



# *First Parish Medfield*

26 North St.

Medfield, MA 02052

(508)359-4594

[www.firstparishmedfield.org](http://www.firstparishmedfield.org)



## April 2011 Newsletter

### **Upcoming Events:**

**April 2**

**North Street Coffee House**

**April 15**

**Annual Passover Seder**

**April 22**

**Earth Day**

**Easter**

**April 24**

## From the Minister

Dear Friends:

In her book “The Gift of Faith,” Jeanne Harrison Nieuwejaar writes, “Whether we wish it or not, our children are religious, spiritual beings. From within their own magical selves they know feelings, intuitions, and impulses. From the people, stories, songs, and media of their environs they hear religious words and messages and see religious symbols and images. From the experiences of their daily living they encounter religious events. They see dry sticks sprout pulsing green leaves. They see the deer killed on the highway. They watch their teacher’s tummy grow round with new life, and bid farewell to their uncle dying of AIDS. From the demands of their living and growing in the world they face situations that require from them a religious decision, response, or interpretation. We cannot choose whether they will be religious, but we can choose how and to what extent we will support, guide, and celebrate this dimension of their nature.”

It is in this spirit of celebrating our children I would like to “Dedicate” all the children who came to our church after they were previously named (in ceremony or not). My own children were

dedicated in a ceremony in my home church when they were infants because Janet and I were members prior to their birth. But most of the children of our church came when they were older and have never been dedicated. I respect that some may not consider it that important but I know that others feel an identity to Unitarian Universalism that they would like ritualized in some way.

On Sunday May 15<sup>th</sup> at our regular hour I will lead an intergenerational service that will celebrate our children and will “Dedicate” those who wish to be. I will of course, include in some way, those children of our church who have already been dedicated.

Our DRE, Shelley Dennis has agreed to help me with this service and is looking to collect the names of those who wish to be included. Age is not a barrier. If your “adult” children are home from college and want to be dedicated because they never were, I welcome them!

Watch for a date and time of an informational meeting with parents to discuss this service. I welcome your input in celebrating our children.

In faith, Bob McKetchnie

## From the Director of Religious Education

### IT TAKES A VILLAGE

It has become cliché to say that it takes a village to raise a child, but yet we all recognize the truth in that statement. We all intuitively know that we wouldn't be who we are today with only our parents' influence; our selves are sculpted by the many connections we have formed, lost and re-formed throughout our lives. Most of us converts to Unitarian Universalism, harbor a secret longing that we could have been influenced by this movement in our childhoods, and imagine that we would have been better off for it. So how do we pass along to the children and youth of our congregation the benefits we wish we had received?

As it turns out, there are many ways in which we do that, and we learned about them during our congregational visioning session. We provide Little Lights nursery care, where our UU youth attend to the needs of small children during the service. We have an active Religious Education program for children and youth from 7-15 years of age, including Sunday morning RE, Neighboring Faiths, OWL and Coming of Age. We invite high school youth to participate in intergenerational services and our young adults in college return to serve in our Christmas Eve service.

And in May, we are preparing to add one more thing to that list: a mass child dedication for all of the children who have converted to Unitarian Universalism along with their parents. As it turns out, we have many children and youth who were never dedicated in a Unitarian Universalist congregation, and their families would very much like to participate in this ceremony of mutual commitment between the congregation and the

youth who find a spiritual home here. On May 15<sup>th</sup> our community will pledge itself to providing a spiritual home for all young people from the ages of newborn to 20 who would like to be dedicated in our community.

If you would like your child to be dedicated, please contact Shelley Dennis, DRE at [dre@firstparishmedfield.org](mailto:dre@firstparishmedfield.org) to learn more.

### WHAT'S THE STORY?

#### CREATING BELOVED COMMUNITY

We need each other to survive, and everyone is responsible for creating the community in which we live. In April, RE discussion will focus on the many ways that being in community is good for the soul, and about what is required of us to be good community members. For example, the children really love sharing joys and concerns during our time together. But how can we do this in a way that is respectful to the group? We will explore the ideas of being good listeners and considerate speakers on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and come to some consensus on how we can use Joys and Concerns to create beloved community among our young people.

The story this month will be the Ant and the Grasshopper—you know the one: the ants store up food for winter while the grasshopper plays all day. Come winter, the grasshopper gets awfully hungry. But does the grasshopper deserve the ants' kindness? We'll enact with the entire group on April 10<sup>th</sup>. How do we feel when we're the ones doing all the work? Who deserves to eat?

## From the Executive Board

- ✚ **Mardi Gras Charity Auction:** Festive decorations, delicious drinks, happy music, fine food, and a fun auction made the March 5th Mardi Gras a great event for FPUU. The Medfield High School Jazz Combo added spice to the evening with lively Dixieland jazz. More than 60 participants contributed \$8000 in the live and silent auctions, grab-bags, raffles, etc. Net income after expenses was \$6800. The five food pantries in Medfield, Medway, Millis, Norfolk and Walpole have each received a \$272 check from First Parish. Thanks to all who helped, donated to, and participated in the Charity Auction.



- ✚ **Spire Project:** FPUU is awaiting T-Mobile and MetroPCS to review and take action on the contract proposals. Engineer interviews are complete. No action will be taken without signed contracts with both wireless carriers.
- ✚ **2011/2012 Budget:** Even with new income from wireless rentals, next year's budget will be tough. On the Expense side, Minister and RE Director salaries and health care costs are up, and loan repayments on spire loan will start. Pledge income will be down substantially due to the \$25,000 "Bridge" borrowing into this year. The result is that the Annual Fund Drive will be asking for an increase in pledges again this year.
- ✚ **Pastoral Care Team:** A Pastoral Care team of Rev Bob, Gaby Harrison, Denise Flaherty, David Maxson, Louise Rachin, Rebecca Stephenson and Becca Kornet has been formed. A request for funds to provide training and support has been submitted to the Woburn Grant committee.
- ✚ **Succession Planning:** Seeking nominees for Treasurer and At-Large FPUU Board members. Please see Rebecca Stephenson, Nominating Committee Chair.

## 2011-12 Annual Fund Drive: *Toward the Summit*

### 2011-12 Annual Fund Drive: *Toward the Summit*

In the winter of 1849 a small party of settlers bound for California struggled to cross a harsh desert they would later name Death Valley. Day after day, against thirst and hunger, freezing darkness and a relentless sun, they pushed westward across the arid plain. Finally, they began to ascend the side of a mountain that, though long visible on the horizon, had seemed so distant. When they reached the summit, the party gathered together and looked out upon a land quite unlike that which they had just come through, as their leader recalled:

*A most pleasing sight filled our sick hearts with a most indescribable joy. There before us was a beautiful meadow, green as a thick carpet of grass could make it. Such a scene of abundance and comfort bursting thus upon our eyes, which for months had seen the desolation and sadness of the desert, was like getting a glimpse of Paradise....*

Settlers seeking a new life on the American frontier a century and a half ago might seem to have little to do with us, the members of First Parish Medfield. But we have a fair amount in common. We too have struggled against adversity. We too have resiliently pursued a shared dream. We too have sought a sanctuary in which to make a better life. And we too are nearing a summit from which we can imagine new possibilities for our congregation.

We have certainly seen our own trials and tribulations. Leaky roofs and peeling walls, budgets in the red, plans and projects deferred—we have endured them all, and more. Our capital reserve remains low, our UU dues unpaid in full. Compensation to our staff, including our minister, continues to fall short. There are too many empty spaces in our pews.

Yet we have pushed on. We have built up our religious education program and professionalized our church administration. We have made improvements to our building, to our music program and to our membership efforts. We have hung on to our exceptional minister.

And now we have begun to climb upwards. Through the tireless efforts of key members of our congregation, we have an opportunity unparalleled in our history. Not long from now we will be receiving a steady source of revenue from literally right above our heads, as our church spire is fitted with cell phone transmitters. And, most likely, it will be a new, higher spire—one that will restore the original silhouette of our historic building on the Medfield skyline.

We are close to our own summit, but are not there yet. We need to pull together in this last stretch to overcome our main obstacle: the constraints that a budget deficit places on everything we do—and everything we wish we could do. We are fortunate that First Parish remains a caring, tolerant, supporting and quite remarkable community. Imagine what we can become if our financial shackles are loosened, and we are able to renovate our buildings, revitalize our programs and rebuild our membership roles.

As you look over our anticipated church expenses, shown in the following chart, please consider what being a member of First Parish means to you. A life-threatening desert may not surround us, but the world outside our sanctuary can be cold, uncaring and intolerant. It is hard going alone.



If we pull together and push onwards, a real transformation awaits us all at First Parish—much as it did the men, women and children gathered on that mountain summit long ago:

*All seemed happy and content now. If ever a poor mortal escapes from this world where so many trials come, and joys of a happy Heaven are opened to them, the change cannot be much more than that which was suddenly opened to us on that bright day, a most auspicious one and one of the most hopeful of my life.*

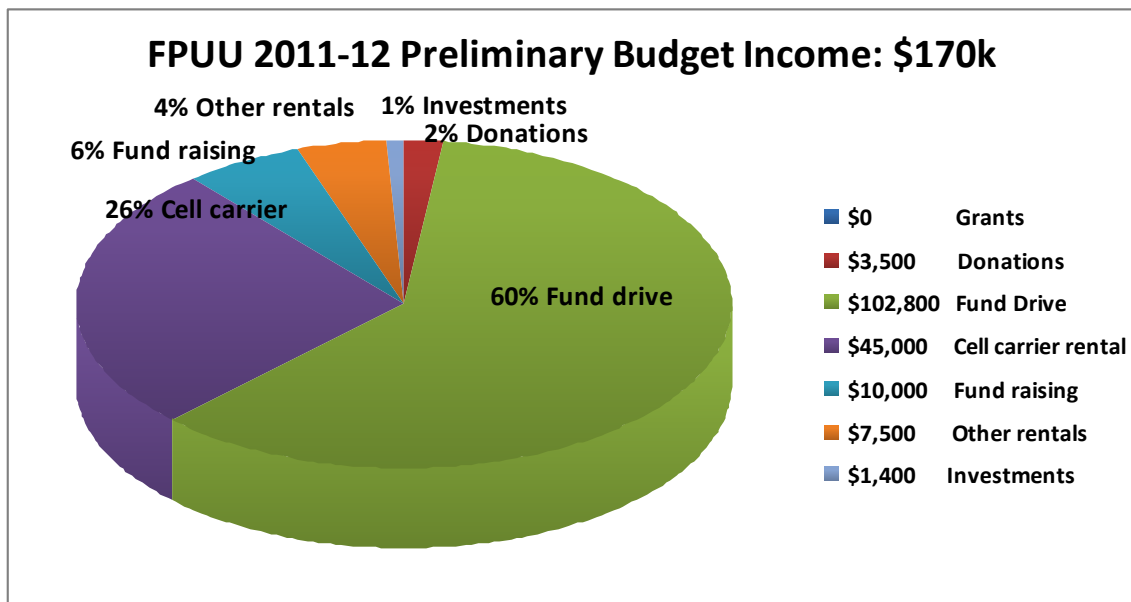
As a financial steward of First Parish, please consider a commitment of financial support to sustain our programs:

- **If you are able, pledge 2% or higher of your household income**
- **If you are unable to pledge 2%, increase your current pledge by 15%**
- **If you are making a pledge for the first time and unable to pledge 2%, consider pledging this year's average target: \$1,950.**

The charts below show the preliminary income and expenses projected for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. As shown, 60% of our income comes from financial support from congregation members like you.

Our 2011-12 Fund Drive needs to total \$130,000 to balance the budget, which is a 15% increase above the 2010-11 Fund Drive. Bridge income that is already being used for this year's budget and a small percentage based on past collections are deducted from this amount, leaving approximately \$102,800 available for our 2011-12 income.

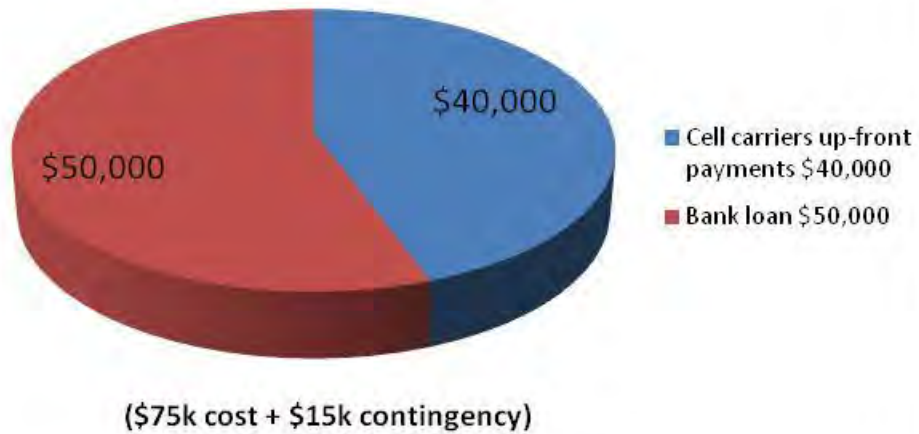
A separate chart shows costs and funding sources for the proposed new spire.



### FPUU 2011-12 Budget Expense: \$170k



### New Spire \$90,000



Thank you from the Annual Fund Drive Committee of First Parish Medfield:  
Duncan Glover, Marshall Sugarman, Jeff Zarker and Mark Samels.

## Message from the Membership Committee

### NEW MEMBER WELCOME

**The Zarker family** has lived in Medfield for more than ten years. Jeff and Cindy and their children began attending First Parish with their children, Jack and Abby in 2009. Jack is 11 and Abby is 8, both attend the public schools in Medfield. Cindy works in the financial services industry and Jeff in the software industry. Cindy grew up attending the United Church in Wilbraham Massachusetts and stopped going to church when she went to college in Saratoga Springs, NY. Jeff grew up in NH, TN, and MA and went to college in MA. He grew up mostly Unitarian.

The Zarkers enjoy reading, trying new restaurants, gardening, walking in the woods, and skiing. They also love to travel. Jeff likes music, photography and collecting old cameras. Cindy likes reading, cooking, decorating (you may have noticed her flair with the Xmas decorations), and attending the opera with friends. Jack loves to read. Abby enjoys arts and crafts, reading and cooking.

They are excited to be a part of the spiritual community at First Parish Medfield. Please take a moment to welcome them as new members!

### Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011--Children's Dedication Service

This will be a special service to recognize and how important the children and youth of our congregation are to our church. We will dedicate and celebrate them on this special day. We encourage as many children to be involved as wish to be.

### Sunday, May 22, 2011—New Member Ceremony

Each spring we have a new member ceremony to recognize those folks who have joined or recommitted to the church during the current church year. We invite those members who wish to be recognized to attend and be celebrated by the congregation. Please speak to Rev. Bob or Barbara Bunger if you wish to be involved.



## FPUU Announcements



**YARD SALE UPDATE:** Thanks to all the volunteers who worked at the First Parish winter yard sale and/or brought things to sell. We made just over \$700 this year. While this is certainly good, we could have done better! We had our usual crowd of customers but fewer donations to sell than in the past. Several church members commented on Sunday that they had things to go through at home but just hadn't found the time. So start that 2012 yard sale pile now!

### **WISHES:**

- If anyone has a surplus desk and desk chair, our Director of RE would appreciate having them. The current table and chair is not adequate.
- A working all-in-one printer, scanner, fax, color copier for the office.

### **WISHES GRANTED:**

-The church kitchen now has a lovely GE smooth top stove! It fits perfectly and will be a welcome improvement. Thanks to Pete & Eileen Hoagland for the donation, and to Eve Potts for suggesting it.





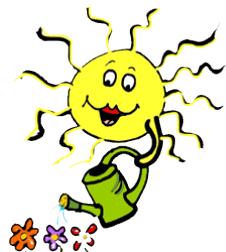
**SAVE THE DATE - Saturday, April 2, 2011**

**The North Street Coffeehouse will host a night of live music on Saturday, April 2nd, at the First Parish U.U. Church, 26 North Street, Medfield. The evening will consist of both a featured performer and an open mic session. The event will be held 7 pm – 10 pm.**

**April's North Street Coffeehouse will feature talented singer-songwriter Rick Fetters. Well know and connected in the folk world, his silky voice and full-bodied guitar fingerings weave an uplifting message within his song lyrics. Warmly received by his audiences, Rick has a wonderful repertoire of both traditional and original songs. His performance is both vibrant and melodic - contributing to an evening that you won't want to miss.**

**If you would like to perform at the open mic session, please contact Janet at [imjanetm@gmail.com](mailto:imjanetm@gmail.com). Music of any genre, prose, poetry, or comedy is welcome. Please contact her in advance as the performer list fills up quickly. Refreshments are available. Admission is \$10 at the door, \$5 for open mikers.**

**Enjoy an evening of music at the North Street Coffeehouse and see for yourself why it is becoming known as one of the best open mics around! For more information visit the North Street Coffeehouse website at <https://sites.google.com/site/northstreetcoffeehouse/Home>.**



Let's celebrate spring by attending *Let's Laugh Today* at the First Universalist Society in Franklin Meetinghouse, 262 Chestnut Street in Franklin, MA on Monday, April 25th at 7:15pm to 8:30pm. We meet on every fourth Monday of the month. Laughter yoga is a unique concept where anyone can laugh without a reason. We don't rely on a sense of humor, jokes or comedy. Developed 16 years ago by Indian physician Dr. Madan Kataria, laughter yoga combines simple breathing techniques and laughter exercises. This allows more oxygen to enter the body making one feel healthier, more energetic, and ridding the body of harmful toxins. Benefits are felt after just one session! Also, the more you practice this, the easier it is to laugh at things that happen to you in your daily life. Ages 10 to 110 are welcome! There is a \$5 donation per person with a \$10 maximum per family. Please bring your water bottle because laughing is dehydrating. Linda and Bill Hamaker are Certified Laughter Yoga Teachers. If you have any questions, please call 508-660-2223 or see [www.letslaughtoday.com](http://www.letslaughtoday.com) for more information and other laughter opportunities.

## Medfield Food Cupboard



The Medfield Food Cupboard has requested the following from our church for the month of April:

- Canned pasta
- Juice
- Jelly
- Cookies
- Crackers
- Beef stew
- Kleenex
- Raisins
- Canned chicken
- Applesauce cups

Please double check your food items to ensure that it is undented, unopened, and unexpired. Thanks for your efforts. Any donations are greatly appreciated and can be placed in the basket in the narthex. All items will be delivered to the Food Cupboard by James Sugarman and Sam Flaherty.

## Services (All Services Begin at 10:00 AM)

**April 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**“Charisma”**

**Rev. Bob McKetchnie**

We all seek it in our leaders, drawn to it by our emotions. Those who want to excel seek it in themselves, driven by passion. The “it” I refer to is of course, charisma! Today’s sermon examines the questions of whether or not one can excel without charisma, whether we overlook people with great potential because they lack it, and what role charisma plays in the development of our own spirituality.

**April 10<sup>th</sup>**

**“Still Learning”**

**Rev. Bob McKetchnie**

There is a Zen saying that states that in the mind of a beginner exist infinite possibilities, in the mind of the expert only a few. Today’s sermon will look at this statement and explore how knowing our own strengths and weaknesses informs our ability to learn and grow as people.

**April 17<sup>th</sup>**

**“Religion Beyond Belief”**

**Worship & Music Committee**

This service is built around a sermon given in 2010 by Peter Morales, the President of the UUA. In his sermon, Rev. Morales argues that "belief" is a modern construct of religion and, in fact, can be the enemy of religion. Instead, Morales suggests that true religion is about having faith in what we love, not in what we believe.

**April 24<sup>th</sup>**

**“The Promise of Easter”**

**Rev. Bob McKetchnie**

Snowdrops have opened their umbrellas, crocuses are welcoming bees, and rays of ready-to-burst forsythia sway the breeze. Easter is a time of renewal for all of us as well. Come and celebrate in this Intergenerational service, the promise of Easter.

Please remember the following deadlines: **Church Newsletter:** Third Sunday of the month. **Order of Service:** Wednesdays by 5:00 pm. If you miss this deadline but have an announcement to be made at the church service, please submit a typed announcement to the service manager for that given Sunday and send a copy to the office.

Church Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Telephone: 508-359-4594

Sandra Andreassi, Administrator.

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

## FPUU Calendar

Saturday, April 2	North Street Coffee House 7:00-10:00 pm/Vestry
Sunday, April 3	IF Justice Committee Meeting 11:30-12:15/Sanctuary OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm/Vestry
Tuesday, April 5	Social Action Committee Meeting 7:00 pm/Vestry
Sunday, April 10	OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm/Vestry
Tuesday, April 12	Worship & Music Committee Meeting 7:30-9:00 pm/Vestry
Thursday, April 14	First Parish Board Meeting 7:30 pm/U-House
Friday, April 15	Annual Passover Seder 4:00-11:00/Vestry
Sunday, April 17	IF Justice Committee Meeting 11:30-12:15 pm/Sanctuary
Thursday, April 22	Earth Day
Sunday, April 24	Easter Sunday
Sunday, May 1	IF Justice Committee Meeting 11:30-12:15/Sanctuary
Saturday, May 7	North Street Coffee House 7:00-10:00 pm/Vestry
Tuesday, May 10	Worship & Music Committee Meeting 7:30-9:00 pm/Vestry
Sunday, May 15	IF Justice Committee Meeting 11:30-12:15/Sanctuary
Thursday, May 19	First Parish Board Meeting 7:30 pm/U-House
Sunday, May 29	IF Justice Committee Meeting 11:30-12:15/Sanctuary

For a complete listing of events, please visit our website at [www.firstparishmedfield.org](http://www.firstparishmedfield.org). If you would like to book the Sanctuary, Vestry or U-House for an event or meeting, please check availability and then contact the church office at [admin@firstparishmedfield.org](mailto:admin@firstparishmedfield.org)