

The Steeple



VOL 2 NO.1 September 1, 2009

First Parish in Framingham
Unitarian Universalist
A Welcoming Congregation

Staying In Touch

Thank you for this summer time to study, to plan, to embrace a different life rhythm, and to enjoy my family.

Thank you to all who cared for the church and its programs over the summer. Creative Sunday worship was offered. The office was "personned" so that David could have time off. The free medical program continued. Four families found comfort, beds and nourishment for two weeks here at First Parish through our participation in Interfaith Hospitality Network...to name a few.

The two questions I pose as we begin the 305th year of First Parish Life: What gets in the way of each of us as individuals (and all of us as a spiritual community) living our UU values and faith more daringly, more joyfully, more consciously, more often, and more freely? And, how can we support one another and our church in removing some of those barriers? I am inviting all of us to reflect on this as we begin the year together.

I have missed you and look forward to all that will be this year.
Rev. Hepler

Sunday Worship

SEPTEMBER 13

9:15 & 11:00 AM Worship

WE ALL, EVERYONE OF US, WANT TO GO HOME AGAIN

We are gathering again. Bring a small amount of water to represent your summer to add to the common bowl. Bring your openness to be seen and known and loved. Bring your willingness to see and know and love others.

This will be a sermon about a home we might not ordinarily envision. It will be a blessing to worship together again.

Rev. Kathleen Hepler

SEPTEMBER 20

9:15 & 11:00 AM Worship

FAITH IN THE LISTENING

We have begun a process of speaking and listening that will help us plan the future of First Parish. The key difference of this process from others you may have par-

ticipated in is that the key expectation of all of us is to share from our hearts, listen deeply to others and to wait for what arises in that process. It is less a "problem solving" or "brainstorming" process and more a "trusting" process.

The committee selected by the Board of Assessors to guide us in this endeavor will join me in the service. (Dennis Charles, Valerie Kapilow-Nesky, Rich Lawson, Jen Long, Greg Wells)

Rev. Kathleen Hepler

SEPTEMBER 27TH

9:15 & 11:00 AM Worship

EVOLUTIONARY FORGIVENESS

Events of the summer (the arrest of Dr. Gates in his Cambridge home for one) have me thinking about the imperative of forgiveness as a key ingredient for the survival of humankind. Yom Kippur begins this evening...a good time for all of us to flex our forgiveness muscles.

Rev. Kathleen Hepler

From the Ministerial Intern

Oddly enough, the greeting which strikes me as most apt for this newsletter is: "Happy New Year!" I've been reflecting about how the natural seasons of the earth and the seasons of the church year are, in many ways, reversed. The church year summer is much like winter in that it is a time when life slows down. We tend to focus more on family and friends, we take vacations from work, and we re-engage with the outdoor world. Fewer church meetings, classes, and activities occur. We lie fallow and we rest. Soon, the church year spring (i.e. fall) will arrive. Our community will, once again, come to full life and we will be filled with the hustle and bustle of the new church year. My hope is that all have found at least some time over the summer to renew and refresh our spirits. I look forward to seeing you all again soon. Happy New Year!

In faith,
Michelle

From the Board of Assessors

First Parish had a busy summer! The lay services were organized and hosted by an enthusiastic group of new members. MIHN hosted four families for two weeks with help from St. Andrew's Episcopal church. The Free Medical Program sponsored a vaccination clinic provided by the Town of Framingham, in addition to the weekly free medical program. Dick Rader and the Maintenance Council shepherded quite a bit of work inside and out; check out one of their projects, the fresh paint and new carpeting downstairs. And the Strategic Planning Group kicked off their endeavor with two forums. This is only a partial list of what went on at First Parish during the summer!

The Board of Assessors had its annual retreat on Friday and Saturday, August 21 and 22. We looked back at what was accomplished and what went unfinished last year and then looked forward to what we hope to accomplish this coming church year. And we had some good food and fun as we got to know one another better.

One of the major endeavors of First Parish this coming year is strategic planning. The Strategic Planning Group, chaired by Jennifer Long, includes Dennis Charles, Valerie Kapilow-Nesky, Rich Lawson, Greg Wells, and our minister Kathleen Hepler. I hope everyone at First Parish will participate; this is our church. The legacy is ours to continue; the future is ours to create.

Because of a conflict for some Board members with the Free Medical Program on Thursday evenings, we will have our first meeting on Wednesday, September 16 at 7:30. Board meetings are open to all. Please contact me or another of the Board members if you would like a copy of the minutes, if you have a question, a request, a complaint, an idea, a problem, a proposal, . . . We want to hear from you. Look for us at coffee hour with our special nametags!

Looking forward to seeing you at Ingathering Sunday,
Janice Knapp-Cordes, Board Chairperson
508-877-3771
janice.knappcordes@gmail.com

Membership Corner

Welcome back members and friends and welcome newcomers. It is great to have the full congregation come together again after the days of summer. Kudos to those who made possible and attended the summer services.

Connections

Whether you've recently joined us or have been here for a while, I am here to help you make connections at First Parish. Allow me to help you find meaningful ways to share your talents. There are many volunteer opportunities with varying time commitments.

Photo Directory Update

We have simplified the photo directory process. Please submit a photo for our photo directory. Pictures can be mailed to First Parish to Veena Baker's attention, put in the membership development coordinator's mailbox in the office or emailed to pictures@uuframingham.org in jpeg format. Thank you to those who have already provided a photo for the directory.

Watch the weekly updates for details on having your picture taken if you are unable to provide a photo.

Veena Baker, Membership Development Coordinator,
email: membership@uuframingham.org, phone: 508-872-3111 ext 218

Religious Education

Life is busy in the First Parish offices gearing up for the new church year! While I am always a bit wistful to see summer come to an end, I am looking forward to our church community coming together once again.

Over the summer, I met with the advisors of both the Junior Youth Group and the YRUU. Both youth groups have enthusiastic, creative advisors. The advisors' energy and dedication are going to make for a great year for both groups. YRUU will begin their regular meetings on September 13th at 7:00 p.m. The first Junior Youth Group meeting will be a retreat here at First Parish on September 12th. (7th and 8th graders received a letter about this retreat - if your child is in that age group and didn't receive a letter, please contact me.)

Save the date! Sunday afternoon, September 20th from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m., the Religious Education Council will sponsor an Ice Cream Social to kick off the year in religious education. At this gathering, all ages can make their own sundaes, meet other families and the RE teachers, see this year's curricula, and hear a bit about this year's RE program. It is sure to be a fun gathering.

With the change last year to having children in the beginning of every church service (a change which has gone very well!), I stopped having "Children's Worship" once a month. Since it is worthwhile for children to occasionally have their own worship time, the RE Council and I decided to structure our "Special Sundays" (Sundays that

fall on 3-day weekends) slightly differently this year. Children ages 4 and up will attend the first part of the church service, then join me in the Huntley Room. We will begin the time together as a Children's Worship and then engage in an activity that is related to the worship time.

Our multi-age Roots and Shoots group is changing its structure this year also. We will be meeting on some Sunday afternoons throughout the year to put children's and youth's ideas for helping people, helping animals, and improving the environment into action. Please see Aimee Dalrymple's article elsewhere in this newsletter.

Parents of 7th and 8th graders: if you missed the mandatory Our Whole Lives (OWL) parent orientation, be sure to attend the one offered on Wednesday, Sept. 9th at 7:00 p.m. in the Huntley Room.

Attention fall teachers: Your curriculum notebooks are available for pick-up. It is essential that you have your notebook prior to the start of the semester on September 13th. The New Teacher Orientation will be on September 12th.

I'm very much looking forward to our continued growing and learning together. See you soon!

Julie Porter,
Director of Religious Education

From The Music Director

Invitation

Our First Parish music organizations resume rehearsals in September. The Parish Choir is open to interested singers high school age and older. The Choir sings a wide variety of music at Sunday services. Rehearsals begin on Wednesday, September 16 at 7:30 pm. For information, contact Tom Berryman.

The Bell Choir welcomes new members to its regular Wednesday evening rehearsals at 7 pm. The Bell Choir plays one Sunday each month at both services. Contact Trish Ramey for information about the Bell Choir.

Elementary and middle school aged children are welcome to join the Childrens' Choir and the Chime Choir, with rehearsals on Sunday mornings. These choirs perform for services on the first Sunday of each month. Contact Trish Ramey for information about the Childrens' Choir and the Chime Choir.

We also welcome musicians in the parish to offer their musical skills in our worship services. If you would like to perform as a soloist or in a chamber group, contact Tom Berryman.

Parish Choir Schedule for September

September 13 and 20 warm ups at 10:15 am and Service at 11 am.

September 27 warm ups at 8:30 am and Service at 9:15 am

Rehearsals on Wednesdays, September 16, 23 and 30 at 7:30 pm

Tom Berryman
Music Director
music@uuframingham.org

Announcements: Dates & Events

Caritas Coordinator

The September Caritas coordinator is Susan Moody, 508 429-8881

Worship & Arts

Hold the date! Reverend William Sinkford will be our guest minister on Sunday, November 29th. Rev. Sinkford was the president of the UUA from 2001 - 2009 and is transitioning to the UU Urban Ministry this summer. Worship & Arts is very excited to be able to bring Rev. Sinkford to our pulpit!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Please consider signing up to usher on Sunday morning. It is a fun and easy way to contribute to our congregation. We will offer an Orientation for Ushers between the church services on September 13th. The commitment is for approximately four Sundays during the church year.

Please call or e-mail Carol Greve (first service coordinator) 508-435-3833, macdubh24@verizon.net, or Sandy Murphy (second service coordinator) 508-872-1837, sandymurphy@comcast.net.

Food Cupboard

The food cupboard is open and accepting donations. It is the gray cupboard located in the First Parish hallway opposite the door to the office. The donations are then taken to the local food pantry, "HOPE", located on Irving Street, Framingham. We are looking for non-perishable items such as peanut butter, tuna fish, canned beans, cereal, pasta. Also accepting shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, paper goods. Your donations keep "HOPE" alive.

WALK for Homelessness

Save the date! WALK for Homelessness (MWOC) on Sunday the 27 of September from 1-3 on the commons. Fill a sponsor sheet and be a part of the rewards program.

For more information contact:
Myrna Howe 781-235-4226
Valerie Waldman 508-877-7769

Metrowest Free Medical Program

Would you like to play a critical role in helping the

Metrowest Free Medical Program care for people who don't have health insurance? Our Treasurer who has done a wonderful job for the past several years is retiring. We need a responsible person who can keep the books, pay the bills, handle banking transactions, do recordkeeping for grants, and provide information for annual filings. These responsibilities will take 3-4 hours per week. The ideal person for this volunteer position will have experience with similar functions in a small business or non-profit organization. If you are interested in helping, please contact Gary Hirsch, President of the Free Medical Program at GBHirsch@comcast.net or Ilene Hofrenning, co-chair of the Framingham site ihofrenning@yahoo.com 508-872-8021. Thank you!

Pies on the Common Fair

Mark your calendar for this year's Pies on the Common Fair, Saturday October 17 from 10 -3. First Parish's 19th annual, the fair is a significant fund-raiser as well as a wonderful celebration of community.

Participation is key to making the event a success, and there are ways to contribute both large and small. Bake pies, sell quilt raffle tickets, or help out with activities at Kids' Corner. You're guaranteed to have fun and make new connections at First Parish. New members and friends are warmly invited to our upcoming Pies planning meetings. Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 1 at 7:30 in the Huntley Room.

The Committee is looking for help with volunteer coordination and quilt raffle sales. Please contact Monica Alley (508) 881-7147 or Ann Arvidson (508) 879- 4246 to learn more.

The MetroWest Interfaith Hospitality Network

During the first two weeks of August, First Parish hosted four families in the Parish House. More than 20 First Parish members volunteered their time to help set up before the guests arrived, provide meals, play with guests' children, provide support to guests and sleep overnight in the building. We also had tremendous help from Saint Andrews Episcopal Church in Framingham, our official support church. With a generous spirit, they provided all of the meals and the majority of volunteers for the second week of hosting. Despite the heat and some logistical glitches, the families reported that their time at First Parish was very relaxed and that the volunteers were very welcoming.

This was our third hosting experience to date. We would like to thank all 35 volunteers who participated during the past year. We have all worked hard together to make this program a success. If you would like to get involved, please contact Lisa Mihnos at lymihnos@comcast.net

Sweet Sounds and Tastes

Please join us for an evening of melodious music and delicious desserts **Sat, October 3, 2009**

Christ Lutheran Church 113 Union St, Natick.

All proceeds benefit MIHN. Tickets are sold at the door.

Please watch our MIHN's website for updates on this annual fundraising event at www.metrowestihn.org.

Roots & Shoots

Roots & Shoots Brunch on Sunday, October

4th 1-3pm

Are you a kid? Or a kid at heart? Do you love nature? Roots & Shoots may just be the group for you. We are a multi-generational youth-focused group that connects with nature (roots) and improves our world one little bit (shoots) at a time. On Oct 4th, we'll meet in Scott Hall for bagels, juice and fruit from 1-3pm. Let's share stories from our past year: How did our garden plot do over the summer? Did any birds nest in the birdhouses we made last winter? Did we successfully beat back invading plants last spring?

Then we will brainstorm new ideas and vote on projects for the coming year. Each project should involve helping animals, the environment and/or the human community. Some general areas of investigation could be learning and improving local water, land, air, plants, animals, and human community. We welcome adult experts and resources in these areas. The Roots & Shoots website at www.rootsandshoots.org is also a great resource.

Please RSVP to Aimee Dalrymple, Program Leader, at ADalrymple@alumni.duke.edu or 508-652-9946.

First Parish Photo Exhibit Opening Reception

This is a chance to see work by First Parish photographers. All are invited to the opening reception Sunday September 13, 12:30-3pm in Scott Hall. The exhibition will be on display September 13 thru October 25. 20% of all sales go to First Parish.

Womens Allilance

Women's Alliance

September 14, 2009

Huntley Rm at 12:00

"How Was Your Summer"

Bring a sandwich, coffee and dessert will be served.

FALL ADULT RE PROGRAM

What a great way to stretch your heart, mind and spirit AND meet more First Parish folks! The Adult Religious Education brochure comes your way in early September. Watch for it via e-mail or snail mail (if your First Parish info arrives that way.) Info will also be found on the First Parish website. Registration is easy via the Coffee Hour ARE Table, or drop off the form and fee in the office or mail it c/o Adult RE to First Parish

Free/Cycle

The Free/Cycle Bulletin Board in Scott Hall has a new form! Find it at the end of each First Parish Weekly Update.

Items may be posted that are free, for sale, or trade. No business promotions or commercial products accepted. Please send the name of the item, a short description and your contact information to lunamoth28@gmail.com Items will be listed for 2 weeks.

From the Parish Office

The Parish Directory for 2009-2010 is available after Sunday services in the Parish House. An interactive Parish Directory including email addresses is now available in the members' area of our website. The members' area is password protected. If you have forgotten the user name and/or password, contact David Moore by phone, 508.872.3111 or email, office@uuframingham.org.

***UUMassAction* calls UUs to Action**

UUMassAction empowers UUs to be the voice for justice, human rights and social change in Massachusetts. Our legislative focus this fall is climate change/environmental justice and homeless prevention. Detailed information can be found at our web site -www.uumassaction.org.

This year we are joining with the other State Networks, Green Sanctuary Program Office, Ministry for Earth, UU United Nations Office, Washington Office for Advocacy and Witness and UU Service Committee to:

- Pass national climate change legislation
- Get 350+ congregations to participate in a 350 event
- Bring a strong U.S. plan to the world environmental conference in Copenhagen in December 2009

In MA, we need to email our Senators in support of the climate change bill, write letters to the editor and send op-ed pieces to your local paper. Background information is available at our web site.

Be one of the 350+! Register at the Ministry for Earth (MFE) for a 350 event. Not sure why 350? Need more information? Additional resources are available on the MFE web site.

Locally our focus is green jobs. *UUMassAction* is a member of the Green Justice Coalition that supports the growth of green jobs in low-income communities and communities of color. Currently, we are seeking to include these goals in the 3-year energy efficiency plans that utilities must get approved by Dec. 30 by the MA Energy Efficiency Advisory Committee.

UUMassAction continues our work on Homeless Prevention and will be asking churches later this fall to support the 'Expiring Use' bill that will preserve existing low-income housing in MA.

Finally, we want to connect your work. Save the date for the fall Social Justice Conference on Sat. Nov. 14 in Framingham. Questions call Nancy Banks at 617.835.5426 or email at nancy.banks1@verizon.net.

Nancy Banks
Executive Director - *UUMassAction*

Save The Date!

October 17, 2009

**Home baked pies
Quilt Raffle, Crafts,
Food, Games and
A Contest!**



Enthusiastic Volunteers Are Needed Now!

For info or to volunteer:

Email pies@uuframingham.org or Call 508-872-3111

Proceeds benefit First Parish Church, Framingham

September, 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 7:30pm - Pies On The Common Committee	2 6:30pm - FCNS: Scott Hall 7:30pm - Bell Choir	3 8 am - Coffee & Muffins: 8 am FCNS: Scott Hall 5pm - MetroWest Free Med. Prg 7 pm RE Council	4 8am - FCNS: Scott Hall	5
6 NO SUNDAY SER- VICE	7 7:30pm - Medita- tion	8 7pm - Heritage Chorale: Scott Hall 7:30 pm - Stitches InTime	9 1pm - Stitches In Time 7pm - OWL Parent Orientation 7:30 Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm - Church Council	10 8am - Coffee & Muffins 5pm MetroWest Free Med. Prg.	11 1pm - MetroWest Free Med. Prg. 8 pm Uncommon Coffee House	12 Junior Youth Re- treat 9am New Teacher Orientation
13 9:15am - Services 10 am Junior YouthBake Sale 11am - Services 7 pm YRUU	14 12pm - Women's Alliance 7:30pm - Medita- tionGroup VB 7:30pm - MICAH	15 7pm - Heritage Chorale 7:30 pm - Pies On The Common	16 7pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm Board of Assessors	17 Heritage Chorale 8am - Coffee & Muffins 5pm MetroWest Free Med. Prg. 7pm Fairs & Squares	18	19 4:30pm - Private Rental
20 9:15am - Services 11am—Services 2pm RE Ice Cream Social 7pm - YRUU	21 7:30pm - Medita- tion VB	22 7pm - Heritage Chorale 7pm - Legacy Planning 7:30 - Stitches In Time	23 1pm - Stitches In Time 6pm - Junior Youth Group 7pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm - Choir	24 8am - Coffee & Muffins 5pm—MetroWest Free Med. Prg. 7pm - Fairs & Squares	25 Deadline for Octo- ber Steeple copy.	26 2 pm - Private Rental
27 9:15am - Services 11am - Services 12pm - MetroWest Walk For Home- less 7pm - YRUU	28 7:30pm - Medita- tion VB	29 7pm - Heritage Chorale	30 7pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm - Health Care For All			

A Note from the Editor

Deadline for the October *Steeple* is: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST! Send your text to: editor@uuframingham.org.

The First Parish In Framingham
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A Welcoming Congregation
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