

First Parish Medfield



26 North St.

Medfield, MA 02052

(508)359-4594

www.firstparishmedfield.org

December 2010 Newsletter

Upcoming Events:

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| December 1 | Facilitated Bible Reading |
| December 5 | Semi-Annual Board Meeting |
| December 16 | Executive Board Meeting |
| December 19 | Intergenerational Winter Solstice Service |
| December 24 | Christmas Eve Service |
| December 25 | Christmas Day |

From the Minister

Dear Friends:

Happy December! The days are shorter, the nights longer and the season of quiet reflection is upon us. The following passage entitled, “All I Want for Christmas,” written by David Blanchard is, I think, a great tool for enabling such reflection. I hope you will read it as a family and discuss with each other just how this Christmas season can leave you feeling more connected to each other and the world.

This is a time of year when we ask - and are asked – what do you want? Shall it be another tie, a new pair of gloves, a book? We ask and answer. We shop, we wrap, we ship. And the season usually comes and goes without us ever really answering the question: *What do you want?*

Some of the things we want we might be afraid to ask for because we can't be sure what we would do if we got them. Many things we want we don't know enough to ask for. Most things we can't ask for because we know no one can give them to us.

Most people ask the question without any interest in really knowing, yet it can be a question for each of us to hold on to for a time in mind and heart. What do we want? Not what would we like, but what do we want to give us a deeper connection with life and to help us give expression to our love? Not a long list of things, but a sense of clarity that illuminates what it is we are doing and why. Not outward signs of generosity, but an internal sense of caring that guides us to give in any season. Not just the reflex of always giving, but also the courage to truly answer some of the people who ask us, “What do you want?”

Dare to answer. Think of the things you want, and the things that others close to you would want. Imagine the ways they might be given and received.

What do you want?

In Faith,
Bob McKetchnie

From the D.R.E. Shelley Dennis

Religious Education, the Postmodern Mind, and Why They Both Matter to You

On Saturday November 6th Joyce Fetteroll, Kirsten D'Abate, Laura Wing and Rev. Bob graciously gave of their time to attend a district-wide Religious Education training. It was stimulating and invigorating, but the news was mixed.

The bad news first: Most churches are having a hard time keeping people in their pews and children in their Sunday School classes. Compounding that the traditional model of RE is outdated, and unappealing for both children and adult volunteers. Most UU's are adult converts, and most people raised as UU's don't come back once they've reached adulthood. If we can't find a way to keep our children into adulthood, the future looks grim.

There are many reasons for this. Children and families are overcommitted and depleted and seek activities that are meaningful uses of their time, a fact we have noticed with much wailing and gnashing of teeth in RE these days. Today's children crave a deeper exploration of how they fit into the universe and how they can make meaningful contributions rather than discussion about the ideas or activities that only scratch the surface.

So what is the good news? As I see it, Unitarian Universalism is uniquely poised to re-imagine the purpose of church as well as RE in an age of religious pluralism. Since we have no absolutes to

fight against, we need to work on exploring why our faith is relevant.

One way suggested in the RE training is incorporating multigenerational and whole family faith formation alongside our children into our worship practices.

Partly this requires a renewed commitment to putting the Seven Principles into practice with our children because they want to apply the Seven Principles in ways that are meaningful to them and explore where they fit into the bigger picture, not just learn about these ideas. There is no roadmap for where we must travel for and with our children in order to assist them in creating meaning for themselves. Frankly, it's never happened before and we're on the cutting edge.

Religious education for UUs is moving towards a vision of "faith formation," and this affects every member of our congregation. In order to preserve and grow both our church and Unitarian Universalism we will need to consider how we can cultivate this faith while meeting the needs of our congregants in the modern world. The needed changes will affect the flavor of our church's activities and will invigorate the life of the congregation and the individuals within it.

Joyce and I, and the other members of the RE Committee would love for you to contribute your thoughts in creating an approach to Religious Education—Faith Formation—that is livelier and more engaging for everyone—including you!

In peace,
Shelley Dennis and Joyce Fetteroll

***Please join us for a congregation-wide Religious Education visioning session:
Saturday, January 29th
12noon-4pm
First Parish of Medfield***

Intergenerational Solstice Service: Please join us in a spirit of openness and warmth as the children creatively explore the themes of darkness and Joseph Campbell's interpretation of the hero's journey using myth, magic, music and metaphor ☺ Service will be held on Sunday, December 19th at 10 am.

Children's Religious Education: We will be meeting in the U House at 10 am to plan and rehearse for Solstice Service during RE on December 5th and December 12th.

Our Fall fundraiser was a smashing success! For the first time at First Parish we did an Innisbrook Gift Wrap fundraiser. In relatively painless fashion, we raised \$178 to go toward Dari-Yoo Ka's tuition. When added to the balance remaining from last year's fundraisers, we will have enough left over cover *both* this year's tuition *and* next year's tuition! Nice work, First Parish, and thank you to all who supported this fundraiser, either by purchasing, selling or just cheering us on ☺

Our Whole Lives: 8th and 9th grade OWL will meet on December 5th and December 12th from 7p-9p in the Vestry. There will be NO meetings the remainder of December but OWL *will* meet on January 2nd, 2011.

FPUU Executive Board Notes

Notes from November 2010 Board Meeting

- The financial situation for First Parish is not looking good. Income is below budget as pledges are lagging, plus rental and fundraising money is below budget. Expenses have been way above budget because of UHouse roof and necessary elevator repairs. To meet short term cash needs, \$10,000 of securities has been sold. The Church finances will be discussed at the Semi-annual meeting December 5. Ideas for increasing rental or other income will be appreciated.
- At this time, only T-Mobile is actively pursuing the wireless antenna project. T-Mobile is considering a proposal to pay up-front the full cost of a new spire in return for a reduced monthly rental charge. First Parish cannot take the risk to invest in a new [spire](#). There will be an update on the wireless antenna project at the Semi-annual meeting December 5.
- A First Parish Religious Education Visioning Session with Deborah Levering of the UU Massachusetts Bay District is scheduled for January 29, 2011. This 3 to 4 hour session is intended to include all First Parish members to help define the future direction of Religious Education.
- Planning for the March 5 Charity Auction continues. Donations of Red Sox tickets and vacation time have been received. A list of auction tasks was discussed and volunteers requested. If you are interested in helping the Charity Auction, please talk to any Board member.

FIRST PARISH CHARITY AUCTION MARCH 5

We need a theme!

We need volunteers!

Talk to Rev Bob or a Board member if you have ideas and/or want to help.

Holiday Message from the Membership Committee

Before we turn the page on November, I want to thank the Worship Committee, Rev. Bob McKetchnie, Eva Kendrick and the First Parish Choir for the spiritually uplifting worship service they presented on the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

The choir sang the premier performance of a beautiful and lively anthem that was composed and directed by Eva, our music director. Then Rev. Bob followed with an insightful homily about "Gratefulness". He left the pulpit to deliver this message, which had an amazing impact on the full sanctuary. There was so much energy and good spirit created by this service. It was wonderful!



The choir will be performing again for the Winter Solstice Program on Dec. 19th and again on Christmas Eve.

As you welcome in the Holiday Season, may you find peace and joy in your hearts, and celebrate the community of love and caring that First Parish provides us all.

Have a blessed Holiday Season,

The Membership Committee

Barbara Bunger, Sara Drumm, Nancy Kingsbury, Margaret Rolph, Jim Stetson

First Parish News and Announcements

FPUU and Amazon.com

With the holidays quickly approaching, please remember that if you are using Amazon.com, you can help support First Parish!

To do this, go to our website www.firstparishmedfield.org and click on the "Support First Parish-Amazon & Equal Exchange" link on the left. That will open up a drop down with a tab for "Equal Exchange" and "Amazon". Click on the tab for "Amazon" and this will open a page with a link to Amazon.com on it. Just go on to the Amazon site, select and order any merchandise as you ordinarily do – and that's it – you have now helped First Parish! First Parish receives a portion (between 2 and 5%) of every dollar you spend online at Amazon.com! Last year FPUU received about \$400.00!

It won't cost you any more and will help support First Parish.

So – go to our website - use the link to go to the Amazon site - make your selections - purchase - that's it! Please refer your friends and neighbors to this link too!



Save the date: Sunday, December 5th following the service there will be a brief semi-annual meeting to report on and discuss the finances of the church and plans for the 2nd half of the church year.

Book Sunday December 26th



Love to read? Have a book that had such a big impact on you that you want to share it with others? Come and enjoy a relaxed, casual Sunday service the day after Christmas where we will discuss the books that have had an impact on us. Share with the group what your favorite books have been, and why. The service will be held downstairs in the vestry.



Let's relieve all the stress of the holidays by attending "**Let's Laugh Today**" on Monday, **December 27th** at the First Universalist Society in Franklin Meetinghouse, 262 Chestnut Street in Franklin, MA at 7:15pm to 8:30pm. We meet on every fourth Monday of the month and everyone is invited to attend. There is a \$5 donation per person and \$10 maximum per family. We laugh in a group and initiate laughter as a form of exercise. Through eye contact and child-like playfulness, laughter then becomes contagious and real. It is based on the scientifically proven fact that the body cannot tell the difference between fake and real laughter. You get the same benefits to your health, even from the first session! All physical abilities can do this. There are no fancy poses. Please bring your water bottle because laughing is dehydrating. Linda and Bill Hamaker are Certified Laughter Yoga Teachers. Call 508-660-2223 or see www.letslaughtoday.com for more information and other opportunities to laugh!

FPUU Calendar

Wednesday, December 1	Facilitated Bible Reading 7:00-9:00 pm U-House
Sunday, December 5	Choir Rehearsal 9:00 am Semi-Annual Meeting 11:00 am OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm
Sunday, December 12	Choir Rehearsal 9:00 am OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm
Tuesday, December 14	Worship & Music Committee Meeting 7:30 pm
Wednesday, December 15	Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm
Thursday, December 16	First Parish Board Meeting 7:30 pm U-House
Sunday, December 19	Choir Rehearsal 9:00 am
Wednesday, December 22	Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm
Friday, December 24	Choir Rehearsal 4:00 pm. Christmas Eve Service 5:30 pm
Saturday, December 25	Christmas Day
Saturday, January 1	New Year's Day
Sunday, January 2	OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm
Sunday, January 9	OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm
Tuesday, January 11	Worship & Music Committee Meeting 7:30-9:00 pm
Monday, January 17	Martin Luther King Day
Thursday, January 20	First Parish Board Meeting 7:30 U-House
Sunday, January 23	OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm
Wednesday, January 26	Facilitated Bible Reading 7:00-9:00 pm
Saturday, January 29	Religious Education Visioning Session 12:00-4:00 pm
Sunday, January 30	OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm

For complete listing of events, please visit <http://my.calendars.net/fpuu>. If you need to book church space for an event or meeting, please check availability and then contact admin@firstparishmedfield.org

First Parish Helps Celebrate the Birthday of Renewal House

On Saturday, Nov. 6, several FPUU congregants drove into the Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry in Roxbury to help celebrate the 30th anniversary of the founding of Renewal House, a facility that shelters victims of domestic violence and provides services to the residents. The party was a gathering of current and former residents.

Those of us who attended were: Barbara and Fred Bunger, Marcia Trahan, Margaret Rolph, Patricia Pratt, and Pat Clark. We arrived early to start decorating and setting up for the event. Financed by the funds collected at the October Breakfast, our church contributed drinks, paper goods for the dinner, decorations and balloons, and a decorated cake. Also, our Religious Education program made party favors for the children. Red Bones restaurant provided a great bar-b-que dinner for us all and a wonderful jazz combo and jazz vocalist entertained us.

After dinner, several residents and former residents gave testimonials about how the program had helped them. All evening the many children enjoyed dancing to the music, had their faces painted, and participated in various games. It was a wondrous celebration and all of us from FPUU enjoyed the experience thoroughly.



From left to right: Barbara Bunger, Margaret Rolph, Marcia Trahan, Patricia Pratt, and Fred Bunger. Not pictured – Pat Clark (Photo by Pat Clark)



GUEST AT YOUR TABLE

Our Guest at Your Table program is under way. Founded in 1939 to rescue victims of Nazi persecution, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee is an independent human rights organization whose work is grounded in UU principles and made possible by the activism and generosity of more than 47,000 members and supporters.

For more than 30 years, UU communities nationwide have participated in Guest at Your Table. They have come together for this special tradition to give thanks, celebrate UU values, and partner with UUSC to change the world.

This year, Guest at Your Table participants are celebrating the work of UUSC and its program partners to strengthen workers' rights; protect the right to safe, affordable water; defend civil liberties and democratic processes; and preserve the rights of vulnerable people after disasters.

Guest at Your Table is our UU tradition for educating our communities about human needs and human rights, and sharing our blessings.

WELCOME A GUEST AT YOUR TABLE

GAYT boxes and envelopes became available November 21. Place a Guest at Your Table box where you have your meals and keep it there for several weeks. During that time, imagine a different guest at your table with you and your family each week. As often as you can, insert coins or bills in the box. Convert the money into a check made out to **UUSC**, and return the box in January 2011.

Gifts of \$100 or more from a family or individual will be doubled through a matching grant.

There has never been a more important time for us to raise our voices together to defend justice and basic human rights.

If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Kingsbury.

Medfield Food Cupboard



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

- Canned pasta
- Juice boxes and bottles
- Boxes of individual oatmeal packets - apple cinnamon, brown sugar, variety, etc.
- Canned green beans
- Canned carrots
- Liquid hand soaps

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

Medfield Food Pantry Christmas Wish List



Dear First Parish,

This year the Social Action Committee decided that once again we would offer the Christmas "wish list" of the Medfield Food Pantry. I will bring the list of the client's wishes to church and also send it out in an email. Please contact me at debra.carbarnes@gmail.com OR call me at 781 956 2901 if you have any questions.

The Food Pantry has offered us 40 wishes, and most of those are in the form of gift cards. As many people have asked me what a "suggested amount" for a gift card would be, I posed the question to the coordinator of the presents. She told me that any amount is appreciated, but that the suggested amount might be \$25.00 based on similar organization's gift cards. The choice is up to you! I MUST collect your presents on **December 14th**.

The past few years have shown our church to be extremely generous to the clients of the Medfield Food Pantry at Christmas. Every year they have thanked us for our church's generosity. No other church in Medfield fulfills these wishes to the adults and Senior citizens of the food pantry.

When you do bring in your gift, I will have a collection box located in the front of the church where you can drop off your present. Please write down what the present is, somewhere on your present. Wrapping is nice, but not necessary.

Thank you!!!!
Debra Carbarnes

Services

(All Services Begin at 10:00AM)



December 5th “Living What You Are Born To Do”

There are many external forces at work that influence what decisions we make, what choices we consider for our life’s work. This sermon encourages reflection on what you are “hearing” from the inside; what passion remains untapped or untested and asks: “What might I finally have the courage to explore in my life?”

December 12th “A Reflection on Warmth”

Dante, (of Dante’s Inferno) learned that warmth is the potential for all emotion, and therefore makes life itself possible. Today in this season of cold temperatures, the sermon will reflect on “warmth” as we experience it from within and without.

December 19th “Our Intergenerational Solstice Service”

Today will be our annual Solstice Service led by Shelley Dennis and the children of our church.

December 24th “Christmas Eve Candlelight Service”

At 5:30 on Friday Dec 24th we will gather for our traditional Christmas Eve Service of music and readings and candlelight. Come with your families and bring your friends!

December 26th “Books That Have Inspired Us” Becca Kornet

In this service you will be invited to share “that book of a lifetime” that you want others to know about.

January 2nd “Mission Possible”

Today’s sermon will report on what I have learned in my investigations of mission trips by other churches and organizations. We will make definite plans for establishing a study group to define our “mission”.

Notes from the church office...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

Email: admin@firstparishmedfield.org.