

The Steeple



VOL 1 NO.9 May 1, 2009

First Parish in Framingham
Unitarian Universalist
A Welcoming Congregation

Staying In Touch

Blessed May is here! Our theme at First Parish this month (and the last one until September) is LETTING GO.

As we let go of our coats and sweaters and indoor mentality, may we each use this opportunity to release any burdens of heart that we carry and wander about in the present moment seeking beauty here and now. It is always there for us. As we thrill to the lengthier light-life with which we are naturally gifted, may we begin to learn again the profound lessons in play and movement and goofing off.

Yours in the Spirit,
Kathleen

P.S. MARK MAY 31ST ON YOUR CALENDAR!!! WE CAN'T DO THIS WITHOUT YOU!

10:00 WORSHIP AND FLOWER COMMUNION. PLEASE BRING A FLOWER TO SHARE FOR OUR COMMUNION (a distinctly UU spring ritual).

11:00 ANNUAL MEETING AT FIRST PARISH
child care provided

3:00 ORDINATION OF CATHERINE
SENGHAS

Sunday Worship

MAY 3
9:15 & 11:00 AM Worship
The Art of Letting Go
Rev. Kathleen Hepler

A service about the human/spiritual practice of letting go. How can we train ourselves to hold our ideas and beliefs about things more lightly, so as to invite new learning? What can arise in that spaciousness? How do we love life and let it go at the same time?

MAY 10
9:15 & 11:00 AM Worship
Searching for Asherah

Reclaiming the Divine Feminine - The Hebrew scriptures tell stories of Israelites worshiping Asherah, the wife of God, as the Queen of Heaven. Few are familiar with these stories today. How were these stories lost? What might we gain spiritually from reclaiming them today?

Michelle LaGrave, Intern Minister

MAY 17
9:15 & 11:00 AM Worship
MUSIC, SWEET MUSIC

A very special service of music and words. The choirs,

the bells, the chimes, the singing, the meditation, the readings....all weaving a tapestry of inspiration and delight.

MAY 24
10:00 AM Worship
What Sustains Us?

So many things enrich our lives: the love of friends and family, the beauties of nature, the thrill of a symphony. Yet we ask ourselves, what gets us through the hard times and heartaches of life? What are the relationships, spiritual resources, and values that get us through the inevitable pain and suffering that we experience as well.

The Rev. Dr. William J. Gardiner

MAY 31
10:00 AM Worship
FLOWER COMMUNION SERVICE
Rev. Kathleen Hepler

Making the case for affirming our good intentions and worthy endeavors, this service will honor this year at First Parish by slowing down and shining the light on our abundance and our accomplishment...noticing, not bragging....celebrating, not horn-tooting.

Share The Plate

May 3rd will be Share The Plate Sunday for the Metrowest Outreach Connection (MWOC), a homeless prevention program. Metrowest Outreach Connection, a non-profit, all volunteer organization is dedicated to seek solutions for and to respond to the needs of low income people and the homeless in Metrowest. We believe that every child should have their basic needs met: food, shelter, clothing, and education. Families living in shelters are challenged in every one of these areas.

Metrowest Outreach Connection received a new grant from the Metrowest Community Healthcare Foundation to institute a new program for Health Through Housing for victims of domestic abuse. The connection between domestic violence, homelessness and poor health is well documented. Housing stabilization is needed to reverse the negative health consequences. 98% of MWOC's money received goes directly for homeless prevention. Valerie Waldman and Myrna Howe are members of MWOC and serve on the Board of Directors.

From the Board of Assessors

With the May 31 Annual Meeting on Sunday morning for a second year, almost everyone should be able to attend while children are engaged in other activities. Apparently other churches have found this model convenient in eliminating a second trip to the church and in reinforcing the notion of coming together to celebrate the successes of the church year.

Following this celebratory model proposed by the Church Council last year and supported by the Board and our Senior Minister, we will again provide time in advance of the Annual Meeting to discuss and resolve any business matters. Analyzing details can be better addressed in places other than at an Annual Meeting. Our new model provides more time for celebrating our achievements and recognizing those who helped to make them happen. Although this approach is still new to us, it is common in other churches.

After services on both May 17 and 24, those interested in the budget can meet with members of the Finance Committee and the Board to review the line items. We are struggling to balance the budget for fiscal year 2010. Pledges are substantially down and expenses have been decreased to the point that any cuts will affect the church as a whole. Our publicized budget-review sessions will ensure that all concerns and suggestions for improvements can be addressed appropriately before we need to make a "Yes" or "No" vote.

All members of First Parish rarely get together as we do at the Annual Meeting. What a wonder opportunity to emphasize our progress and our plans and our spiritual home!

In gratitude for our wonderful faith community,

Pam Pierson, Chair, Board of Assessors
508-561-4474
pipierson@gmail.com

Membership Corner

New Members/New Member Recognition

Please give a warm welcome to our newest members: Todd Vroman, Brad Goering and Dave Manwaring. These new members as well as others who have signed the book since January will be formally recognized during the worship service on May 31st.

I am at your service to help you navigate First Parish in Framingham. You may reach me by phone, email or at the Welcome table on Sundays. I look forward to answering your questions about membership and helping you make connections

Veena Baker
Membership Development Coordinator
membership@uuframingham.org

Religious Education

This year has certainly flown by. There are only 3 more regular RE classes left in the semester. Please take a moment to thank your child's teacher for their dedication to your child's faith development this semester. Beginning on Memorial Day weekend, there will be special activities in the Huntley Room for grades 1 through 6 (after they have started out in the church service) and coverage for the Early Preschool and Preschool/Kindergarten classes. Seventh and eighth graders will be welcome to stay in the worship service.

Since it is near the end of our eighth graders' religious education class experience, they will be recognized and honored in the church services on Sunday, May 17th. Booklets of their Statements of Belief will be handed out at the end of each service. Families of eighth graders, remember to make plans for attending the potluck dinner and worship on Saturday evening, May 16th.

All the RE families who have children/youth registered in the program this year should have received

a registration packet last week. (If you didn't receive one, please contact me, and I will get one to you.) If you have not yet turned in your registration form for next year, please do so soon. The deadline for registration is Sunday, May 10th. And please remember that if you did not teach this year, this coming year you need to volunteer to teach. Our entire program depends on volunteers...no volunteer teachers, no program!

Do you enjoy being with people who have inquisitive minds, good senses of humor, and refreshing views of the world? Then here is a great opportunity for you: we need some volunteers to be advisors next year for our Junior Youth Group (7th and 8th graders). The group meets twice a month for supper, socializing, and service. Come get to know a great group of young people - they will help to keep you young at heart! If you'd welcome this opportunity, please contact me as soon as possible. These youth need you!

Julie Porter,
Director of Religious Education

Finance Committee

With the canvass almost complete, the Finance Committee is preparing a draft budget for next year (FY 2010) and will provide the opportunity for feedback from parishioners after each service on the two Sundays prior to the annual meeting on May 31.

Here are some of the committee concerns:

- The canvass yielded pledges of about \$335,000 from about 230 pledging units compared with about \$357,000 for this year. With current projected total income down about \$37,000 from this year, the current draft budget leaves the parish barely able to maintain current programs and certainly unable to provide for any growth. We should be able to maintain our staff. However, any further cuts in spending will impact programs and our efforts to maintain our facilities.
- Currently, the parish has an operating reserve of which is less than the approximately \$45,000 required for one month of operation. As a result we are not positioned to easily respond to any further economic difficulties.

Eric Pierson, Finance Committee chair

Worship & Arts

We wish to remind you that beginning May 24th there will be only one Sunday Worship Service at 10:00 AM

A Note From the Editor:

Copy for the June *Steeple* is due at the First Parish Office no later than noon, Friday May 22.

The congregations of
First Parish in Framingham
& First Unitarian Society in Newton

request the honor of your presence
as we ordain

Catherine Senghas

to the Unitarian Universalist Ministry

Sunday, May 31, 2009, at 3:00 p.m.

First Parish in Framingham
24 Vernon Street, Framingham, Massachusetts



Reception immediately following the service

Please rsvp by May 21 to senghasordination@gmail.com
and indicate if child care is required

Clergy, seminarians and religious educators are invited
to gather by 2:30 to robe and process

Directions can be found at
www.firstparishframingham.org/directions.htm

Announcements: Dates & Events

Caritas Coordinator

The May, Caritas coordinator is Mary McCarty:
508-877-2935 or raven1018@rcn.com

Around the Parish

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Rev. Hugo Hollerorth upon the death of his wife Barbara. A UU minister, Barbara was formerly the Associate Minister at First Parish in Lexington, a practicing psychotherapist, and an avid photographer and artist. Her memorial service will be at First Parish in Framingham on May 9th at 11:00.

Julie Porter successfully went before the UUA's Religious Education Credentialing Committee on Tuesday, and she is now a Credentialed Religious Educator at the Masters Level. Congratulations Julie!

Ordination Committee

Elsewhere in the newsletter you will see an invitation to Catherine Senghas's Ordination. As hosts for this event, we are looking for people in the congregation to bring finger food. If you can participate, please contact Diane Montgomery. 508 620-0452 montgomeryd2@comcast.net

First Parish Art Exhibition

Come see how some of your First Parish artists express themselves in watercolor, oil, acrylic. Exhibition on display until May 17. All art is for sale, 20% commission to go the First Parish. Any questions contact Beth Walton elizabethwalton@verizon.net or Judy Perry judy1of4perry@hotmail.com.

Annual Talent and Treasure Auction

Saturday, May 2nd! Come Celebrate a Cinco De Mayo Mexican holiday with your friends from First Parish! From 5:30-7:00 pm, enjoy hors d'oeuvres with Corona beer, margaritas, wine, or non-alcoholic beverages while you bid on the 16 different "Wine & Unwind" dinners to be held at the homes of fellow parishioners. During this same period, meander into the Huntley and Dorothea Dix Rooms and place your silent bids on 86 different items, and take some chances to win one of the 13 Raffle Baskets. A dinner (mild American version available) of chicken burritos with all the fixin's, Spanish rice and homemade cookies will be served at 7 pm, to be followed by a live auction of 35 very unusual talents, treasures, massages, vacation homes, etc. Tickets will be sold at the door for \$15 each. If you could be so kind as to send an email to montgomeryd2@comcast.net to let us know you're planning to come, it will help greatly with the food

and beverage planning. If you forget to do so, come anyway!!

Nominating Committee

Great People Needed!!

The Nominating Committee has been working hard to fill church leadership positions for next year. We still have some key positions open, and are seeking interested church members!

We need folks with many different skills --- analytical, strategic thinking, creativity, communication, tactical planning, and more. Newer members are welcome and encouraged to get involved - we are looking for new ideas and approaches! The only requirement is that you have been a member since at least March 1, 2009.

Available positions include: Board of Assessors member, Nominating Committee member, Clerk, and Collector. If you are interested, please contact Jennifer Long (508-877-9758 home or 508-207-7567 cell) for more information about the positions available.

Women's Alliance

The Alliance Annual Luncheon will be held on May 11th at noon in the Huntley Room. There will be a small charge for the meal. If you have not been called contact Susie Macdonald at 508-875-3322.

The Women's Alliance has replaced the blinds in the Huntley Room, which were in such disrepair. The new blinds are Hunter Douglas Macro aluminum which will be easy to use and hopefully durable. We do ask, however, that they be used with care. We are also working to find new and attractive valances.

Chancel Decorations

Donating flowers to decorate our Chancel on Sunday morning is a wonderful way to remember someone or celebrate something not to mention adding beauty to our Meeting House! I'm looking for someone for the following Sundays: Sunday, May 3, Sunday, May 10, Sunday, May 17th, Sunday, May 24 and Sunday, June 14th . Please let me know if you can help out with this.

Thanks!
Susan Moody

BRE

Thank you to everyone who generously donated to replace the swing for Lars Kynvi! We raised just over \$300 - more than enough to replace the swing! Thank you to all!

On another note, we need some additional

“buddies” to support our kids next year. BRE buddies spend time one on one with a special needs child or young adult during the church service in order to allow other family members to attend church. We can have a team of buddies, so responsibility can rotate over a period of weeks and you are not committed to working every week.

Buddies can be any age from teen to senior. The only requirements are patience, a sense of humor, and an openness to learn about people with special needs. Everyone who has served as a “buddy” has told us it was an enjoyable and worthwhile experience! It is a wonderful way to connect with the community, meet new families, and offer a much-needed service.

At this time, we are specifically seeking buddies for a teen with autism, and a preschooler with multiple special needs. We also welcome new members on our committee.

Please contact Jennifer Long at 508-207-7567 or 508-877-9758 if you are interested in learning more.

Update on the MetroWest Free Medical Program

The volunteers at the MetroWest Free Medical Program have had some heart-warming experiences with our patients. Mrs. K came in with her mother and her mother-in-law, for vision exams. Both elderly women were from Africa and spoke no English. Dr. Zide, one of our volunteer optometrists, determined that the mother-in-law had advanced cataracts and needed to be referred to an ophthalmologist. Eve Benda was able to locate one who agreed to perform the surgery free of charge. Laura Morrall, volunteer social worker, was able to arrange for Tufts New England Medical Center to cover the cost of anesthesia and other surgical expenses. Mrs. K's mother was seen at the Sudbury site by an internist, who recommended follow-up for her chronic malaria to rule out complications. After more phone calls, Laura arranged for Dr. Treadwell to see her at the Infectious Disease Clinic at Framingham Union Hospital. Mrs. K, hard-working and caring, communicated frequently with Laura and acted as translator for the elderly women during the multiple visits and procedures. She expressed much gratitude for all the efforts and care provided to her family.

First Parish Framingham FREE CYCLE: Goods & Services for Swap & Sell!

In April, May and June ... swap or recycle or sell your gently used goods and offered services. On

individual 3x5 cards (1 item per card) describe the item and your contact information. Thumbtack your card/s on the Adult RE bulletin board in Scott Hall. 4 categories and your 3x5 cards will help get the word out.

CATEGORIES:

1. Goods and Services for Swap and Sale
2. Looking for...
3. Techie (no monitors) plus the *Cord Swap Bins* (see below)
4. Stuff (stereo, computer, entertainment systems etc.)

All exchanges are between the individuals swapping, buying or selling (i.e., First Parish will not be involved).

Also by the Bulletin Board:

BUSINESS CARD BINDER of cards for FPF (only people with services or small businesses will be on a table near the bulletin board. You may place several cards in a sleeve for people to take.

CORD SWAP BINS are by the bulletin board for people to leave and take cables, power adapters, power strips. Important — NO car adapters, no AC/DC adapters. Please label EACH cord's purpose and tie it up with twist ties or rubber bands.

Questions: tech wise: David Doucette 508-624-9664, otherwise: Karin Tanenholtz 508-485-7185

Worship & Arts

Sewing Volunteer Needed

The Worship and Arts Council is looking for an experienced, volunteer to make a simple curtain for our chancel. The material will be provided. If you can help us out contact Beth Walton - elizabethwalton@verizon.net or 508-904-840

Social Action

May Day: Friday May 1st

Defend Immigrant Rights!

We voted for change, Today we make our demands!

Respect the dignity of Immigrant Workers

Where and When?

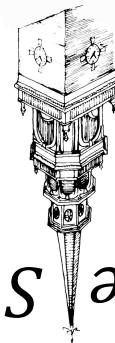
East Boston, 2:30 pm, Central Square. March from Liberty Plaza in Central Square to Chelsea City Hall

Chelsea, 3:00 pm, Chelsea City Hall. March from Chelsea City Hall to Glendale Park in Everett

Everett, 4:30—5:30 pm, Glendale Park. Rally and Entertainment at Glendale Park (50 Elm Street, Everett)

May, 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	1 • 1:00 PM Metrowest Free Medical Program • 1:00 PM Women's Alliance • 8:00 PM Uncommon Coffee House	2 • 9:00 AM Auction
3 • 9:00 AM Photo Directory • 9:15 AM Church Service • 10:30 AM Chime Choir • 11:00 AM Church Service • 12:30 PM OWL • 7:00 PM YRUU	4 • 12:45 PM Karin Tanenholtz • 6:00 PM ROUNDS • 7:30 PM Meditation Group VB	5 • 7:00 PM Covenant-JB • 7:00 PM Heritage Chorale • 7:30 PM Pies On the Common Committee	6 • 9:30 AM Yoga III • 11:30 AM Worship & Arts • 6:00 PM Junior Youth Group • 7:00 PM Young Adult Group • 7:30 PM Church Council Meeting • 7:30 PM Bell Choir	7 • 8:00 AM COFFEE AND MUFFINS • 5:00 PM The MetroWest Free Medical Program • 7:00 PM RE Council	8	9 • Memorial Service
10 • 9:00 AM Photo Directory • 9:15 AM Church Service • 10:20 AM Youth Ensemble • 11:00 AM Church Service • 12:30 PM OWL • 7:00 PM YRUU	11 • 12:00 PM Women's Alliance • 6:00 PM ROUNDS • 7:30 PM Meditation Group VB • 7:30 PM FCNS Board Meeting	12 • 3:30 PM Brownies • 7:00 PM Heritage Chorale • 7:30 PM Stitches In Time • 7:30 PM Finance Committee	13 • 1:00 PM Stitches In Time • 7:00 PM Young Adult Group • 7:30 PM Bell Choir	14 • 8:00 AM COFFEE AND MUFFINS • 11:00 AM Elder Care Support Group • 5:00 PM The MetroWest Free Medical Program • 7:00 PM Heritage Chorale • 7:30 PM Board of Assessors	15 • 1:00 PM Metrowest Free Medical Program	16 • 5:00 PM 8th Grade Potluck & Worship
17 • 9:15 & 11:00 AM Church Services • 10:20 AM Youth Ensemble • 12:30 PM OWL • 2:30 PM New Comers Orientation • 6:30 PM Green Sanctuary Film Series • 7:00 PM YRUU	18 • 6:00 PM ROUNDS • 7:30 PM Meditation Group VB	19 • 7:00 PM Covenant-JB • 7:00 PM Heritage Chorale	20 • 9:30 AM Staff Meeting • 6:00 PM Junior Youth Group • 7:00 PM Young Adult Group • 7:30 PM Bell Choir	21 • 8:00 AM COFFEE AND MUFFINS • 5:00 PM The MetroWest Free Medical Program • 6:30 PM Parents & Others • 7:00 PM Leadership Unlimited • 7:00 PM Heritage Chorale • 7:30 PM Green Sanctuary	22	23
24 • 10:00 AM Religious Ed • 10:00 AM Church Service • 12:30 PM OWL • 7:00 PM YRUU	25 • OFFICE CLOSED - HOLIDAY • 6:00 PM ROUNDS	26 • 3:30 PM Brownies • 7:30 PM Stitches In Time	27 • 1:00 PM Stitches • 7:00 PM Mothers of Twins • 7:00 PM Young Adult Group • 7:30 PM Bell Choir	28 • 8:00 AM COFFEE AND MUFFINS • 5:00 PM The MetroWest Free Medical Program	29	30 • 5:00 PM Roots & Shoots
31 • 9:30 AM Photo Directory • 10:00 AM Religious Ed • 10:00 AM Church Service • 11:00 AM ANNUAL MEETING • 12:30 PM OWL • 3:00 PM Ordination: Catherine Senghas • 7:00 PM YRUU						



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The First Parish In Framingham
Unitarian Universalist
A Welcoming Congregation
24 Vernon Street
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