



First Parish in Concord
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
Gathered in 1636

The Meeting House News

REVeries

Random thoughts on an August morning.

I actually had dinner with Mary Oliver in late June (at a table for seven) and then listened as she read her poetry to the nearly five thousand folks who attended General Assembly in St. Louis. Sometime during the night I composed an amazing Mary Oliver-like poem about the experience, but it was gone by morning.

Thanks to all who attended our own Annual Meeting in June and who stayed through thick and thin on a glorious afternoon (outside) to once again vote to support the direction of our Capital Campaign leadership. These folks are putting in countless hours of their time and talent and are fueled/ buoyed/ affirmed by your support.

Eliz and I had a magnificent month in Maine, on Crescent Lake and environs. I had my usual grand plans for reading, but aside from some Transcendentalists, I ended up working my way through the mysteries of Lisa Scottoline. I am using the month of August to plan for the fall, to gather many new staff onto our team, and to respond to any and all of the happenstances of our community life. There are the usual births and deaths, joys and sorrows, gains and losses that there are in any season.

Sometime in July I had a dream about our Opening Sunday (September 10). I know there was a grand procession, that the choir sang in front of some huge backdrop, and that I read from a Psalm that had the name of George Bush in it. As with many of my dreams, chaos then ensued. Please come on September 10 when we return to two services, at 9:00 and at 11:00. There will be no procession and I hope little chaos. Please bring your children and enjoy the open house in our R.E. space. There has been a remarkable transformation of many of the rooms this summer as we prepare for Workshop Rotation-style education.

We were in Ogunquit in early July, on our way to Crescent Lake. On Shore Drive, near our hotel, sits a beautiful Methodist Church, where in our first summer there, the congregation served pancakes out on the lawn on Saturday mornings. The church has closed now, replaced by (I'm not making this up) Sanctuary Shoppes, a Revelation Gallery, and the Genesis Spa. Here in Concord, your presence, your support, your vision will keep us from a similar fate.

— Gary Smith

Sunday Worship Schedule

September 3

One 10:00 a.m. Summer Service
Sally Hamlin, Ministerial Intern
First Parish in Concord
Nancy Ackerman, clarinet
Ingrid Guttberg, organ

September 10

Opening Sunday
Gary Smith, preaching
9:00 & 11:00 – Adult Choir
Souls A-Gathered – Bethel/Tollerud
The Good Old Way – Traditional/Shelton

September 17

Jenny Rankin, preaching
9:00 – Bell Choir
Beth Norton, violin
Kingsfold – McChesney
Largo – Handel/McChesney
11:00 – Adult Choir
I Will Sing with The Spirit – Rutter
God Be in My Head – Rutter

September 24

Transylvanian Thanksgiving
Gary Smith, liturgist
9:00 & 11:00 – Adult Choir
Erik a som – Bardos
Esti Dal – Kodály

October 1

Gary Smith, preaching
9:00 – Adult Choir
Avinu Malkeynu – Janowski
Elohim Hashivenu – Rossi
11:00 – Bell Choir
Beth Norton, violin
Kingsfold – McChesney
Largo – Handel/ McChesney



COME BUILD A DREAM!
See insert for updated information about the First Parish Capital Campaign.

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There are two inserts with this newsletter:

Capital Campaign Update
Jericho Road Ride Information

OFFICE HOURS

Beginning on Tuesday, September 5, the office at First Parish will be open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday thru Friday.

The Meeting House News, the newsletter of First Parish in Concord, is published monthly September to June, to provide parishioners and friends with information about our congregation and our larger community.

Please send address changes to:
First Parish in Concord
20 Lexington Road
Concord, MA 01742

Noon Deadline	Mailing Date
Monday, Sept. 18	Wednesday, Sept. 27
Monday, Oct. 16	Wednesday, Oct. 25
Monday, Nov. 20	Wednesday, Nov. 29

Newsletter items should be limited to 100 words and may be delivered, faxed or e-mailed to the church office.

Wright Tavern Center

HELLO TO FIRST PARISH...

My name is **Mary Elizabeth Wheeler**, and I want to introduce myself to you as the new Director of the Wright Tavern starting in September. I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work with the First Parish program staff and Wright Tavern advisory board (including **Caroline McCloy**, the previous director and owner of some very big shoes) to create a thoroughly inviting catalogue of offerings for 2007. I anticipate meeting and getting to know many of you as I come to learn more about the needs and interests of the First Parish community. It is my intention to support the deepening of spiritual practice within the UU community and to reach members of the community-at-large through a diverse, engaging and welcoming program. Look for the Wright Tavern fall 2006 flyer coming soon by mail. The current course schedule with detailed descriptions can be found on our website: wrighttav-ern.org. You can reach me by e-mail at FPTavern@aol.com. Please feel free to introduce yourselves to me — I would love to hear from you!

—*Mary Elizabeth Wheeler*

UU News

GREAT UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Rev. Roberta Finkelstein will give the keynote address ("The Great Unfinished Business") at the New Massachusetts Universalist

Convention's Annual Conference on Saturday, September 30, at First Parish Church in Dorchester. "When the American Unitarian Association merged with the Universalist Church of America," Rev.



Finkelstein writes, "there were so many logistical issues to attend to, theological issues were left behind.

Some among us believe that the vexing theological questions of contemporary Unitarian Universalism (diversity, the language of reverence, various anxieties and reactivities) are the result of that unfinished business."

Worship ("The Good Luck Legend") will be led by Rev. Edmund Robinson and members of the First Church in Belmont. The program will also include a panel of "old-time Universalists" reflecting on how Universalism as they remember it differs from today's UU-ism, workshops by Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Strong ("Remember Universalism into Life") and Rev. Richard Trudeau ("The Tragedy and the Glory of Christianity"), and a car pool to one or more Dorchester Universalist sites led by Phil Lindsay.

The day will run from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and include a continental breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Yellow registration fliers have been sent to all UU churches in New England. For full information, please go to www.nmuc.org and click on "Annual Meeting."

Sunday Forum

Forums are held Sunday morning between 10:10 a.m. and 10:55 a.m. in the Chapel. Everyone is welcome to attend. Please contact **Dian Pekin** if you wish to recommend a topic or speaker.

There are no Forums scheduled for September.

Parish Notes

AUCTION AUCTION — NOVEMBER 18 — AUCTION AUCTION

Get ready for BIG fun ... the SKY's the limit ... at our BONANZA of an auction coming on Saturday, November 18!

COFFEE HOUR APPRECIATION

When you see **Rhoda Miller**, be sure to thank her for volunteering to head up our welcoming coffee hours this summer. The presentation has been as special as the tasty treats, and we are most grateful.

FAIR TRADE COFFEE AVAILABLE IN SEPTEMBER

Be sure to save your coffee, tea and cocoa shopping for Sundays (cash and check only). Starting September 10, Fair Trade products will be sold during both coffee hours. Our prices are competitive, and a small portion of the profits go into the church's general fund. If you would like to help sell coffee, please contact **Sue Beck**.

JOIN THE ALL-PARISH ART EXHIBIT

Would you like to show a painting, drawing or print in the art exhibit? Bring your work in to **Doug Baker** during the first week of September. The exhibit will go up on September 7, and be on display for about five weeks.

FIRST PARISH PHOTO DIRECTORY COMING THIS FALL

Are you ready to update your family portrait? Will you need holiday photos? Did you regret not having your picture taken for the last directory after seeing how great everyone looked? Here's your opportunity to have a very special portrait taken this fall by **Pierre Chiha** and his staff, who make this a quick, easy and pleasant experience. We do this only every three or four years, so don't miss out! And if you would like to be part of this fun project, meeting lots and lots of wonderful First Parishioners, please contact Pierre at 978-369-9949 (at the Emerson Umbrella) or photo@pierre.com. More details will be in next month's newsletter.

TAKE ACTION — JOIN THE UUSC!

If you are looking for an organization that works around the globe to promote UU principles, then join the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). Through Action Alerts, the UUSC will help you to take action on causes ranging from stopping genocide in Darfur to urging Congressional oversight of reconstruction on the Gulf Coast. The UUSC works through local organizations that already have ties to the community, funding projects like getting fishermen back to work after the tsunami. Today it is more important than ever for us to promote UU principles and take action to make a difference. For more information, see the UUSC website at www.uusc.org and become a member, or contact **Sue Beck**.

HUMANIST GROUP FORUM OFFERED

The Humanist Group of First Parish is pleased to announce the first in a series of its forums. On Sunday, October 1, Rabbi Greg Epstein, Humanist Chaplain of Harvard University, will be discussing the impact of Humanism in today's world. All are invited to hear this dynamic speaker and join in the discussion starting at 10:10 a.m. in the Parlor after the first service. Future topics may include: The Ethics of Stem Cell Research, Global Warming, Domestic Violence in Concord?, Spare Parts Babies, and Separation of Church and State.

PARISH NOTES continued on page 7

Money Matters

I hope everyone had a nice summer. Here are just a few quick notes from the finance side at First Parish.

First, we are happy to inform you that we ended the year with a strong net income. This is primarily due to stronger than projected revenues. Subscription income for the year was only slightly higher than budget. (Note that the budget does not reflect the total amount pledged for the year but builds in a factor for pledges not received.) The stronger than projected income came from a combination of higher income in other areas, including: higher than projected non-pledge income, higher interest income, more funds received from Wright Tavern programs, and higher than budgeted income from Special Events. On the expense side, we were below budget in some areas, which also contributed to the strong net income.

Second, I would like to raise the topic of some logistical issues we are facing with pledges in the hopes that you can help us out. If you pledged by credit card, please note that we will have to get new information from you if your card expires during the year. Since many of you pledged several months ago, some cards had even expired by the start of FY'07. If you received a call about this or other questions we had regarding your credit card pledge, please respond as soon as possible so we can start charging the credit card as you requested. Also, if you pledge by automatic deduction from your checking account and want to increase your pledge each year or cancel the automatic deduction to switch to another form of pledging, please note that you have to fill out a form to make this happen. Many of you were surprised to learn that we could not do this for you. Again, please help us out if someone contacts you asking you to fill out one of these forms. We greatly appreciate your pledges and want to make sure we are able to put through these transactions as you requested.

—*Lisa Cole*

Business Manager

Pastoral Care News

Greetings to you all! I am honored and very happy that I am your Associate Minister for Pastoral Care. **Karen Foley** and I have worked together to make this transition as smooth as possible. To become familiar with Pastoral Care programs at other large UU churches, I have been on the Web. My research has led me to conclude that First Parish has one of the most developed programs in the association. Karen, along with the many committees and hands, has created a comprehensive and caring program. Over the coming years I hope to continue the program, expanding and deepening its reach.

Let me introduce myself. I grew up in New York City and South Jersey (outside of Philadelphia), and came to Boston in 1968. In 2000, I graduated from Andover Newton Theological School and was ordained by my home church, First Religious Society of Carlisle. For the next six years I served as affiliate minister at United First Parish Church in Quincy, Mass., while I simultaneously pursued community ministry as Hospice chaplain. I also studied "Being with Dying" with Roshi Joan Halifax at the Upaya Zen Center in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Since 2002, I have served on the board of directors of Partakers, Inc, a nonprofit multifaith organization that recruits congregations to sponsor prisoners in the College Behind Bars program. I have also taught classes on spiritual/emotional awareness, as well as Alternatives to Violence at the local prisons. I will be offering a modified emotional/spiritual awareness course through the Wright Tavern Center for Spiritual Renewal.

Throughout my professional life, I have been committed to those who are disenfranchised, helping them to "find their voice" as they struggle to meet their needs. This was true in the late 1960's, when I was a public health nurse in Schenectady, New York; as well as when I was a pediatric nurse practitioner in Boston in the 1970's. For fifteen years, as editor of the *Children In Hospitals* newsletter, I advocated for the needs of families when their children were hospitalized.

I am presently a student at the Shalem Institute of Spiritual Formation and offer spiritual direction through the Wright Tavern Center. As a spiritual director, I bring the lessons of the dying to the living and serve as a midwife to the birthing of the true self. My multiministries have affirmed my faith in the transformative power of compassion.

My husband Jon and I have been married for 35 years and have lived in Carlisle for 24 years. We have four adult children: Genevieve, Graeme, Gregory and Andrew; and one granddaughter, Emma.

I look forward to meeting you. I am in the office Monday, Wednesday and some Thursdays. Please call for an appointment to visit, or to ask me to visit you.

In faith,

—*Margie King Saphier*

Music Notes

ADULT CHOIR — OPEN REHEARSALS IN SEPTEMBER

The Adult Choir will start the season with “open rehearsals” on Wednesday nights in September, beginning on September 6. Rehearsals are from 7:45 to 9:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary balcony. Anyone interested in singing in the choir is invited to attend, with no obligation during this time. Singers of all voice parts are welcome. The choir will sing in church for the first time on Sunday, September 10, at the 9:00 and 11:00 o’clock services. If you plan to attend a rehearsal, or have any questions, contact Beth Norton at 978-369-9602, ext. 420, or music@firstparish.org.

Keep this information handy as you make plans for fall. And consider joining a choir!

CHOIR REHEARSAL SCHEDULE FALL 2006

ADULT CHOIR

Wednesday 7:45 – 9:30 p.m.
beginning September 6
Beth Norton, Director

BELL CHOIR

Wednesday 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
beginning September 6
Martha Goodman, Director

GOSPEL CHOIR

(Grades 7 – 12)
Sunday 10:00–11:00 a.m.
beginning September 17
Anderson Manuel, Director

CHALICE CHOIR

(Grades 4 – 6)
Wednesday 5:00 – 5:40 p.m.
beginning September 13
Judy Burrows, Director

JUNIOR CHOIR

(Grades 1–3)
Wednesday 4:30–5:00 p.m.
beginning September 13
Judy Burrows, Director

For more information, contact Beth Norton at 978-369-9602, ext. 420, or music@firstparish.org.

MUSings

This was a “summer on the Mississippi” for me. UU music-related travel took me to St. Louis, Missouri, for General Assembly and to St. Paul, Minnesota, for the annual conference of the UU Musicians Network. My traveler’s discipline of getting out and walking served me well in these cities. Both have attractive river fronts that encourage exploration via parks and bike paths.



The highlight of GA in St. Louis for me was the opportunity to lead music at the Sunday morning worship service with Rev. Gail Geisenhainer, Rev. Jane Rzepka, UUA President William Sinkford and percussionist Matt Meyer, as well as a choir of over 70 UUMN singers and St. Louis area choir members.

I also had the great pleasure of hearing the 2006 UU Children’s Choir sing in the GA Closing Ceremony and at their own concert at Christ Church Cathedral just blocks from the convention center in St. Louis. The UUCC is a select choir of around 70 children from UU congregations all over the continent that is convened at GA every three years. This year First Parish was wonderfully represented by **Sophia Suarez-Friedman**. Sophia and her fellow singers had the opportunity to work with Sandra Snow, a world-class children’s choir director, and it was clear that the musical and social experience of singing with a choir of young UU’s was a memorable one. A wonderful “blog” describing the UUCC 2006 experience can be found at www.watzmanassociates.com/uucc/.

August found me farther north on the Mississippi, for a week in St. Paul. The UUMN conference, my second as president of that organization, was stimulating and exhausting. In addition to meetings with the UUMN board and other committees carrying on the many activities of our professional organization, I was also able to stretch my own musical muscles. Particularly memorable was a master class with choral legend Dale Warland, whose scrutiny of my conducting style left me with some useful techniques to consider. As always, gathering with my UU music colleagues inspired and energized me.

It was an eventful summer. And it’s good to be back, though you should know that the music office moved over the summer. You can find me and the other music staff in the room—formerly-known-as-the-nursery off the stage in the Parish Hall. Come by and visit!

Blessings,

— *Beth Norton*

CROP WALK 2006 — OCTOBER 15

The 2006 Concord Area Crop Walk for the Hungry will take place on Sunday, October 15, with registration at 1:30 p.m., starting from First Parish. This six-mile walk raises funds for Church World Service to use in hunger relief and development projects, both locally and internationally.



Twenty-five percent of the money raised goes to six local supper and food pantry programs, including Concord's Open Table. The other 75 percent goes to disaster relief, refugee assistance, and projects to provide access to clean water and nutritious food to those in need around the world. Please put this date on your calendar and plan to join us; this is a great activity for the whole family! Sponsor forms will be available at coffee hour starting September 17. See concordcrop.org for more details, and to find out about on-line pledging.

FALL ORIENTATION FOR CONCORD PRISON VOLUNTEERS

Have you ever considered volunteering in your local prison? An orientation is required before you are allowed to enter. Fortunately, NCC (Northeast Correctional Center), "the farm," located on Barrett's Mill Road near the Route 2 rotary is having an orientation on September 25, from 6 to 8 p.m. Anyone interested in attending should follow the signs to the visitor entrance; you will be directed to the restaurant in the main building. Prison volunteers often find that they receive more than they give in prison work. For more information, contact Lenore James at 978-369-1430, or **Linda Reynolds** at 978-371-0562.

COMMON CATHEDRAL NEEDS LUNCH

Throughout the church year, many of us go to the Boston Common on a Sunday to take part in Common Cathedral, a remarkable ministry for the homeless. We join another faith community to provide food for lunch for about 200 homeless parishioners. We serve the food, listen to people's stories, and learn. The Choir, the Youth Group and Neighboring Faiths have already signed up. Dates waiting for you or your church group are October 22, November 19 and April 15. Please contact **Mary Lou Toussaint** at mlou512@yahoo.com for sign up or questions.

CREATING A CULTURE OF PEACE

If you are interested in making a positive difference for peace in your life, community and world, join us for an Alternatives to Violence Workshop to be held Saturday, October 14, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Trinitarian Congregational Church. Discover ways to tap into your own creativity as a resource for building a culture of peace. The AVP workshop is cosponsored by the Alternatives to Violence Project and Concord Prison Outreach. Prior registration is necessary. Registration is \$15, and morning coffee and lunch are provided. Registration forms are available in the First Parish office.

HELP REBUILD A BILOXI FAMILY'S HOME

Bridge to Biloxi, an interfaith task force spearheaded by **Jenny Rankin** a year ago, invites you to participate this fall in our pilot rebuilding project for Gulf Coast resident Cynthia and her five children. Cynthia works hard, while living in a FEMA trailer, to provide for her family and an older child in college. You can help this family by volunteering up to a week of your time this October or November to help reconstruct their home (no special skills required), or by donating to the total cost of rebuilding, which comes to a remarkably small \$45,000 in cash. To learn more about Bridge to Biloxi volunteers, please visit bridgetobiloxi.org or e-mail info@bridgetobiloxi.org.

SUPPORT THE JERICO ROAD RIDE 2006 ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

On Sunday, October 1, we will be holding our annual bike-a-thon from Concord to Lowell to raise money to support Jericho Road's annual operating costs. Supporters of all ages are invited to come out and ride, and then join us in the beautiful Tsongas Arena Park for a buffet lunch picnic, family fun activities, a raffle and an awards ceremony. Registration is \$125 per adult or \$25 per child 14 and under. With a choice of a 10-mile, 20-mile or a 40-mile route, there's something for every kind of cyclist. Chances to sponsor other riders or contribute to Jericho Road will be available at coffee hour throughout September. To find out more about the Ride or to register, please go to jerichoroadproject.org or e-mail lkoplow@jerichoroadproject.org.

OUTREACH FOR A DEPARTMENT OF PEACE

The Massachusetts Campaign for a U.S. Department of Peace, launched at First Parish in March 2005, is discussing outreach for broadening its base. Rev. Fred Small, minister of Littleton First Parish, has proposed a Peacemaker Project. "It's as easy as one, two, three," says Fred. One person makes two contacts (e-mail and phone call) to three members of Congress (one Rep. and two Senators). For a copy of the proposal, call Jason White at 978-621-0353 or **Pat Simon** at 781-373-1410 or go to madop.org and get involved. The Newton group, hosting a meeting at the Unitarian

SOCIAL ACTION COMMUNITY NOTES continued on page 7

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SOCIAL ACTION AT FIRST PARISH?

The First Parish Social Action Community (SAC) helps parishioners connect with a diverse and exciting range of social action projects. To find out more about what is going on, join our e-mail list by sending a blank e-mail to SAC-join@lists.firstparish.org, see our website www.firstparish.org/cms/content/view/97/70/, or check out information on the SAC bulletin board downstairs in the church.

Society September 11, will feature a new film on Gandhi, developed by the New York Department of Peace Campaign.

SOCIAL ACTION GIVING COMMITTEE

The Social Action Giving committee is the grant-making group of the First Parish Social Action Community and Parish. Each year 7.5 percent of Parish pledge payments, about \$65,000, supports parishioner proposals to help the less fortunate through grants to non-profit organizations. Grants range from \$1,000 to \$10,000. If you actively support an organization that would like to apply for funds, please see the social action Web page for instructions on applying and to download the application. Contact **Alane Wallis** at awallis@nutter.com or 978-369-1114 or firstparish.org/cms/content/view/205/96. Fall applications are due October 15; spring applications are due in April 2007.

WE SEEK A SOCIAL ACTION STAFF PERSON

Gary Smith and **Jenny Rankin** would like to fill the half-time position of Social Action Associate. This person will work with SAC cochairs **Claudia Nimar** and **Eric Van Loon** and the many other parishioners who are engaged in a wide variety of social justice projects.

WANTED...

A committed, energetic, skilled individual to help bring First Parish social action to a new level of excellence. Work with volunteers, lay leaders and ministers in a staff structure, half-time, beginning fall '06. Interpersonal skills, energy, organization, leadership and follow-through ability are key. Writing, speaking and recruiting skills are also important. Contact **Jenny Rankin** at 978-369-9602 or revjenny@comcast.net.

OUR TRANSYLVANIA PARTNER CHURCH: THEY'RE COMING! WE'RE GOING! COME ALONG!

Join us on Sunday, September 24, at 5 p.m. for a light Hungarian supper and information about the following.

1. The Youth and Choir pilgrimages to Szekelykeresztur (and beyond) in summer 2007. Find out how you can become involved.
2. The Thanksgiving visit of Rev. Jozsef Szombatfalvi and Anna, and four other members of our partner church.
3. The beautiful (and short) movie, *Women in Transylvania*, which provides an introduction to social issues in Transylvania and the importance of our partnership. You will also meet 15-year-old Istvan Csaka, here for three months. Tickets (suggested donation \$15 to help our Thanksgiving guests) at coffee hours starting September 10.

KNITTERS: JOIN THE CATNIP BALL WORKSHOPS

Please come to help put together the knitted cat toys that sell at the November 4 Artisans Fair. Workshops will take place on Thursdays, October 12, 19 and 26, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at **Cindy McLean-Greeley's** home, 1515 Main Street in West Concord (on the corner of Brown Street and Main Street.) For further information, contact Cindy at 978-371-1057.

CELEBRATION AND THANK-YOU!

On Friday, October 13, at 7:30 p.m., the Nominating Committee and the Ministers wish to celebrate and honor those involved in First Parish leadership. Standing Committee members and Trustees, current, immediate past and upcoming committee chairs, as well as others interested in becoming more involved in leadership at First Parish are all invited. Enjoy champagne and festive desserts while becoming better acquainted and sharing thoughts about First Parish governance and goals. Stay tuned for more information. —The Nominating Committee: **Kitsy Rothermel**, chair; **Lillian Anderson**, **Jack Nevison**, **Mark Richards**, **Patty Popov**, **Laurie Van Loon**

ART, CRAFTS AND MORE AT THE HOLIDAY ARTISANS FAIR

Plans are well under way for this year's Holiday Artisans Fair on Saturday, November 4. Start setting aside treasures for our white elephant table. The fair committee is looking for donations of small gift items of high quality. Several new artists and artisans have been added this year to ensure an interesting variety of handcrafted items as well as photography and prints. There are many fun ways to participate in this community-wide event, and you can volunteer to work for an hour or more. Contact **Jan Petersen** at 978-369-4103 or **Dian Pekin** at 978-263-0426 or pekindc@comcast.net to offer your services or gift items.

Membership Corner

DON'T MISS THE FIRST SEASONAL DINNER PARTY

Would you like to meet new, interesting people — and enjoy a delicious meal? This church year the seasonal potluck dinner parties will take place on three Saturday evenings — October 28, January 27 and March 31. Be sure to mark your calendar now. These informal potluck dinners of 8 to 10 people will be held in the participants' homes. Delicious food, beverages and spirited conversation in these friendly, intimate settings allow us all to become better acquainted. For more information on the Fall Seasonal Dinner Party on Saturday, October 28, contact **Carolyn** and **Barry Copp** (cbcopp@comcast.net).

Two years ago, while I was working with a kindergarten class, a kindergartener made a guess that took me by surprise. I had brought in a “mystery box” and asked students to make a guess as to what could be inside the box. We used all sorts of measuring tools to help us make “educated” guesses, using scientific facts about the size of the box. I let the kids think about possibilities and I returned the next day to open the box with the class.

Before opening the box, kids had a chance to share what they thought was inside. Many kids had drawn pictures. One child stood up with her picture. She confidently asserted that a pony was inside the box. Many of the kids explained why it just couldn't be a pony, but she was not convinced. As you can imagine, my heart sank because I knew there was definitely not a pony in that box. Well...we opened the box and inside was a painted pumpkin. Above the din of excitement, I heard the girl say, “But I thought it was a pony!” Despite her lost hope, she joined the others and embraced the silly looking pumpkin. It was not what she had hoped for, but she was happy nonetheless.

Many exciting changes are happening this year in our RE program at First Parish. The most obvious of these changes is the start of our Workshop Rotation model of religious education. So many have helped toward making this program a reality. It has been quite a summer, and I am continually amazed at how dedicated people are toward making RE a place kids want to be on Sunday.

We are continuing the very successful program, Spirit Play, with our Kindergarteners and First Graders. For our 7th Graders, Young Activists is back and an integral part of our RE program this year. Kids learn by doing, and Young Activists promises to bring the hands of our youth to the needs of our community. Ways of Worship, our 8th Grade fall program, will be using themes from *Godspell* to create a worship service for our congregation. But, these are just programs. Each one holds promise, but we all know they need all of you, your enthusiasm, commitment and caring, to really work and help our kids grow.

Another year, another mystery box. I hope you are with me, wishing for ponies, working for ponies, but always seeing the beauty in what we create together.

— Pam Howell

KUDOS TO OUR RE STAFF

Please take a moment to appreciate and thank our amazing RE staff.

Jane Barnes has truly brought our program together. She brings so much talent and enthusiasm to RE. Although she will not be working on Sunday mornings, Jane runs our office all week. If you have not met her already, please stop by and introduce yourself.

Carol Duane will begin her third year with us. We have expanded her position and she will now be working with our 0-First Graders. Carol's commitment to several of our programs, including Spirit Play, has really made a difference for our youngest kids.

Mary-Wren vanderWilden will also be starting her third year at First Parish. Mary-Wren's vision and dedication comes through to our teens in the YRUU program, Senior Owl and the many youth retreats.

Without the leadership, dedication and vision these people bring, our RE program would not be what it is today. Thank you.

WORKSHOP ROTATION VOLUNTEERS

I am in awe of the countless hands and considerable talent that have gone into this program in preparation for the fall. Please take a look at our RE bulletin board if you want to share in this awesome feeling. Each hand made its mark, each hand made a difference.

There are a few who made all of this possible. Our room designers, **Debbie Page, Francene Amari-Faulkner, Steve Lenox, Leslie Koplou, Susan Ryan and Suzie Weaver**, and our Workshop Rotation general contractor, **Allison Aley**. Please take a moment to view their creations at the RE open house. Once our program is under way, we will have an “RE Thank You” event in November to celebrate all our hard work.

IMPORTANT TECHNOLOGY NOTE — CALENDARS AVAILABLE

If you are missing a calendar, we have included calendars for all of our programs on our First Parish website: www.firstparish.org. We hope you find this a useful resource this year.

RE ORIENTATIONS

Because of the new programming, we will be conducting orientation a bit differently. Orientation will be critical to the success of Spirit Play and Workshop Rotation. For each rotation, all leaders and guides are required to attend. If one person doesn't know the expectations, it could throw the whole program off.

Orientation Schedule for '06-'07 RE:

Babies and Preschool – September 9, 10:00 a.m.

Spirit Play – September 9, 10:00 a.m.

Workshop Rotation 1 – September 7, 7:30–9:30 p.m.

Workshop Rotation 2 – October 19, 7:30–9:30 p.m.

Workshop Rotation 3 – December 7, 7:30–9:30 p.m.

Workshop Rotation 4 – February 8, 7:30–9:30 p.m.

Workshop Rotation 5 – March 29, 7:30–9:30 p.m.

RE NEWS continued on page 9

Standing Committee Notes

The Standing Committee (SC) met on June 26 and welcomed new Treasurer **Rob Richardson** and new member **Dick Shohet**. The meeting was largely an orientation and get-acquainted session, with **Laura Graham** adding her knowledge of policy governance to the discussion. The SC would also like to welcome the new staff members: **Margie King Saphier**, Associate Minister for Pastoral Care; **Caroline McCloy**, returning as Membership Director; **Mary Elizabeth Wheeler**, new director of the Wright Tavern Center and **A. Bigay**, Assistant to the Ministers. We are all looking forward to the new church year and invite every parishioner to be involved in the coming Capital Campaign. Please help us to be the best church leaders we can be by talking to us at coffee hour (SC members have stars on their name tags), checking the church web-site for information and updates, reading the monthly newsletter and staying informed. The next SC meeting will be on September 11 and will be open to visitors from 7 to 8 p.m.

Submitted,

—*Sue Beck*, Clerk

RE NEWS continued from page 8

RE SCHEDULE SEPTEMBER 2006

- Thursday, September 7:
RE Orientation for Rotation 1 7:30 p.m.
- Saturday, September 9:
RE Orientation for Spirit Play and Pre-K
10 a.m.
- Sunday, September 10:
RE for Pre-K only 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
RE Open House: 10:15 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.
- Friday, September 15: wow Movie Night
7:00 p.m. at First Parish
6th Grade Youth Group 7:00 p.m.
- Sunday, September 17: Regular RE for
Pre-K thru 6th Grade 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
Regular RE for 7th and 8th Grade 11:00 a.m.
- Saturday, September 23: wow Gaining
Ground Workday 12:30 p.m.
- Sunday, September 24: Regular RE for
Pre-K thru 6th Grade 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
Regular RE for 7th and 8th Grade 11:00 a.m.
Sunday, September 24: Junior High
Youth Group 4-6 p.m.

Senior Youth News

I am so excited to see everyone after three months of going off in different directions. Each year it's wonderful to reconnect, meet new youth and come together as a community. We have a dedicated, energetic group of senior leaders who are planning a terrific year for the youth at First Parish.

We are hoping to increase youth participation in social action this year. We are focusing our efforts on four or five projects that we feel will be very meaningful to our youth. We are also planning another Youth Pilgrimage to Transylvania for July 2007. Applications are available on the First Parish website and will be due October 9.

The backbone of our program is YRUU, which will continue to meet on Sunday nights from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Chapel. Our aim this year is to create a welcoming community where youth can feel comfortable coming every week or dropping in when they can. Our first meeting will be on Sunday, September 10, and we hope to see lots of new faces and old ones too. Look for your "What's the Deal?" youth mailing coming the first week of September with a September youth calendar.

We are heading back to Mayromai for our Fall Retreat September 29 to October 1. This retreat is always well attended and a wonderful way for youth to feel connected to the youth program at First Parish. Information about the retreat and permission slips can be downloaded from the First Parish website and are due no later than September 20.

Senior High OWL was such a success last year that we will be offering it again this year for 11th and 12th Graders, beginning in November. If youth participated last year, we encourage them to do it again if they would like. There will be different discussions and some new activities. Registration forms can be downloaded from the website and are due October 12.

I encourage all parents of youth to come to a parent orientation on Thursday, September 7, at 7:30 p.m. in the Wright Tavern. I will be introducing all the new offerings for youth, so even if you're a veteran, there's lots of new information. We will also discuss the upcoming Youth Pilgrimage to Transylvania.

In an effort to save money, I will be posting all documents on the First Parish website for you to download. We will still send the monthly newsletter, *What's the Deal?*, so if you do *not* want to receive this, then please e-mail **Mary-Wren vanderWilden** at vanderWilden@verizon.net or call me at church at 978-369-9602, ext. 427. For that matter, feel free to call or e-mail me about anything. I'm anxious to hear from youth and parents about anything related to youth. Come visit me in my new office in the main church building (the old music office).

September is a crazy time for youth as they transition from the lazy days of summer to the stress of busy schedules and worries about grades, colleges and other things. On the other hand, it can be an exciting time to reconnect with friends, meet new ones and learn and try new things. We are hoping that the Youth Group at First Parish can be an oasis of peace, a place to connect with others, a time to pay attention to our spiritual needs and a place for fun. Come join us on September 10 and find out more!

—*Mary-Wren vanderWilden*

Miscellaneous

CLIMATE CHANGE IN CONCORD?

Thursday, September 28, at 8 p.m. in the Parish Hall

Henry David Thoreau kept meticulous notes about nature in Concord — when certain flowers bloomed, when migrating birds returned, and other natural phenomena. Now, 160 years later, BU biology professor Richard Primack has taken Thoreau as his “lab partner,” compiling and comparing massive data about when these same things occur in Concord today. You and your family can consider what natural changes close to home may tell us about global climate change. Join in this interesting, informative, provocative presentation and discussion. Cosponsored by FP Social Action and Musketaquid Arts and Environment (for more information, contact Morwen Two Feathers, Program Coordinator, 978-371-0820).

CONCORD LIGHT RESIDENTIAL ASSISTANCE RATE APPLICATION

Applications for the Residential Assistance Rate are available in the First Parish office. This discounted electric rate is available to Concord residents who meet guidelines that are spelled out on the application. Look for an application in the First Parish office if you think you might qualify for this discount, or call the Concord Light Plant at 978-318-3101 for additional information.

CONCORD ORCHESTRA BENEFIT CONCERT

All are invited to a Benefit Concert at 51 Walden for the Concord Orchestra, conducted by Alan Yost on Sunday, September 17, at 1:30 p.m.. There will be refreshments, then music that includes **Siri Smedvig** playing Mozart's *Concerto in G*, Pamela Marshall's *Enchanted* with Veronica Kenney, oboe, and Barber's *Adagio* and *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with Epp Sonin, soprano. Tickets are \$25 and support the Concord Orchestra. For more information, visit the Website at concordorchestra.com or call 978-369-4967.

Classified

VIOLIN LESSONS

Learn to play the violin! All ages and levels welcome. Whether interested in classical, bluegrass, Irish or playing as an effective form of meditating! **Siri Smedvig** has experience galore and has a few slots available. Please call for more information at 978-369-1470. “Do not deny the music in you” —Delius

Women's News

THE WOMEN'S AM/PM BOOK GROUP

This year the meetings of the First Parish Women's Book Group will be on Tuesday mornings and Monday evenings, usually the last week of the month (fourth or fifth Monday and Tuesday), with a few exceptions as indicated in the date list below (note in particular that the “September” meeting for the evening group has been changed to October 2). The morning session is facilitated by **Darien Smith**, and the evening by **Siri Smedvig**. The book for September's discussions is *The Peabody Sisters*, by Megan Marshall. The morning group meets on September 26 from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m., and the evening group meets on October 2 from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. All women of First Parish are warmly invited to read the current book and join one or both of these discussions. If you would like to be added to the Women's Book Group e-mail list, please contact **Darien Smith** at darien@smithquest.com.

Books and dates for the 2006-2007 year are as follows:

October 2 (P.M.) and September 26 (A.M.)

The Peabody Sisters, Megan Marshall

October 30 (P.M.) and 31 (A.M.)

The Master Butchers' Singing Club, Louise Erdrich

December 4 (P.M.) and 5 (A.M.)

Pilgrim at Tinker Creek, Annie Dillard

January 29 (P.M.) and 30 (A.M.)

The Birth of Venus, Sarah Dunant

February 26 (P.M.) and 27 (A.M.)

The Spiral Staircase, Karen Armstrong

March 26 (P.M.) and 27 (A.M.)

Independent People, Halldor Laxness

April 23 (P.M.) and 24 (A.M.)

The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down, Anne Fadiman

May 21 (P.M.) and 22 (A.M.)

Snow Flower and the Secret Fan, Lisa See

SEPTEMBER WPA LUNCHEON AND MUSIC PROGRAM

The Women's Parish Association is pleased to offer you a chance to socialize with old and new friends while enjoying a delicious lunch and delightful and interesting music. “La Jouisance,” under the direction of **Sue Cornwall**, will offer a program of Renaissance and Medieval dances, madrigals and chansons as well as religious chants. The group's instruments include the recorder, viola da gamba, guitar, harpsichord, krumhorn and voice. A sandwich and dessert buffet will be served at noon on Tuesday, September 19, followed by the program. All First Parish folks and their friends are cordially invited. The price of the meal is six dollars. Reservations are not required, but for ease of planning, please contact **Dian Pekin** at pekinc@comcast.net or 978-263-0426 by September 16 if you plan to attend or to request child care.

September 2006 Calendar

*Listings in italics represent classes offered through
the Wright Tavern Center for Spiritual Renewal.*

Every Week...

Morning Meditation	Monday-Friday	7:15 a.m.
<i>T'ai Chi</i>	Tuesday	6:00 p.m. (not 9/5)
<i>Tibetan Buddhism</i>	Wednesday	9:30 a.m. (not 9/6)
Bell Choir	Wednesday	1:00 p.m. (not 9/6)
Junior Choir	Wednesday	4:30 p.m. (not 9/6)
Chalice Choir	Wednesday	5:00 p.m. (not 9/6)
<i>Kripalu Yoga</i>	Wednesday	7:30 p.m. (not 9/6 or 9/13)
Adult Choir	Wednesday	7:45 p.m.
<i>Tibetan Buddhism</i>	Thursday	7:30 p.m. (not 9/7)
Gospel Choir	Sunday	10:00 a.m. (not 9/3 or 9/10)
YRUU	Sunday	7:00 p.m. (not 9/3)

<p>Mon Sep 4 Holiday—Office Closed</p> <p>Tue Sep 5 9:00 Women's Parish Association Board Meeting</p> <p>Wed Sep 6 7:00 Youth Advisory Committee Meeting</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:00 RE Council</p> <p>Thu Sep 7 9:30 <i>Play with Purpose</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:30 Youth/Parent Orientation</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:30 Religious Education Orientation</p> <p>Fri Sep 8 9:30 Parish Care Ministry</p> <p>Sat Sep 9 9:00 Photo Club</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">10:00 Religious Education Orientation</p> <p>Sun Sep 10 12:30 Opening Sunday Picnic</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">6:30 Crop Walk Recruiters</p> <p>Mon Sep 11 7:00 Standing Committee</p> <p>Wed Sep 13 7:30 Clergy Laity Breakfast</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:00 Youth Advisory Committee</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:30 <i>Play with Purpose</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:30 <i>Kripalu Yoga</i></p> <p>Fri Sep 15 9:30 Parish Visitors</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">11:30 <i>T'ai Ji</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">1:30 <i>T'ai Ji</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:00 Ways of Worship movie</p> <p>Sun Sep 17 11:00 Junior High Youth</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">3:30 COA Mentors</p> <p>Mon Sep 18 9:30 Pastoral Care Council</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">9:30 <i>Bones for Life</i>®</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">12:00 Newsletter Deadline</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">1:15 <i>Bones for Life</i>®</p>	<p>Tue Sep 19 12:00 Women's Parish Association Luncheon</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:30 <i>Rise Up and Call Her Name</i></p> <p>Wed Sep 20 6:30 <i>Poetic Journeys</i></p> <p>Thu Sep 21 9:30 <i>Play with Purpose</i></p> <p>Sun Sep 24 4:00 Junior High Youth</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">5:00 Partner Church Committee Dinner</p> <p>Mon Sep 25 9:30 <i>Bones for Life</i>®</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">1:15 <i>Bones for Life</i>®</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:30 <i>The Gospel According to Evolution</i></p> <p>Tue Sep 26 9:30 Women's Book Group</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:30 <i>Rise Up and Call Her Name</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:00 <i>Stress Reduction</i></p> <p>Wed Sep 27 9:15 Newsletter Mailing</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">12:15 <i>Listening for God</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">6:30 <i>Poetic Journeys</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:30 <i>Play with Purpose</i></p> <p>Thu Sep 28 12:00 <i>Brown Bag Emerson</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">8:00 <i>Finding Your Calling</i></p> <p>Fri Sept 29 9:30 <i>Stress Reduction</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:30 <i>Rise Up Singing</i></p> <p>Sat Sep 30 1:00 <i>Dying to Live</i></p> <p>Sun Oct 1 8:30 Jericho Road Ride</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">10:10 Humanist Forum</p> <p>Mon Oct 2 7:30 <i>Five Important Sermons</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:30 Women's Book Group</p> <p>Tue Oct 3 9:00 WPA Board Meeting</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">9:30 <i>Kundalini Yoga</i></p> <p>Wed Oct 4 6:30 <i>Poetic Journeys</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">7:00 Youth Advisory Committee</p>
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First Parish in Concord

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

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SEPTEMBER 2006 NEWSLETTER

The next **Newsletter deadline** is **Monday, September 18**, at noon.
The Newsletter mailing is Wednesday, September 27.
News items should be limited to 100 words.

Don't Miss...

OPENING SUNDAY

Sunday, September 10
Services at 9:00 & 11:00 o'clock

Homecoming Celebration at 12:30
under the tent

First Parish in Concord • UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST Staff

Gary E. Smith, Senior Minister (*on sabbatical January–June 2007*)

Jenny M. Rankin, Minister

Margie King Saphier, Associate Minister for Pastoral Care

Rebecca M. Blodgett, Affiliate Minister for Pastoral Care

Sally Hamlin, Ministerial Intern

Pam Howell, Director of Religious Education

Jane Barnes, RE Administrator

Carol Duane, Program Coordinator for Young Children

Mary-Wren vanderWilden, Youth Program Director

Elizabeth Norton, Music Director

Eric Huenneke, Organist

Martha Goodman, Bell Choir Director

Judy Burrows, Children's Choir Director

Anderson Manuel, Music/RE Associate

Mary Elizabeth Wheeler, Wright Tavern Center Director

Dan Holin, Jericho Road Executive Director

Leslie Koplou, Assistant to Executive Director, Jericho Road

A. Bigay, Assistant to the Ministers

Douglas Baker, Sacristan and Curator

Jane Johnson, Office Manager

Peggy Gallo, Financial Secretary and Collector

Lisa Cole, Business Manager

Caroline McCloy, Director of Member Services

Kate Keleher, Newsletter Editor

Kaye Harvie, Jane Johnson, Newsletter Staff



HOMECOMING CELEBRATION — SEPTEMBER 10

Come one, come all to our homecoming celebration! Connect with friends old and new under the tent on the front lawn. There will be music, children's games and picnic fare at 12:30, after the second service. Hot dogs (regular and tofu), chips, lemonade, water, and ice cream will be available for purchase. We will celebrate, rain or shine.



Church Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 9:00 to 4:00

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