind the concept of "truth-in-sentencing" invented by the American Legislative Exchange Council in the late 1990's. Now almost twenty years later what do the facts, statistics and personal stories of inmates tell us about the morality of this legislation.

March 15th "Brad's Conversion"

The story of one man's journey from Orthodox Judaism on the north side of Chicago to Hebron, in the Palestinian West Bank as a self-described religious fanatic to an advocate for religious pluralism. Come hear what this man has learned about himself and what he asks us to reflect upon in our own lives.

March 22nd "Why I Am At First Parish"

In today's service we will hear from several members of First Parish as to why they choose to participate in our church community.

March 29th "We Would Be One"

Today is the official start of our annual pledge drive that funds the church's operations for the coming year beginning July 1st. This sermon will speak to our responsibilities and commitment to good stewardship as we recognize the common aspirations that we share in the community that we call First Parish.

### *Special Events*

First Parish Auction, February 28th, 7PM

Winter Yard Sale, March 21st

Canvass Dinner, March 28th, 7PM

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FIRST PARISH UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST MEDFIELD  
26 NORTH STREET  
MEDFIELD, MA 02052