



26 North St. Medfield, MA 02052 (508)359-4594 www.firstparishmedfield.org

January 2011 Newsletter

Upcoming Events:

- January 1 New Year's Day
- January 11 Worship & Music Committee Meeting
- January 16 Initiation for Justice Study Group
- January 17 Martin Luther King Day
- January 20 First Parish Executive Board Meeting
- January 23 RE Teacher Training
- January 26 Facilitated Bible Reading
- January 29 Religious Education Visioning Session
- January 30 Guest Speaker Mark D. Hinderlie

From the Minister

Dear Friends:

Religious Education as defined by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) has been evolving for quite some time. "Lifespan Religious Education" is the term more recently used in our materials – but what does it mean?

Recently five of us from FPUU participated in a workshop hosted by the Mass Bay District (MBD) of the UUA led by Deborah Levering, Director of Faith Formation. In that workshop we wrestled with questions that I hadn't thought as deeply about since seminary.

Collectively we realized that since we were fortunate to have our former religious educator, Jeanette Ruyle for more than a decade it has also been a long time since the congregation has reflected on the many proposed questions and ideas that were presented to us. Questions like: What should the goal of UU children's religious education be? Should we be striving to develop adult UU's? What should the structure of our Sunday time be? Should we have intergenerational services every Sunday? What trends involving lifespan religious education have developed in our churches across the U.S. and Canada? What amount of adult programming would our church like to support? No doubt you may have strong opinions one way or another when considering these questions.

On Saturday January 29th from noon until 4:00 p.m. Deborah Levering, Director of Faith Formation is coming to Medfield to facilitate a "Religious Education

Visioning" which requires your participation. We need everyone to attend in order to discern what is important to us regarding religious education. This information will inform our future planning, i.e.; program development, financial and human resource allocation, and help to define our identity to the outside community. This workshop needs the input of everyone whether you have children or not, whether your children have come through our programs already or whether they are just beginning.

Strong religious education programs attract members and families to our church. What we offer and how we offer it is a matter of concern to every member of FPUU. Our support of religious education is articulated in both our third and fourth principles which state: (3rd) We affirm and promote: acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations. (4th) A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

Creating the environment for these principles to be realized by every member is the responsibility of all of us. Please mark your calendars now for the 29th. I will ask that you sign up for this workshop as we need to ensure a discussion group size of fifty or more to cost justify this workshop which the district is providing at no cost to us.

> In faith, Bob McKetchnie

From the Director of Religious Education

Strong Language Will Be Used, Viewer Discretion is Advised

Hello fellow UU's,

I'm in the throes of preparations for Solstice, with an eye toward our Congregational Visioning session planned for late January. I'm still getting acquainted with many of you, and it occurred to me that I don't yet have a sense of where different people stand on the issue of strong language. Oh, I'm not talking about the four-letter kind, I'm talking about the kind that the religious right has taken hostage...the kind that, because of its use by the religious right still causes ruffled feathers in many UU congregations. I want to prepare you for this visioning session, because some of that language will be used.

Language like values, beliefs, religion, and faith formation for example. Many UU's bristle at the term "faith formation" in particular, because in the common usage of our day faith implies endorsement of particular beliefs in a particular formulation of God. Even renowned mythologist Joseph Campbell once said, "I don't have to have faith, I have experience."

In response to that concern, allow me to share some favorite quotes:

"Faith in reason is the trust that the ultimate natures of things lie together in a harmony which excludes mere arbitrariness...The faith in the order of nature which has made possible the growth of science is a particular example of a deeper faith...To experience this faith is to know that in being ourselves we are more than ourselves." ~Alfred North Whitead, Mathematician and Philosopher

"Faith is...an inner quality that unfolds as we learn to trust our own deepest experience...No matter what we encounter in life, it is faith that enables us to try again, to trust again, to love again." ~Sharon Salzberg, Buddhist Meditation Instructor

Isn't that what we would all like for our children? The ability for them to trust their inner voices? To try again after disappointment? To trust again after life's betrayals? To love again after loss? That is part of what we aim to cultivate in our Religious Education program, and not just for our children, but for our adults as well.

As we near the visioning session, I invite you to open your mind to other ways of hearing faith language. If there are terms that are particularly problematic for you, I invite you to meet with me for coffee and talk about the experiences that give rise to those terms. And lastly, most importantly, please stay at the table and listen for the deeper meaning, because when you disengage from the conversation, the fundamentalists win. Blessings and peace, Shelley

If you are looking for a unique opportunity for spiritual practice, one in which you can:

- Practice mindfulness
- Be spontaneous
- Laugh with your whole body
- Make messes (small ones, anyway)
- Experiment with experiential worship styles

... then teaching RE is for you!

Teacher training will be held on January 6th for the January 9th-January 30th session and January 23rd for the February 6th-February 20th session. Please be sure to attend the training if you are interested in teaching during February so we can put you on the schedule!

From the Executive Board

Dear First Parish Members and Friends:

The First Parish Unitarian-Universalist semi-annual meeting was held on December 5, 2010.

The Church finances and status of the wireless facility were discussed at length. Glen D'Abate, Treasurer, gave a complete report of Church expenses and income for this fiscal year and predicted a deficit of around \$25,000. The shortfall was the result of unbudgeted expenses for buildings repair, lower rental and fundraising income and, most significantly, by a delay in the anticipated start of the wireless facility. At the meeting, a "barn-raising" of \$25,000 was suggested.

The membership of First Parish has elected to maintain the vitality of the Church and spur long term health and growth. You have supported hiring a professional Director of Religious Education to work half time to maintain and grow the program. You have supported a professional Music Director to build the choir and music programs. You have supported the hiring of a 12 hour per week Administrator to improve Church communication and reduce the pressure on volunteer time. The Church is on a very positive path to grow the capacity, capability and offerings to attract new members.

The improved programs and inflation have raised expenses 14% since 2006. However, pledge income has not kept pace. The 2010 average pledge is \$1,691 with 67 pledge units, compared to 2005 when the average pledge was \$1,663 with 69 pledge units. Therefore, the 2010/2011 fiscal year pledge income budget is approximately the same as it was in 2005/2006.

Rental, fundraising, grants, etc. have had to increase from \$31,000 to \$48,000 (50%) to keep pace with rising expenses. For 2010/2011, the anticipated wireless facility startup was to bring in \$13,400. With the delays, however, the income will likely not start until next fiscal year.

The Church needs to take action to reduce the deficit. The Board <u>does not</u> recommend cutting expenses. We do not want to risk all the positive improvements on the foundation for growth. We want to work on increasing income. We are very optimistic on having the wireless facility income starting in the 2011/2012. We are working to increase other rental income including plans for a Farmers Market. We will continue to search for other sources of income such as grants and other donations.

The Church has a \$25,000 hole to fill before the end of this Church year. A "bridge" to the 2011/2012 wireless income must be built. Accordingly, the Board is asking each Church member to participate in a "Bridge Building" campaign. If every member could bring forward a substantial (more than 25%) advance of their 2011/2012 pledge by March 1, 2011, the Church will then have the bridge it needs to finish 2010/2011. The startup of the wireless facility will make up for the diminished pledges for next year. With one wireless renter, the Church can balance the budget and begin setting aside a capital reserve for future large repairs. With two or more renters, the Church can plan on additional capital reserve funding, new capital projects, social action projects, improving programs, and starting a marketing campaign to grow Church membership.

We hope everyone will contribute. More details will be sent in January.

Fred Bunger Chair, Executive Board First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church of Medfield

News from the Social Action Committee

"The Rising Tide of Elder Homelessness"

The First Parish Medfield Social Action Committee is pleased to announce that on **January 30, 2011** Hearth President and CEO Mark D. Hinderlie will speak on the organization's initiatives to end elder homelessness.

The faces of homelessness we see or hear about do not usually include images or stories of elderly persons who are homeless. Homeless elders, although increasing in numbers, continue to be a forgotten population.

Hearth is dedicated to the elimination of homelessness among the elderly through housing, outreach, and advocacy. Hearth was founded as *The Committee to End Elder Homelessness, Inc.* (CEEH) in 1991 by a group of seven professional women with diverse experience in housing, finance, health, and human services. They realized that elders were a growing percentage of the homeless population and that no one was expressly addressing the issue.

Mr. Hinderlie began his service to Hearth in 2006. His former positions include President and Executive Director of Federated Dorchester Neighborhood Houses, President of Hinderlie Associates, Chief Development Officer for Franciscan Children's Hospital and Rehabilitation Center, President of the Boston Children's Institute. Executive Director of Boston Children's Services, and Director of Development for Project Bread/The Walk for Hunger. Throughout the 1980s, Mr. Hinderlie held leadership positions with the United Way of Massachusetts Bay, the Community & Youth Services Division of the City of Cambridge, and the Community Learning Center. He graduated from Yale and holds a Masters Degree in Public Administration from Harvard's Kennedy School.

The Social Action Committee: Helen Beedy, Barbara Bunger, Deb Carbarnes, Patricia Clark, Alison Galley, Patricia Pratt, Louise Rachin, Margaret Rolph & Laura Wing.

Message from the Membership Committee

Happy New Year!!

We hope you all had a lovely Christmas and safely weathered the blizzard that followed. Today is magical with the sun glistening off the softly rounded mounds of snow. How glorious it is to be alive and witness such beauty!!

For those who attended, our Christmas Eve Service was a joyous event. The sanctuary was full, the music and the message were uplifting. The choir sang an original musical composition written by John Kornet and Eva Kendrick. We are fortunate to have such talent among our congregants.

And to top it off, in the month of December, we had two families sign our membership book. Please "welcome" the Donovan Family, Mike and Karen and their daughters, Molly and Shaylagh. Also, please "welcome" the Zarkers, Jeff and Cindy, and their children, Jack and Abbey.

In the month of January, Rev. Bob will be offering the Introduction to Unitarian Universalism Class. This is always a very popular class because Rev. Bob has a knack for making the subject come alive. If you're interested in attending, please contact Rev. Bob at <uuketch@gmail.com>. This class is open to all—new members, folks who might be considering joining the church or just want to know more about U.U. ism, or current members looking to update their knowledge.

Do keep reading our column because we are planning a couple of initiatives for the upcoming year!

Blessings and Peace in 2011.

Membership Committee: Error! Reference source not found., Sara Drumm, Nancy Kingsbury, Margaret Rolph, and Jim Stetson.

FPUU Announcements

WISHES FULFILLED:



Thanks to Mike and Sara Drumm, the Vestry has a new refrigerator. They donated their surplus 2005 model to replace the wheezing, frost- clogged 1980's model. The newer refrigerator will save the Church \$171 per year in energy costs and delight all those who have struggled to thaw out & clean the old one. THANK YOU DRUMMS!

WISHES:

- If anyone has a surplus desk and desk chair, our new Director of RE would appreciate having them. The current table and chair is not adequate.

- Vestry Stove: A 2000's era electric range to replace the 1980's model would spruce up the Vestry kitchen.

Time to collect your Guest at Your Table!

On **January 9**, we'll close our Guest at Your Table program with the collection of the Guest at Your Table boxes.

In recent weeks, our Guest at Your Table boxes and *Stories of Hope* have taught us about real people engaged in struggles for justice in the United States and around the world. It has also taught us about our power to change the world when we support the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and the many amazing people they partner with.

Before bringing back your Guest at Your Table box, be sure to complete the form on the box. And please convert your cash and coins to a check made out to "UUSC."



We'll announce the results of our Guest at Your Table program as soon as possible. On behalf of UUSC, we thank and commend every person who has chosen to share their blessings through Guest at Your Table.

If you miss bringing back your Guest at Your Table box, you can pass it to Nancy Kingsbury, our UUSC local representative, at any time. Thanks so much!

January 16th - Initiatives for Justice Study Group – IF Justice

On January 2nd Bob will be preaching a follow-up sermon to the one he preached last May on Haiti. The result of this sermon will be the formation of a study group which will explore the possibilities of a "hands-on" service trip. Our destination, the nature of the relationships we will establish, the service we may provide, and the agency we align ourselves with for our first undertaking will all be determined by this study group. The group will initially meet on **January 16th from 11:30 till 12:15** in the sanctuary.



UU Urban Ministry Hosting Book Discussion Group

From Kate Wilkinson, UU Urban Ministry: We are hosting a book discussion group on **Thursday, January 20, at 6pm**. This year we asked all of our volunteers working with youth to read Geoffrey Canada's <u>Reaching Up for Manhood</u>. It's a wonderful book which

offers so much insight into working with the youth in our program. To encourage folks to finish the book, we're meeting over hot soup to discuss it. I'd like to open this invitation to you, our delegates, as well. **RSVP to Rev. Kate at <u>kwilkinson@uuum.org</u>**

Here's what Marian Wright Edelman says about the book: "Geoffrey Canada is on the front lines with youth and poverty every day, and his <u>Reaching Up for Manhood</u> answers the questions, 'How did things get like this?' and 'What can we do?' But this terrific book isn't a lecture. It is both an entertaining memoir of Canada's own teenage years and a sensitive portrayal of what our children face in today's world. If you have or care about children, this book may be one of the most valuable tools you've ever picked up."

<u>Reaching Up For Manhood</u> is available at your local library, your local bookstore, and new or used on <u>Amazon.com</u>. A limited number of copies are also available through our Volunteer Resource Library at UUUM.



Let's all make the New Year's Resolution to exercise our laughter muscles every fourth Monday evening by attending the Let's Laugh Today Laughter Club at the First Universalist Society in Franklin, 262 Chestnut Street, Franklin, MA! We will be laughing together on <u>Monday, January 24th</u> at 7:15pm. There is no need to attend regularly, but you will probably want to! All ages are welcome! If you can breathe and laugh, you can do laughter yoga! \$5 Donation to the church/\$10 maximum per family. <u>Please bring your</u>

<u>water bottle as laughing is dehydrating</u>. See <u>www.letslaughtoday.com</u> for other opportunities to laugh or call Linda and Bill Hamaker, Certified Laughter Yoga Teachers at 508-660-2223 if you have any questions. No need to pre-register.

January 26th Facilitated Bible Reading

"Massive injustice has been and continues to be done in the name of the Bible. But the problem is that all of us allow the powers and principalities of both secular and spiritual oppression to usurp the spirit of the Bible and use it to legitimize such clear sins as economic and environmental exploitation, racism, sexism, homophobia, and more. Meanwhile the Bible is about the beauty and goodness of creation itself; about the ancient human struggle for freedom and liberation; about frustration with violence and injustice throughout the generations; and about experiences of exultation, expectation, and inspiration that can sustain the human quest for wisdom, justice and peace." (John Buehrens: "Understanding the Bible")

First Davish offers a Fasilitated Dible Dead

First Parish offers a Facilitated Bible Reading with our minister, Bob McKetchnie once a month in the U-House. All meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and run no later than 9:00 p.m. The class meets again on Wednesday January 26th.

This class does not interpret the Bible for you. It requires you to read the text and engage in discussion about what the text means to you and how it may have meaning in the contemporary world in which we live. Bob facilitates by offering the insight of many biblical scholars who offer "commentary" on individual texts and shares what he has learned in over twenty-five years of studying the Bible himself. The text we use is the following: "New Revised Standard Version of the Bible with Apocrypha" ISBN # 0195283805

To sign up for this class please drop an email to: <u>uuketch@gmail.com</u>

Coming up soon in Adult Education at First Parish: Introduction to Unitarian Universalism

This three-session adult education course is designed to introduce the ideas, history, and people that make up the First Parish of Medfield and the Free Church Tradition of which Unitarianism and Universalism are a part. This is one step towards involvement in a community of faith dedicated to the preservation of religious freedom and the uplifting of the human spirit.

This course will be offered in January. The day, time and place will be determined by the class participants. I do this because often both parents of a "new" family want to take the course and it work out best for us to meet when it is most convenient for them.

If you are not new to First Parish but would like a refresher in our history please feel free to join this class.

Anyone interested should contact Bob McKetchnie at <u>uuketch@gmail.com</u>

A Unitarian Universalist Cantata, to benefit the UU Urban Ministry



What: A benefit concert in support of the UU Urban Ministry

When: Sunday, January 30, 2011, 3pm

Where: UU Urban Ministry, First Church in Roxbury, 10 Putnam Street, Roxbury, MA 02119

Cost: Tickets are \$20; \$15 for students and seniors

"Sources: A Unitarian Universalist Cantata", written by Rev. Kendyl Gibbons (words) and Rev. Jason Shelton (music,) will be presented on January 30 at 3:00 pm to benefit the work and outreach programs of the UU Urban Ministry. Singers from the Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network – Greater Boston Coalition, from ten participating congregations are joining forces to produce this event. They will be joined by children from Roxbury and Concord, who will sing parts of the cantata with the adult chorus.

"Sources," which explores the six sources of Unitarian Universalist faith and its promise for the future, is under the direction of Elizabeth Norton, Director of Music for First Parish in Concord. The children's chorus is under the supervision of Gail Carey, director of the Concord congregation's children's choirs. An orchestra of keyboards, strings and percussion will accompany the performance, which also features several local guest artists.

Jeannie Gagné, performer and voice professor at Berklee School of Music, will add her jazz/pop vocals to "Sources." Gagne will be joined by poet and performance artist Regie O'Hare Gibson, winner of national and international poetry slam competitions, and Anderson Manuel, director of the gospel chorus of First Parish in Concord, as featured soloists in the cantata.

The Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry unites communities and transforms individuals through education, service, and advocacy. The UU Urban Ministry engages communities and congregations in social action and change with programs that empower youth and adults to realize their full potential. Support our shared ministry by coming to this fabulous concert.

To reserve tickets or for more information, please contact UUUM Development Director Ruth Crocker at <u>rcrocker@uuum.org</u>.

March 2nd - "Building Your Own Theology"

D. H. Lawrence once wrote," I believe that religious education is a life-span process of building our own theology and harnessing those deepest explosions."

How does one "build" a theology unless they have what Richard Gilbert calls a "toolbox"?

This eight week course 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. You will learn so much about yourself in this class.

The class is offered on eight consecutive Wednesday nights beginning March 2nd from 7:15 p.m.-9:15. Class size will be 9-12.

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.

Medfield Food Cupboard



Food Pantry Donations Needed

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

- Applesauce (little cups servings)
- Raisins
- Canned Chicken
- Rice
- Canned Pasta
- Juice (Bottles and boxes)
- Coffee and Tea
- Shampoo and Conditioners

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.

Annual Fund Drive 2011-2012 Nurture Your Spirit Help Heal Our World

Our annual fund drive will kick off during the week of March 22 - 27 with the **Nurture Your Spirit Help Heal Our World** theme, with a fund drive event to be announced, and with the annual fund drive Sunday Service on March 27.

This year's Annual Fund Drive Committee welcomes two new Committee members, Mark Samels and Jeff Zarker, who will be joining Greg Beedy, Duncan Glover, and Marshal Sugarman. We are grateful for the expertise, new energy, and fresh ideas that Mark and Jeff bring to the Committee.

The Annual Fund Drive Committee is responsible for planning and conducting the annual fund drive each spring. Together with volunteer fund drive leaders, the Committee contacts every member and friend in the church to ask for a pledge. If you would like to participate, please contact any member of the Committee.

Our 2010-2011 budget is approximately \$150,000, with about 75% of funding realized through the generous financial pledges made by us during our annual fund drive. This year presents as a financial challenge in part due to increased expenses including the cost of the U-House roof replacement as well as a delay in the anticipated startup of cellular income from our T-Mobile contract. Over the next few months, the Committee will provide more information about First Parish finances so we all know why our pledges are important and how they work for us.

First Parish Medfield is blessed to have generous members and friends who understand that First Parish needs our financial support every year at the annual fund drive time, in addition to the many hours of volunteer work we contribute. Our collective generosity is evidenced by last year's annual fund drive, which increased by 9% from the previous year to approximately \$113,000.

Whether you value First Parish for the Sunday worship services, the religious education programs, the social events, the opportunity for social action, or because it is important to you to have a home for liberal religious thought in the Medfield area and in this country – or for all of the above reasons – your support is most important.

The Canvass Committee: Greg Beedy, Duncan Glover, Mark Samels, Marshall Sugarman, and Jeff Zarker

Services (All Services Begin at 10:00 AM)

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".

January 9th "U.U. Religious Education: Now and in the Future"

On January 29th we will engage in a church-wide "visioning' of what the role of religious education is in our church community and within Unitarian Universalism at large. Today's sermon will set the stage for this exercise and explain its relevance to you whether you have children or not.

January 16th "The Spiritual Benefits of Being Honest"

Can you be blatantly honest with others and still be kind? To what extent can you be (or should you be) emotionally transparent? Does being honest all the time have drawbacks? These are some of the questions we will consider in today's sermon.

January 23rd "In Service to Each Other"

Interdependence is a primary theme among Unitarian Universalists and often comes at a cost. Today's sermon will examine whether "being in service to each other" always results in helping ourselves and others change our lives for the better.

January 30th "The Rising Tide of Elder Homelessness"

The faces of homelessness we see or hear about do not usually include images or stories of elderly persons who are homeless. Today we welcome Hearth (formerly the Committee to End Elder Homelessness) President and CEO Mark D. Hinderlie who will speak on the organization's initiatives to end elder homelessness.

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: <u>admin@firstparishmedfield.org</u>

FPUU Calendar

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
Sunday, January 16	Initiation for Justice Study Group 11:30-12:15 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	RE Teaching Training
	Faciliated Bible Reading 7:00-9:00 pm
Saturday, January 29	Religious Education Visioning Session 12:00-4:00 pm
Sunday, January 30	Guest Speaker Mark Hinderlie at our Sunday Service.
Sunday, January 30	OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm
Saturday, February 5	North Street Coffee House 7:00-10:00 pm
Sunday, February 6	OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm
Tuesday, February 8	Worship & Music Committee Meeting 7:30-9:00 pm
Sunday, February 13	OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm
Sunday, February 14	Valentine's Day
Thursday, February 17	First Parish Board Meeting 7:30 pm U-House
Monday, Febuary 21	Presidents Day
Wednesday, February 23	Facilitated Bible Reading 7:00-9:00 pm

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