

**first parish
medfield**

**North Street Coffeehouse
Saturday, November 7th
7 - 10 PM**



**Featuring singer-songwriter Tiffany Gasset
(Details Inside)**

November 2009 Newsletter

2nd Annual

**First Parish Family
Breakfast and Social
Action Event!**

**Interfaith
Thanksgiving
Service
Tuesday November
24th, 7:00 p.m.
Medfield UCC Church**

More details on choir coming.



**Sunday morning Nov. 1,
2009 in the Vestry
Breakfast served 8:30
to 9:30 a.m.**

From The Minister

"If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them." Ralph Waldo Emerson

Dear Friends:

Last month after preaching on Universalism many people asked me how they could learn more about Unitarian and Universalist history. In particular I was asked questions about the origins of unitarian and universalist thought and practice before they became movements large enough to warrant the foundation of their individual denominations first, and the ultimate merging of the two into the current Unitarian Universalist Association. I was also asked questions about what was happening in the world that warranted the Unitarian and Universalist movements to flourish in the years of their peaks. In other words, "What void were they filling in peoples lives?"

There are several ways of course, to get this information and learn the importance and relevance of our deep history to your life. Besides occasionally hearing a sermon on these topics you might consider enrolling in the adult education curriculum that I wrote entitled: "An Introduction to Unitarian Universalism." This curriculum introduces Unitarian Universalism to people who are new or desire a refresher. I will offer it during January of 2010. The exact date and more details can be found in the First Parish Adult Education brochure.

"Stream of Light: A Short History of American Unitarianism" by Conrad Wright – ISBN #1558961550	"The Larger Faith: A Short History of American Universalism" by Charles A. Howe – ISBN # 1558963081
"For Faith and Freedom: A Short History of Unitarianism in Europe" by Charles A. Howe – ISBN # 1558963596	"Three Prophets of Religious Liberalism: Channing, Emerson, Parker" Introduced by Conrad Wright – ISBN # 0933840209
"A Chosen Faith" by John Buehrens and Forrest Church ISBN # 0807016179	"Being Liberal In An Illiberal Age" by Jack Mendelsohn ISBN # 1558963324

In the meantime, I know that many of you like to read. A few people asked me at coffee hour one Sunday if I could recommend a few books that could serve as "the next step" of learning our history if one wanted to go a little deeper into the subject. I recommend the following six to get one started and can certainly recommend others as you need or want them.

This collection can be accumulated over time or given as gifts to Coming of Agers or Bridgers. These books are probably also available for a discount by buying them used. I remind you that when purchasing these or any books that you can help First Parish out financially by clicking to the Amazon web site from the First Parish website.

These books are also available to be borrowed from me. They are kept in my office in the U-House. I only ask that you sign out for them on the provided clipboard on my book shelf.

In faith,
Bob

Message from the Chairperson of the Executive Committee

"The only constant is change..."

Heraclitus

The executive committee started off the church year September 8 with a retreat facilitated by Rev Terasa Cooley and Rev Susan Philips. Here we created our covenant together and set out a course for the year reviewing strategic plans, outreach, and leadership development.

So this past weekend 5 of us went to the Weston UU church for a leadership development seminar on change in an atmosphere of learning from each other. Our Mass Bay dues were clearly at work in the thoughtful seminar, "Leading Through Change", with Rev Sue Philips. I realize that we are all stewards of a tradition at FPUU Medfield and that we are responsive to our changing church community needs and the world around us. We have executive committee meetings monthly in the vestry, the third Thursday of every month at 7:30 PM and all are welcome to attend.

As I reflected on these leadership sessions and executive meetings, I see how we need to foster new ideas and give them time to develop. Like how the idea that created our elevator came to be. The elevator, which makes us accessible and welcoming in so many ways started with an idea by a member, Diane Maxson, who kept the flame of the idea alive as we got behind it, developed the plan, raised the money and built it.



Bob Luttmann, Fred Bunger, Rebecca Stephenson, Denise Sullivan and Jeanette Ryule at the Mass Bay leadership seminar "Leading Through Change" held at the First Parish of Weston on Saturday October 17.

Ideas like the elevator may come to fruition under different conditions. You may have thought of something that just didn't catch on, it just might not have been the right then but with more time...

The last of my grapes have been picked and savored and were so much better after the cold had ripened them. I see in myself sometimes that it is easy to push through decisions just to reach the conclusion, but that would be like trying to rush the grapes before they are ready to fruit.

Rebecca Stephenson
508 740-0663

Around First Parish ... Around Medfield... ... Around the UUA

Social Action Meeting

The next Social Action Meeting will be Wednesday, Nov. 4, in the U-house at 7:00 PM. All members are welcome to attend and the meetings are always interesting, and over by 9:00 PM! Call Helen Beedy 508-359-2760 or e-mail Helen@beedy.net if you are interested in joining us. Please call to confirm the date and place.

UUA Mass Bay District Workshop

Transforming Our Whiteness
a workshop for white members of Unitarian
Universalist congregations hosted by Allies for
Racial Justice
December 5, 2009 - 8:30 am to 10 pm
First Parish Church, Arlington, MA

In our society, white ways of living are the norm, making it difficult for white people to see the undue privilege of whiteness. In Transforming Our Whiteness we will explore

white privilege and how it affects us
the racial identity of white people
the stories we are told and internalize about
race and whiteness
In small groups, we will examine how racism
impacts our congregations and use the
Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist,
Multicultural Institution to discuss strategies
for making change.

For further details about content, facilitators,
schedule, etc. please go to [http://
www.mbdoua.org/programs-events/social-
justice/social-justice-learning/](http://www.mbdoua.org/programs-events/social-justice/social-justice-learning/).

Tri-Valley Habitat for Humanity

Tri-Valley Local Partnership Committee
(LPC) is part of South Shore Habitat for
Humanity. Tri-Valley includes
representatives from Medway Community

Church; St. Thomas the Apostle, Millis;
Millis Church of Christ (UCC); Church of the
Advent, Medfield; United Church of Christ
in Medfield; Franklin Federated Church, and
now from First Parish Medfield. I am acting
as the liaison from our church to the Tri-
Valley Committee. For more information on
the group, visit

<http://www.sshabitat.org/lpcs/trivalley.php>

The Tri-Valley LPC has made great strides in
its fundraising efforts, and is now making
progress toward building its first Habitat
home at 9 Walker St, Medway. The hope is
to have a foundation poured in early
November. Construction and other support
teams will be set up soon. I will keep you
updated on opportunities to participate in
the project.

Feel free to contact me if you are interested
in this project – 508-668-1392 or
rolph@110.net.

Margaret Rolph
Social Action Committee

Executive Board Meetings 2009-10

All meetings are open to members and
begin at 7:30PM in the Vestry:

October 15	January 21	January 21
November 19	February 11	February 11
December 17	March 18	March 18

Welcome to First Parish, Linda Rondeau!

Linda Rondeau of Franklin is First Parish's new administrator, filling the role that Tracy Buckley performed so well last year. She started work on October 7, and she's normally expected to be working here in the U-House Monday through Thursday from 2:15 to 5:15.

Linda earned a bachelors degree in computer science from Syracuse University and went to work as a software developer for a variety of companies. In 1998, she left to raise a family. Linda returned to the workforce in 2007 in a marketing role with Microsoft but found it interfered too much with her family responsibilities. She says she is delighted with all the people she's met at First Parish, and she welcomes the flexibility our job offers. When Linda is not taking care of her family and First Parish, she enjoys gardening, scrapbooking, and reading.



Newsletter Changes

Beginning with the December 2009 newsletter Linda Rondeau will assume the editing and distribution duties. The deadline for articles remains the same Third Sunday of the Preceding Month.

Send articles to Linda at admin@firstparishmedfield.org

HELP WANTED

FPUU is looking for someone to assist in our cataloging of our documents. The project has been started and moved forward in a significant way by Greg McKetchnie last year. Greg is off at college now and we are looking for someone to lead this project. There are people to help you and show you what has been done. If you are interested please email Rebecca Stephenson at rgspt@comcast.net

North Street Coffeehouse, Saturday, November 7th, 7 – 10 pm

This month's North Street Coffeehouse will feature talented singer-songwriter Tiffany Gasset. Tiffany has been playing and writing music for more than a decade, beginning in the Virgin Islands, where she was raised. In 2008, while juggling a career as a middle school teacher, she completed her debut album **Back to the Water**, when she formed the band Rising Tribe.

Rising Tribe is classified as Alternative Rock, but fans enjoy its varied musical styles, including Country, Celtic and Reggae. The band's songs deal with a range of emotional topics, from love to history to human rights. Memorable melodies and poetic lyrics fuse with funky bass lines, driving percussion, multi-genre violin riffs, and intense vocals to create the Tribe sound. To learn more about Tiffany, please visit her website. <http://www.tiffanygasset.com/>

In addition to enjoying the music, we also encourage you to please bring an article of warm clothing to the concert as we join area coffeehouses in supporting the Warm Clothing Drive to benefit homeless adults and children. The drive is run by WUMB (91.9 FM) in conjunction with The Golden Key Society at U Mass Boston.



Standing on the Side of Love is a campaign sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Association, promoting respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every person. We stand with all who share our belief that no person of any immigrant status, race, religion, gender and sexual orientation or political view should be dehumanized through acts of exclusion, oppression or violence. For more information visit www.standingonthesideoflove.org.

Unitarian Universalist Association Launches ‘Standing on the Side of Love’

Unitarians Respond to Identity-Based Violence at Knoxville Congregation with Outward-Looking Nationwide Campaign

Boston, Mass. - Standing on the Side of Love is a new campaign aimed at delivering the message that no one should be dehumanized through acts of exclusion, oppression or violence because of his or her identity. The campaign, which promotes respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every person, is sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and was launched at its General Assembly meeting in Salt Lake City in June of 2009.

The campaign was conceived in response to a shooting at a Knoxville, Tenn. Unitarian Universalist Church where two churchgoers were killed and seven others injured by a gunman who opened fire during a performance of “Annie.” The gunman’s motive was to kill “liberalisms’ foot soldiers” [sic].

“It is clear our nation is suffering through an epidemic of identity-based violence and oppression,” says Peter Morales, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association. “Our response to these heinous acts must be personal. We must stand on the side of love, in solidarity with those who are targeted based on their identity.”

Based on Unitarian Universalism’s aspirations to create a beloved community, grounded in the principle of the inherent worth and dignity of all people, the campaign will pursue change through advocacy, public witness and speaking out in solidarity with those whose lives are publicly demeaned.

The religious point of view has too often been ceded to those who use religion to shut people out, but American history would not have progressed on any social issues without people of faith who fought for justice and who continue to do so.

Standing on the Side of Love continues the UUA’s long tradition of working to expand who is included when religious people speak of beloved community. The UUA’s record encompasses women’s ordination and suffrage, education reform and economic justice.

About Standing on the Side of Love

Standing on the Side of Love is a public advocacy campaign that seeks to harness love’s power to stop oppression. It is sponsored by the [Unitarian Universalist Association](http://www.standingonthesideoflove.org) and all are welcomed to join.

Why

This is a time of great hope and possibility, yet our communities are threatened by the increased prevalence of acts motivated by fear and hate.

No one should be dehumanized through acts of exclusion, oppression, or violence because of their identities.

In public debates over immigration, LGBT rights, and more, religious people stand on the side of love and call for respect, inclusion, and compassion.

How

The Standing on the Side of Love campaign elevates compassionate religious voices to influence public attitudes and public policy.

2nd Annual First Parish Family Breakfast and Social Action Event!



**Sunday morning Nov. 1, 2009 in the Vestry
Breakfast served 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.**

Sponsored by the Membership and Social Action committees

What better way to start off our new year than to eat breakfast together and help residents at the Medway House at the same time!

Volunteers will cook and serve pancakes, bacon, fruit, juice, and coffee starting at 8:30 and serving until 9:30 a.m. Just leave for church early Sunday Nov. 1 and bring the family for a great meal and a good time!

Breakfast is free! The ticket for admission is a package of diapers (any size), or wipes to support residents at the Medway House, a family shelter in Medway.

If you know that you and your family can come, please RSVP to Margaret Rolph (508-668-1392 or rolph@110.net) so we can get an idea of how many to serve. Everyone welcome, whether you RSVP or not!

Religious Education for Children and Adults

From the D.R.E.

In September, I wrote about how parents can set the tone and expectation for their children to attend RE (religious education) as regularly as possible. My article was based on one large assumption: there is value in children participating in religious education and it is ultimately worth it for parent(s) to get them there.

But now I am wondering if the validity of my assumption, which is really my belief, is clear. So here is Part 2 of my newsletter mini-lecture, which probably should have been Part 1. And, brace yourselves... it is brief.

Why should children go to RE? There are many answers for this. I believe the most important reason is for children to discover tools they can use to build their faith— their sense of self, purpose, and place in this world. Religious education introduces these tools again and again as each child grows and develops. It takes time. Faith involves being able to grapple with the Big Questions in life, and to engage and feel supported during this process. All of us, at any age, can benefit greatly from having a “spiritual toolbox.” The “tools” we share in religious education are many, but acquiring them is really a lifetime process. Love, reflection, justice, patience, flexibility, forgiveness, courage, resiliency, humor are some of the tools, and there are more. The metaphor of tools and toolbox is one that I first heard of some years ago from a colleague, Gail Forsyth-Vail and I give her thanks. Gratitude is a spiritual tool, by the way.

As children grow into youth and adulthood, they truly test what has been shared with them in their religious education. They use their tools to build their faith. This means that they may choose a divergent path, maybe for a while, maybe permanently. They still need the tools on their life’s journey.

What do you think? Why have religious education? It takes an amazing amount of energy from volunteers, staff, and families. Is it worth it? The only problem I see in asking that question is that sometimes the answer lies way in the future. In the meantime, we use faith— another tool.

Blessings on this red-orange leafy fall day,

Jeanette Ruyle
Director of Religious Education

FAITH in ACTION Standing on the Side of Love

Our first RE “Faith in Action Sunday” was on October 11, National Coming Out Day. Children learned about the grassroots movement called Standing on the Side of Love, an interfaith movement “harnessing love’s power to stop oppression.” We talked about: what “oppression” means, what the word “gay” means, and the importance of treating everyone with kindness and respect. We strategized about what they can do if they see a person being teased or bullied.

More information about Standing on the Side of Love can be found at

www.standingonthesideoflove.org .

Thank you to all who signed the Petition for Full Equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. The petition may also be signed online at the SSL website. Note that although Standing on the Side of Love is sponsored by the UUA, it is not just for UU’s.

Our next Faith in Action Sunday is November 15. The focus will be on the Guest at Your Table Box project, an effort of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. Faith in Action Sundays are part of our regular RE programming and are for children of all ages.

“Reverse Trick-or-Treating”

The kits finally arrived in the mail. Information cards with a piece of wrapped fair trade chocolate glued to it will be distributed to all who are interested on Sunday Oct. 25. Cards that are left will remain in the vestry and anyone may have them. The idea is to educate people about how fair trade helps cocoa farmers and workers receive fair pay and working conditions. When you go trick-or-treating on Halloween, you can give this treat to the people you visit.

“Pennies for Peace”

You may have noticed the reappearance of the large Pennies for Peace jar in the vestry. Children in RE sponsored the penny collection last winter for

building schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan. This year, on Medfield Day, instead of asking people to pay our usual price of \$2 to decorate a pumpkin or a reusable bag, we charged \$1.98 and asked them to donate the change to Pennies for Peace. Everyone was happy to do this! The jar is out in the vestry now. If you have some pennies or other coins jangling in your pocket, think about dropping them into the jar. Just one penny goes a long way in that area of the world.

Children's Food Table at Coffee Hour

It is officially a weekly thing now- every Sunday there will be a table of food for children. As was discussed with some of the children, this

does not mean that adults cannot eat from this table, just as children may still take food from the "adult" table. What it means is that hopefully there will be enough food for everyone, it will be less crowded at the tables, and the food will be easier to reach. Thank you to all the coffee hour volunteers for helping this happen!!

Children's RE - First Rotation

During the first RE rotation of the new church year, I worked with the children on a project that documented the world around them. In the context of our story about Thomas Potter and John Murray, we discussed ways that people record the events of the world around them, from journal and letter writing to taking photographs and video. As part of the experiment I blogged and twittered about our lessons, too; I encourage you to check out the final products online at <http://fpuure.wordpress.org>.

Thanks! Jenifer Bartle

WINTER SOLSTICE PIZZA LUNCH Nov. 8

Time to make plans!

This year, I am seeking direct input from children and parents and other congregants about what you would like for the multi-generational Winter Solstice Worship Service to be held on Dec. 20. There will be a Solstice Pizza Lunch on Nov. 8 in the vestry after coffee hour to discuss plans.

Everyone who is interested in the least little bit is invited! I will present some options and listen for suggestions.

Eva, our Director of Music, has an awesome choral piece for all ages and voices. Also, any children who would like to play an instrument, please let us know.

Share in some sunny pizza and ideas!



Jeanette Ruyle



Negotiations with T-Mobil

You may recall that at Annual Meeting on June 7, 2009, the congregation authorized the executive board to negotiate a lease with T-Mobile to put antennas in our steeple. Our building committee has been working with T-Mobile to define the lease terms and figure out how to fit a wireless base station in our meetinghouse. The antennas will be placed in the steeple and connected by cables to a room with their radio equipment. We are still discussing where this room should go. It turns out that the attic, which has plenty of space, will not work for structural reasons. We have made clear that the installation must be quiet and non-disruptive. We are working with T-Mobile engineers to develop a creative solution in some of the nooks and crannies of our big building. We may be ready to sign the lease in the next few weeks, at which time T-Mobile will complete initial engineering work and file for the necessary permits.

We held two informational meetings over the summer August 31 and September 2, to discuss progress with members and the committee made a presentation to the executive board on October 15th.

We are most grateful for the herculean effort of the lease sub-committee, which includes the expert legal advice of Renee Lloyd and technical advice of David Maxson, as well as the wisdom of Dan Bible, Fred Bunger, and Jim Stetson. To be certain we have good architectural advice, T-Mobile is reimbursing our expenses for having local architect David Sharff participate in the design process on our behalf. If you have any questions about the project, please direct them either to me (cell 508 740-0663) or David Maxson (cell 617 448 8570).

Rebecca Stephenson
Chairperson Executive Committee

Medfield Day is Resounding Success

FPUU's participation in the Medfield Employers and Merchants Association's (MEMO) Medfield Day was a resounding success with the beautiful fall weather showcasing our church and grounds. Jen's Bartle's coordination of the annual Medfield Day bake sale anchored a record fundraising effort exceeding last year's take by more than 80% and netting \$1,126 for the church. Pumpkin and tote bag painting proved to be a big hit offering budding artist an unusual canvas for some very creative pieces. Church games run by FPUU RE students offered entertainment to many a participant throughout the day. Steeple tours once again provided an opportunity to introduce the community to our historic building and offer people a unique vista of downtown Medfield. Many thanks to all of the individuals who generously gave their time and effort to make the 2009 Medfield Day a great success for FPUU Medfield.

Buchanan Endowment Continues to Grow

The FPUU Buchanan Endowment received a recent boost thanks to the wonderful generosity of many individuals who made donations in memory of Kay Buchanan. Nearly \$2,500 was added to the Endowment bringing the total to nearly \$17,000. The Buchanan Endowment assures the long-range financial future of the church and can be used to fund capital needs and special projects that further the mission of the church. Kay is missed tremendously by the FPUU community but her legacy will live on in perpetuity through the Buchanan Endowment.

Meetinghouse Yard Improvements

There is a continuing interest on the part of some members of the congregation in improving the lawn area in front of the Meetinghouse. The trees, as lovely as they are, obscure public view

To accomplish the next step, we propose to do some tree work to open up the yard space to improve the visibility of the Meetinghouse and come one step closer to creating a more private garden environment in front of the UHouse and Meetinghouse.

The tree work involves the following:

- removal of the mature Norway Maple at the SE corner of the yard. (Our horticulturist says it is an invasive specie and would not recommend keeping it.)
- removing dead limbs from the large birch on the SE corner of the UHouse
- trimming up the lowest hanging branches on the Locust in the left front of the church.

Three reputable tree service people have bid on the work. The bids range from \$700 to \$875 for the work including stump

grinding, chipping all limbs and cleanup.

The Town has been contacted and has no jurisdiction because the Norway Maple is on Church property.

The Building and Grounds Committee has considered this proposal and recommends that the FPUU Board approve this work.



Barbara and Fred Bunger, along with Eve Potts, working on improvements to our Meetinghouse Yard.

of the grand and welcoming tetrastyle portico that is the front of the building. This architecture dates back to the Greek Revival period (1820-1860) of the United States, when the young nation was expressing its confidence and hopefulness through the architecture of humanity's first democracy. In addition, Reverend Bob has spoken of his vision that at least part of the front lawn be reconfigured to have a gathering space free of through-traffic. To date, work to improve the front yard has resulted in the installation of a Peace Pole, planting of a garden along the fence and plantings next to the sidewalk stairway.

Services (All Services Begin at 10:00AM)

November 1st "Being Present"

Today's sermon will look at some practical and spiritual ways of being present with others in a way that is healing, nurturing, and potentially even transforming. Discover what is both natural and surprising about this process, including how it affects your life as well.

November 8th "Building Your Own Theology"

Members of last year's Building Your Own Theology Class will lead our service today.

November 15th "Religious Discrimination"

History shows us that some American churches had found justification for slavery and Jim Crow and a basis to oppose interracial marriage and voting rights for women and blacks - in the Bible and religion. Today's sermon will look at ways in which those same churches use their teachings to oppress and denigrate gay people and the effects of those teachings on gay teens in particular.

November 22nd Intergenerational Thanksgiving Service

November 29th "On Retreat at Ferry Beach"

Today we invite the Rev. Fayre Stephenson, Program Director of the Ferry Beach Camp and Conference Center to First Parish. Today's sermon will reflect on what "retreat" means to us in our lives and the benefits of making a summer visit to Ferry Beach.

December 06th "Essentialism"

Essentialism is the spontaneous tendency to assume your group shares characteristics such as niceness, and intelligence. Today's sermon will look at the results of recent studies regarding children and race, and the role of adults in the formation of healthy attitudes about race in their children.