



First Parish Medfield

26 North St.

Medfield, MA 02052

(508)359-4594

www.firstparishmedfield.org

February 2011 Newsletter

Upcoming Events:

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| February 5 | North Street Coffee House |
| February 6 | Initiatives For Justice Study Group |
| February 8 | Worship & Music Committee Meeting |
| February 13 | Congregational Members Meeting/Wireless Decision |
| February 14 | Valentine's Day |
| February 17 | First Parish Board Meeting |
| February 21 | President's Day |
| February 23 | Facilitated Bible Reading |

From the Minister

Dear Friends:

In the past eight years we have done a great job of keeping in touch with the young adult members of our congregation who are away at school or who are not at school but beginning careers following high school.

This connection begins at the end of every church year with our Bridging Ceremony that helps us establish a means of connecting with a graduating student during the years that immediately follow. In some cases the students have to look no further than their own college campuses. It also gives us a formal way of letting these young adults know that we love them and that we will always be here for them.

The students all know how to reach me and on occasion I get a note or an e-mail from them telling me about something that is going on in their lives. They have come to expect that at Christmastime we will invite them to participate in our Christmas Eve service. It is always a joy to see them and catch up on how they are doing and they often tell me how happy they are to be taking part.

This year for the ninth time we will be sending packages, called HUUGS (Hearty Unitarian Universalist Greetings) in early March to all those that I can identify as being away in high school, college, or beginning their careers “somewhere out there”.

If you want to participate in our HUUGS program it is very easy. The idea is to let the students know that we love them and that we know how hard they are working. Last year folks contributed note cards, letters, candy, cookies and small creative items that could be placed on a student’s desk or stuck to their fridge.

I will make the boxes available in the vestry on February 27th and March 6th. I expect that we will be sending about 21 HUUGS this year.

If you don’t feel you know these students very well, I still encourage you to send them a copy of your favorite poem or your own inspirational words.

In the past I have posted in the vestry many letters of thanks, and notes about what it felt like to receive this package from “home.” Many expressed their gratitude for our desire to stay connected with them.

In faith,

Bob McKetchnie

From the Director of Religious Education

BEING UU IN A NON-UU WORLD

One thing you realize if you are non-Christian is exactly how Christian your environment is. Our worldviews and holidays are not quite in sync with those of the world in which we find ourselves. We know that it's possible to be both atheist and ethical, or deeply religious and yet not adhere to a creed. Yet the religious lives of UU's are dismissed and misunderstood by mainstream Americans. We are the butt of Garrison Keillor jokes, and are considered by some right wing Christians to be a cult. This can be a difficult religion to follow.

The children in this congregation face a similar challenge in their schools, and we all know how hard it is to be different when you're young! Most UU adults did not grow up within UU congregations, and are newly discovering and developing their faiths as well, so we are sometimes not as equipped to help them as we'd like to be. How can we support the children and families in our congregation in their free and responsible search for truth and meaning in a world that does not often validate such a search?

A few new sections will be added to the RE portion of the newsletter with the goal of helping the adults in our congregation find creative ways to support our children and youth in their faith development, understanding how much support they need given that the surrounding culture does not always reflect the values their families are trying to instill. While I imagine that most non-parents will be tempted to pass by the RE portion of the newsletter, I hope that everyone will take a minute or two to read the sections entitled "What's the Story?" and "Bringing It Home" so that you can chat with the children about the RE theme for the month at coffee hour. Your willingness to have a conversation with them about what they are doing

in RE speaks volumes about how important it is to live by our Seven Principles!

I am also interested in helping parents create a more Unitarian Universalist home environment that will give your children a lived experience of your UU faith and help them to see the many ways in which you enact your beliefs on a daily basis. You may be doing quite a lot already, or maybe you are searching for more ideas. I will facilitate an idea swap in the "Family Traditions" section.

As always, I am very open to suggestions and comments. If you have ideas or questions to share, please contact me at dre@firstparishmedfield.org to share them!

WHAT'S THE STORY?

THIS MONTH'S THEME: WHY ARE WE HERE?

Every religion has a creation story, a story that provides a context for every other story told in that culture. Typically these creation stories establish a relationship between the culture at hand and the forces of life itself. When we decided to move to the *Love Connects Us* curriculum, we realized something was lacking—we didn't have a creation story to help us put this in a context. Without a deeper understanding of how we came to be, *Love Connects Us* can feel sentimental and insubstantial. Our children are too intelligent to begin with something that could be a Hallmark greeting card, they needed an origin story.

In the words of John Kornet: "Unitarians need a creation story we can call our own. This much is clear to me. Adam and Eve, no thanks. Noah? I don't think so. Why not start with the best that science has come up with and go from there? The theory that all matter in the universe used to be in the same impossibly small place is just as wondrous as any flood-disaster epic. And the implications the big bang has concerning our connections to each other and the role of creativity

in our universe are astounding. Some might even call them spiritual. It turns out that we don't need to make up wild stories with villainous snakes in them; all the inspiration we need might be right under our noses, just waiting to be discovered and interpreted to the best of our intellectual, emotional, and creative abilities.”

As a response to those concerns, Joyce, John, and I collaborated on a dynamic, engaging retelling of the Big Bang Story, with an emphasis on our common origins and our interconnectedness. We felt that this story could potentially deepen the children's understanding of the importance of our Seven Principles. Additionally, since some of our children are atheist and others are theist, we believed that starting with this story allowed room for everyone to participate in the conversation and engage their own spiritual questions while respecting the beliefs of others.

The children have been so engaged in the story, and so engaged in the activities and discussion that have emerged from the story, that sometimes they're not ready to leave RE when it's over with! They bring such wonderful questions and such insightful dialogue to our time together, and everyone leaves enriched!

This story will continue through February. If you would like to see an electronic copy of the story, please email your request to dre@firstparishmedfield.org and I will mail it to you a.s.a.p.!

BRINGING IT HOME:

QUESTIONS FOR CONVERSATION

How does the story of the big bang support our Seventh Principle, respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part? What actions, large or small, does your family take in support of the interdependent web? These could be as small as recycling and shutting off lights, or as large as donating money to an environmental organization.

And if everything is interconnected, then the big bang story must somehow relate to the other Seven Principles. What other connections can you imagine?

FAMILY TRADITIONS:

CREATING A UU HOME

In the future I will share ideas for UU rituals, prayers, stories, and activities that families can do at home. This month, I will begin by asking you to share yours with us so that I can post them in this newsletter. What rituals does your family have that help you connect in a way that reflects your Unitarian Universalist values? Do you have a bedtime prayer, or story, that is particularly meaningful? Do you light a chalice at home? Other UU families want to know!

In peace,

Shelley Dennis

DRE



February FPUU Board Notes:

- The Board reviewed the progress on the wireless contracts and the plans for a new spire. Rental contracts with T-Mobile and MetroPCS are under review. It is proposed to replace the existing spire with a new spire that reaches 115 feet (Which reestablishes the historic pre-1938 height. The current spire is 90 ft. high). A net present value (NPV) financial analysis was calculated comparing the current value of future income of two carriers in a new spire versus in the existing lower spire. With even low probabilities of future 3 or 4 carriers, the NPV was positive for building the new spire.
- The Board unanimously agreed to recommend to the FPUU membership that the Board be authorized to:
 1. Conclude the negotiations and sign the contracts with T-Mobile and MetroPCS.
 2. Design, engineer and construct a new 50 ft. spire to replace the existing spire at a cost not to exceed \$100,000.
 3. Arrange for financing to secure funds to build the spire. (The 2 wireless carriers will be expected to pay for 50% of the cost of the spire).
 4. Finalize a design for the new spire.
 - It was agreed to call a meeting of the membership for Sunday February 13 at 11:30 AM in the Sanctuary.
- The income “Bridge” status was reviewed. To date, \$5000 has been received from members as early pledges for next fiscal year (2011/2012). A “Bridge” status graph will be put on an easel in the vestry.
- The plans for a Farmers Market on FPUU grounds are continuing to be developed.
- The March 5 “Mardi Gras” charity auction plans were discussed. Volunteer leaders for the early tasks are on-board, but a few volunteer spots need to be filled for the tasks on Auction day. Invitation letters to members will be sent out before the end of January.
- The opportunity for additional funding through grants will be investigated.
- Annual fund drive plans are underway.
- The next Executive Board meeting was brought forward to February 10 in order to prepare for the special membership meeting on February 13.

News from the Social Action Committee



Christmas Eve Collection: Every year the Social Action Committee distributes half of the Christmas Eve collection to a charity or cause that impacts the five towns of our congregation. This year, the social action committee distributed the funds to the Emergency Fuel Assistance program of each area town. The total collected was \$1217.50, and each program received \$243.50.

These are the programs that received the donations:

- ❖ The Medfield Home Committee
- ❖ The Medway Council on Aging
- ❖ The Millis Fund
- ❖ Norfolk Together, Inc.
- ❖ Friends of Walpole for the Walpole Council on Aging

Thank you everyone for your continued generosity, especially since the need is great and the winter has been and continues to be so hard.

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

Thank you for helping with the 2010 Food Pantry Client Christmas presents!!!!

For the fifth year in a row, First Parish UU collaborated with the Medfield Food Pantry to provide gifts for their clients. Initiated by the Social Action Committee, the Food Pantry gave us 40 wishes from their clients. The clients receive no other presents from local organizations, and many of them are children. It should also be noted that we are currently the only church that donates to clients of the Medfield Food Pantry.

37 of the 40 wishes were chosen and presents were delivered to the church and taken to Beth Eby, the Food Pantry Coordinator. She distributed them at a party held for the clients several days before Christmas, and reported that they were appreciated and delighted with the generosity of our church members.

Thank you to all of the church members that participated in this collaboration. Once again, the generosity of our church touched many local families directly.

Message from the Membership Committee



Welcome New Members

The Donovans began attending First Parish Medfield in September 2010 and decided to sign the Membership Book a few months later.

Karen was born and raised in Milton, MA. Mike grew up in Connecticut and moved to North Andover MA at the age of 12. They met as students at Providence College, in Providence RI and married several years later. They were both raised in the Catholic Church and attended Sunday services regularly through their high school years. They were married in the Catholic Church. However, in the years leading up to their marriage and more so in the years after, they gradually grew distant from the Church. They first began having conversations about how they would introduce religion and faith to their children when their first daughter Molly was born (they have 2 girls - Molly 6, and Shaylagh 2), and were having second thoughts about having her baptized. They felt like they were doing it because both their families expected it. They both knew they wanted a different experience for their children than they had growing up, but they were not sure what, or where that would be. Ultimately, it was the freedom, open-mindedness and principles that made them feel like Unitarian Universalism was the right choice for them and their children.

Karen and Mike spend most of their free time hosting or attending small gatherings to enjoy the company of their family and friends and their children - most recently for Molly's 6th birthday! They love taking the kids on day trips to the zoo, the beach, children's museums, farms, etc. Karen and Mike both love to run and try to hit the streets of Medfield as much as their busy lives will allow.

Please say "Hello" and welcome the Donovan's to First Parish!!

FPUU Announcements

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.
- A working all-in-one printer, scanner, fax, color copier for the office.



Save the date! The FPUU Annual Indoor Winter Yard Sale will be on Saturday, March 19 in the vestry from 9:00 to 1:00. Please start putting aside things you are willing to donate. Good sellers include books, CD's, small appliances, games, toys, kitchenware, knick knacks, etc. We do not take outdated electronics or software, clothing, shoes, car seats, bicycles, furniture, or items too large for us to move easily. Please make sure all items are usable and in good condition. Any valuable leftovers will be sold after the yard sale on eBay. Contact Janet McKetchnie at imjanetm@gmail.com with any questions and happy pre-spring cleaning!

PLEASE NOTE: In case of severe weather, check the First Parish website for a possible date change.

February 2011 Annual Fund Drive 2011 – 2012 Small Suppers



Following last year's success, the Annual Fund Drive Committee is organizing small suppers again this year. The pleasure of your company will be requested at one of several intimate small suppers hosted in the homes of First Parish members on the evenings of **Sunday March 20, Friday March 25, and Saturday March 26.** Invitations will be sent via U.S. Mail and via email in mid-February. Following the small suppers, the Annual Fund Drive service will then take place on **Sunday March 27.**

In the meantime, please mark your calendars for the evening of your choice. Let's come together again to dine and celebrate our First Parish Medfield family.

The Annual Fund Drive Committee: Duncan Glover, Mark Samels, Marshall Sugarman, and Jeff Zarker



Join us to hear Red Pony perform at Medfield's North Street Coffeehouse

Celebrate the **5th year anniversary** of the North Street Coffeehouse with a night of live music on **February 5th**. As in the past, the evening will consist of both a featured performer and an open mic session. The event will be held 7 - 10 pm. Janet McKetchnie will be the host for the open mic portion of the evening.

The featured artist for the evening will be **Red Pony**.

Based in Boston's metro west, Red Pony blends soulful tales of heartbreak and gritty reflection, with music inspired by the American experience from roots to rock. With influences by artists ranging from Allison Krauss to Wilco, Red Pony is: **Tom Farrell** (bass), **Katie Frassinelli** (vocals, guitar), **Greg Klabon** (keyboard), **Tibor Nemeth** (steel guitar), **Tim Neves** (harmonica), **John Powers** (vocals, guitar, mandolin, banjo), and **Peter Woodward** (drums). For more information, visit their MySpace page at <http://www.myspace.com/redponymusic> .

If **you** would like to perform at the open mic session, please contact Janet at 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.

Come and celebrate our anniversary with good music and company - and a surprise or two that has been planned for the evening!

For more information on this and future events, visit the North Street Coffeehouse website at <https://sites.google.com/site/northstreetcoffeehouse/Home>.

Mardi Gras *Charity Auction* **Saturday March 5th 7 PM First Parish Vestry**



Get ready for another evening of food, wine, music, fun and fund-raising. The plans for **Mardi Gras Charity Auction** are in full swing. The musicians are tuning up, the chef is warming the stove, the wine is selected and the auctioneers are in voice training. The Medfield High Jazz Combo will entertain us. Members and merchants are donating an international variety of items and services, from Fenway Park to New Orleans, weekend getaways and restaurant meals.

The auction proceeds will help continue the work of the church, to maintain our historic building and support local charities. Twenty percent of auction earnings will be given to the Food Pantries in Medfield, Millis, Medway, Norfolk and Walpole. Your participation in the Auction will help support these great programs.

Tickets go on sale February 13, but you can put your order in now. To make a reservation, email Duncan Glover (duncanglover@comcast.net) or our church administrator Sandra Andreassi (admin@firstparishmedfield.org).

Now is the time for members and friends of First Parish Medfield to get a group together and encourage friends to join them at the auction. To attract new people, if you bring a friend, they will get in FREE! (Regular admission is \$20 per person). Child care will be provided at the auction.

If you have an item, a service, time or a talent to donate, please let Duncan Glover or Fritz Fleischmann know. Auction letters and donation forms are being sent out to everyone on the Church mailing list. If you did not receive a letter, please let Duncan or Fritz know. (Duncan 508-528-8456) (Fritz 508-242-523). Or call Sandra in the Church Office at 508-359-4594.

Call your friends, pack your bags and join us at Mardi Gras.



Let's beat the winter doldrums by attending *Let's Laugh Today* at the First Universalist Society in Franklin Meetinghouse, 262 Chestnut Street in Franklin on Monday, February 28th at 7:15pm to 8:30pm. We meet on every fourth Monday of the month. Laughter sessions are designed to bring the health benefits of laughter to your life! There are no contortions or fancy movements. You do not need to be in shape. Come and enjoy this unique exercise of simulated laughter combined with gentle breathing techniques known as laughter yoga. Everyone should experience this at least once! There is a \$5 donation per person with \$10 maximum per family. 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 more opportunities to laugh!

Medfield Food Cupboard



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

- Juice
- Beef stew
- Pasta
- Pasta Sauce
- Cookies
- Crackers
- Jelly

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)

February 6th

“To Touch and Be Touched”

Rev. Bob McKetchnie

Are you more likely to “reach out” to others in your daily interactions or would rather go unnoticed about your business?” Do you talk to strangers on a crowded train? Are you warmed by the smile of an infant given freely to you from the infant’s mother’s arms? Today’s sermon will look at these questions and others and reflect on what they mean spiritually.

February 13th

“This is Where I Belong!”

Rev. Bob McKetchnie

How important is a sense of belonging in your life? Are our daily habits and evolving sociological and technological innovations adversely affecting our occasions for warmth and rapport? Today’s sermon will explore how a strong sense of belonging may open us to others or may make us less approachable.

February 20th

“Music Sunday”

Eva Kendrick

This is our annual intergenerational music service led by our own Eva Kendrick. Come, relax and introduce a friend to First Parish!

February 27th

“In () We Trust!”

Rev. Bob McKetchnie

It was once said that all trust is a bet! Each time we trust, we take a big risk? Today’s sermon will be a personal account of why I trust, where my limits are, and the joy I derive by taking risk.

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

FPUU Calendar

Saturday, February 5	North Street Coffee House 7:00-10:00 pm
Sunday, February 6	IF Justice Study Group 11:30-12:15 pm/Sanctuary
Sunday, February 6	OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm/Vestry
Tuesday, February 8	Worship & Music Committee Meeting 7:30-9:00 pm/Vestry
Sunday, February 13	Congregational Membership Meeting 11:30 am/Sanctuary
Sunday, February 13	OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm/Vestry
Monday, February 14	Valentine's Day
Thursday, February 17	First Parish Executive Board Meeting 7:30 pm/U-House
Monday, February 21	President's Day (Federal Holiday)
Wednesday, February 23	Facilitated Bible Reading 7:00-9:00 pm/Vestry
Wednesday, March 2	Building Your Own Theology Class 7:15-9:15 pm/Vestry
Saturday, March 5	3 rd Annual FPUU Auction/Vestry
Sunday, March 6	OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm/Vestry
Wednesday, March 16	Building Your Own Theology Class 7:15-9:15 pm/Vestry
Thursday, March 17	First Parish Executive Board Meeting 7:30 pm/U-House
Saturday, March 19	FPUU Winter Yard Sale/Vestry
Wednesday, March 23	Building Your Own Theology Class 7:15-9:15 pm/Vestry
Sunday, March 27	OWL Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm
Wednesday, March 30	Building Your Own Theology Class 7:15-9:15 pm/Vestry

For a complete listing of events, please visit our website at 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