



First Parish in Concord
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
Gathered in 1636

The Meeting House News

REVeries

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! May we be “riders of paradox” in the “mess and the mystery” of creation! (Gary’s words are still here.)

I have a spiral-bound notebook in which I record quotes that among other things elucidate or eliminate my theological beliefs, fill my heart with inspiration, and sometimes make me laugh. It is important to start the New Year with laughter, so I would like to share with you a bit of humorous trivia. “In 1861, the flush toilet with a separate water tank and a pull chain was patented by Thomas Crapper.”

Continuing with trivia, when I visited the International Spy Museum, I read this quote, “The history of spying on one another began when people settled in agrarian society.”

Chris Hedges, who was a war correspondent for the *New York Times*, claimed in a book entitled, *War Is God* that war is God because it requires the sacrifice of the other, and ultimately the sacrifice of the self. The sacrifice of life becomes the force that gives life-and-death meaning to the soldiers, their leaders and ultimately the nation. Hedges stresses that when soldiers are given full license to kill, it becomes intoxicating, leading to dehumanizing the other through grievous acts. In this bleak self-perpetuating cycle, Hedges gives hope stating, “What finally saves us is compassion — seeing the divinity in our enemies that is in ourselves.” And he gives this warning, “If we can’t, we are doomed.” Back in the 1960’s or 1970’s, Chris Hedges attended Harvard Divinity School and was a student of James Luther Adams, the UU ethicist and theologian.

James Baldwin explains the significance of compassion more eloquently, “The moment we cease to hold each other, the moment we break faith with one another, the sea engulfs us and the light goes out.”

Just for good measure, Rev. William Schulz cautions with a sense of humor, “Humility is like underwear: essential but indecent if it shows.”

In faith filled with compassion,

— *Margie King Saphier*

Sunday Worship Schedule

January 7

Jenny Rankin, preaching

9:00 – Adult Choir

Didn’t My Lord Deliver Daniel? – arr. Emerson

There Is a Balm – arr. Dawson

11:00 – Larry Gall, bass

January 14

Sally Hamlin, preaching

9:00 & 11:00 – Intergenerational Gospel Choir

Anderson Manuel and Beth Norton,

codirectors

(See announcement page 5.)

January 21

Jenny Rankin, preaching

9:00 – Siri Smedvig, violin

11:00 – Adult Choir

I Will Sing with the Spirit – Rutter

God Be in My Head – Rutter

January 28

9:00 & 11:00

A special service led by

Matt Meyer, percussionist

February 4

Jenny Rankin, preaching

9:00 – Gospel Choir

11:00 – Handbell Choir



COME BUILD A DREAM!

See page 4 for the latest update on the First Parish Capital Campaign.

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There are two inserts with this newsletter:
Women's Retreat Information
Wright Tavern Center Information

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, Jan. 22	Wednesday, Jan. 31
Friday, Feb. 16	Wednesday, Feb. 28
Monday, Mar. 19	Wednesday, Mar. 28

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

THE LARAMIE PROJECT AUDITIONS IN JANUARY

January 7 at 7:00 p.m.
and January 11 at 7:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall

This March, First Parish will present **The Laramie Project**, an award-winning play based on the 1998 murder of Matthew Shepard in Laramie, Wyoming. Matthew was a 21-year-old college student who was kidnapped, severely beaten, tied to a fence on the outskirts of town and left to die just because he was gay. Laramie's citizens are chronicled as a community in the wake of the hate crime as they confront bigotry, tolerance, fear, courage, hate and hope.

The play is an ensemble piece for approximately 15 actors who will all play multiple roles. Many ages and types of people appear throughout the play — so we encourage anyone interested from high school age to elders to audition. The cast is a wide cross section of the community, not limited to the crime victim's advocates, the perpetrators and investigators, but also including students, shop owners, academics, ranchers, blue collars, clergy, the media and many others. More than 70 characters are portrayed over the course of the evening. We will be rehearsing up to two nights a week from mid-January through the performances on March 23 and 24. Scripts will be available to check out in the main office.

We are also looking for help with the production, specifically videographers, a projectionist, stage manager, music director and costume head. If you have ever been interested in any aspects of theatrical production now is your opportunity!

Want more info? Contact **Lillian Anderson** (producer) 978-369-1468 or lillianand@comcast.net; **Sheryl Blair** (producer) 978-369-9749 or sherylblair@verizon.net; or **Kim Novick** (director) 978-318-0949 or kim@knovick.com.

Sunday Forum

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

JANUARY 7

No Forum

JANUARY 14

Forgiveness and Reconciliation
Richard Vargas-Vila

Richard will talk about the impressive work of the Foundation for Reconciliation, a SAC-supported organization, that was founded in 2000 by a Columbian priest, Fr. Leonel Narvaez Gomez, who developed a system that could change the hearts and minds of people who had been living in a society of hatred and violence all their lives.

JANUARY 21

UUSC Mass Action Network
Nancy Banks

Nancy will talk about a UUSC initiative to form a network in Massachusetts to address political issues. The Network would *not* be to campaign for or against political candidates but a place for UU's to get together and address issues that are important to us as a denomination.

JANUARY 28

A Gift of Love
Lobsang Phuntok

When Lobsang started teaching Buddhism at First Parish five years ago, he dreamed of establishing a school for some of the 90 percent of the children in Northeast India who go uneducated. Last summer, that dream became a reality for 35 children. Come see how, for only \$360 a year, a desperately poor child can enter a world of hope and opportunity.

Parish Notes

SECRET SANTA PROGRAM A HUGE SUCCESS

Approximately 60 families in difficult circumstances have been provided with thoughtful and generous gifts this holiday season by First Parish "Santas." It has been truly wonderful to celebrate the joy of giving with all of you. Thank you!

—Susan Ryan, Natalie Bartlett and Bev Bringle, Secret Santa Committee

FROM THE OFFICE

Just a reminder that we do have a list of First Parishioners willing to provide rides to medical appointments if you are unable to provide your own transportation. However, your very busy office staff needs plenty of advance notice in order to find you a ride.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER—SAVE THIS DATE

First Parish is hosting this year's Concord celebration of the World Day of Prayer which will take place on Friday, March 2, with a worship service at 11 a.m. followed by a festive lunch. Women of Paraguay wrote this year's worship service. If you would like to help in this effort or if you have art objects, decorations or folk costumes from Paraguay that we could borrow, please contact **Dian Pekin** at pekindc@comcast.net or 978-263-0426.

PLEDGE•2007 JANUARY — CELEBRATION SUNDAY ON MARCH 4

Pledge•2007 — Pledge Early and Be Done!

As the New Year begins, so does our annual pledge season. The Pledge•2007 campaign will run nearly six weeks, culminating on March 4, Celebration Sunday. Please plan to come to Celebration Sunday to celebrate the connections we share at First Parish.



Pledging is an annual tradition and responsibility in our community. Please make First Parish a priority and consider a generous increase when you pledge this year.

Our goal is for 100 percent participation from the entire First Parish community. Each of us is expected to contribute financially to the church's operating budget for the coming fiscal year, July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008.

All members and friends of First Parish will soon receive the campaign mailing. Please read this important information. The materials include the First Parish fair giving table which can be used to help you plan your pledge.

Please pledge early to First Parish! This year, we will not be canvassing parishioners at home. Instead, there will be several First Parish canvass events and affinity groups who will be asked to pledge early in the campaign. We will ask the congregation-at-large to mail or deliver their pledge to the church office. You will also be able to pledge at church on Sunday during the coffee hours.

Last year's campaign was a great success. You are a most generous congregation. We thank you in advance for your financial support for Pledge•2007.

Dave Dawson and Cynthia Ellis, cochairs

Pledge•2007 Team: **Margaret Adams, Mary Ellen Connell, George Gagliardi, Susan Galford, Jennifer Jacoby, David Knauss, David Quimby, John Sheffield, Bill Taylor**

Money Matters

EXCITING NEWS ON THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN!

On December 3, 2006, the full congregation voted 156 to 8 (11 abstentions) to approve the proposed design for improving and renovating the Meeting House as part of the Capital Campaign. In response, the Building Committee is now working with architect Robert Taylor to refine the design so that we can get more explicit cost estimates and eventually put the contract out to bid. The schedule for starting construction has been pushed out to allow more time for public hearings, staff preparation, and fundraising. The Capital Campaign leadership now estimates construction will begin in the winter or spring of 2008. That will allow the Fundraising Committee to continue with leadership donations until the Spring of 2007. General fundraising will follow. A revised calendar is maintained on the First Parish website and on the bulletin board across from the kitchen.

Pastoral Care News

"In this great dance of life, giver and receiver are one. We suddenly realize how little it matters which of the two roles one happens to play at a given time. Beyond time, our true self rests in itself in perfect stillness. Within time, this is realized by a graceful give-and-take in the dance of life."

—Brother David Steindl-Rast
Gratefulness, the Heart of Prayer

There can be no giving unless there is the willingness to receive. The Pastoral Care Council and the ministers want to celebrate the give-and-take in the dance of life here at First Parish on Sunday, February 4, by hosting a luncheon in appreciation for the volunteers who provide pastoral care, meals, flowers, baby blankets, transportation and more. If you have been on the receiving end during a time of need, please give a call (ext. 422) or send a note to First Parish to my attention, letting me know what these acts of kindness meant to you. During the luncheon these notes will be on display (you may remain anonymous) for the volunteers to read. But to complete the dance of give and take, I have also invited the pastoral care volunteers to write a short note about what it means to them to be able to give.

I want to give a special thanks to **Rhoda Miller, Diane Bleday** and to all the parishioners who heeded the call in November to come to the First Parish kitchen to cook up a storm. The First Parish freezer is once again filled with nourishing and scrumptious meals to be given to those families who are facing a major illness or death in the family. I also want to thank the volunteers who delivered poinsettias to First Parish families after Christmas.

I regularly give thanks for the spirit of generosity in this congregation!

In faith filled with gratitude,

—*Margie*

DEAR PASTORAL CARE VOLUNTEERS:

You will soon receive an invitation through the mail inviting you and your significant other to an appreciation luncheon on Sunday, February 4, from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. We hope you will mark this date on your calendar now so you will be able to attend. The Pastoral Care Council and the ministers of First Parish want to celebrate the care and dedication each of you brings to the parishioners when they are in need. First Parish is a large congregation, but through every one's dedicated and coordinated efforts, First Parish often has the feeling of a small, intimate congregation. We want to celebrate your sincere efforts in walking the UU talk to affirm the inherent dignity and worth of the individual and to affirm and promote the interdependent web of existence. Thank you for all you do.

In faith,

—*Margie*

Music Notes

SARASA CONCERT

On Sunday, February 4, at 7 p.m., the Music Events Committee will present a concert by the Cambridge based, nationally acclaimed chamber music ensemble Sarasa. The program will feature Italian baroque selections, with soprano Emily Van Evera, and instrumental music by Marini and Castello. Instrumentalists will include Heidi Powell, violin; Richard Hsu, violin; Timothy Merton, cello; Charles Sherman, harpsichord.

Tickets are \$20, seniors \$16, students \$13, children free. They may be purchased at the door or online at sarasamusic.org. The public is invited. For more information, call 617-492-4758, 978-369-3779 or 978-369-9602.

CABARET NIGHT 2007

The Music Events Committee will be sponsoring the annual "Cabaret Night" on Saturday, February 17. This year we're proud to present the Tom Nutile Big Band — a Boston-area 14-piece band that plays traditional swing, modern jazz, blues, jump, waltzes and Latin tunes. Think Basie and Sinatra, Benny Goodman and Peggy Lee. Mark your calendars now for this exciting event. Tickets are \$15 at the First Parish office and at the door. Light refreshments will be served. For more information, see the Tom Nutile Music website at tomnutile.com or call the First Parish office at 978-369-9602.

MUSings

Our Thanksgiving visit from József, Anna, Piroska and Erzsébet was a wonderful reminder of the deep and powerful connection we have with the members of our Transylvanian partner church in Székelykeresztúr. At one of the lovely and delicious potluck we had while they were here, each of us at the dinner took some time to reflect on what their visit meant to us, both here in Concord and to the congregation in Romania.

Several parishioners who had hosted our Transylvanian visitors spoke of their profound pleasure at having these dear friends from so far away come into their homes. "It was so amazing to have you actually walk in through my front door and stand in my living room. In *my* house." What a gift it is to have someone you carry in your heart actually appear at your front door! This visit made our connection to Transylvania so much more real.



I had this feeling when we sang "Find a Stillness" during our morning service the Sunday after Thanksgiving, when József and Anna were sitting in the congregation a few rows behind me. I realized as I sang, that I could clearly hear their strong voices singing "Megpihen ni, megnyugodni hozzád jöllünk Istenünk,"* the Hungarian words that they normally sing to this Transylvanian hymn. In that moment, our guests were present with us in worship in a powerful way and in a way that will stay with me. Now, when we sing "Find A Stillness" each week to remember our partner congregation in Székelykeresztúr, I hear their voices among those of our congregation. In that moment of our liturgy, our Transylvanian brothers and sisters are so much more present for me.

Like many others who have traveled to Transylvania and who have gotten to know our fellow Unitarians in that far corner of the world, I have found the experience to be transformative. The presence of our visitors this Thanksgiving reminded me of the power of that experience and reaffirmed connections to Székelykeresztúr that had begun to slacken. We have much to share with one another — our faith, our love, our common humanity, our desire for peace, justice and understanding. I am so grateful to be returning to Transylvania next August. And I am deeply thankful for the support that this congregation gives to this partnership. Köszönöm szépen!

Blessings,

— Beth Norton

* "We come to you to have rest and peace, our God."

INTERGENERATIONAL GOSPEL CHOIR—JANUARY 14!

On Sunday, January 14, to honor the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr., we will assemble our third annual Intergenerational Gospel Choir to sing at both services. The choir, which will be co-led by **Anderson Manuel** and **Beth Norton**, will sing songs from the African-American tradition. The repertoire is still being decided, but it may include spirituals, gospel and freedom songs.

In addition to the Sunday commitment, there will be one rehearsal on Thursday evening, January 11, at 7:30 p.m. This group is open to singers of all ages, and you do not have to read music to join. We ask that singers who decide to join commit to singing both services on January 14.

For more information or to sign up, contact **Beth Norton** by e-mail at music@firstparish.org or by phone at 978-369-9602, ext. 420.

FAMILY HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION FORUM SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, AT TRINITY EPISCOPAL

In Massachusetts, about 1400 families, including about 3,000 children, are in shelters every night. To house a family in a shelter for a year costs about \$36,000, while the yearly cost of adult basic education is \$2000 per person.



This Third Annual Forum on Family Homelessness, Overlooked Strategies to End Family Homelessness: What Works & Why — First Hand Accounts, focuses on the key role adult education plays in preventing family homelessness. This community forum will be held on Sunday, January 28, from 7:00 to 8:45 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church, 81 Elm Street, Concord. Contact **Jane Blumberg** at Janie@media.mit.edu for more information.

FUNDERBURG SCHOLARS DINNER AT FIRST PARISH — SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, AT 6:30 P.M.

Help Roxbury youth apply to and graduate from college while you enjoy a nice meal with great company! Meet some Roxbury students and learn more about the program. No fixed “price” — donate what feels right to you at the dinner. For more information, call **Loretta Ho Sherblom** at 978-369-4325 or e-mail her at Loretta@LHSBenefits.com. Wine and cheese is at 6:30 p.m., dinner by **Caroline McCloy** at 7:15.

JANUARY GLOBAL WARMING ACTION

As a follow-up to fall programs featuring Al Gore’s *Inconvenient Truth* and Boston University Professor Primack’s work on Concord and Thoreau’s field notes, the First Parish Global Action group is meeting again on January 23 to plan further action steps in the spring, including a town-wide CCAE forum in March. Please come to that evening forum to help define what we can do and plan our next steps. For more information contact **Eric Van Loon** at evanloon@verizon.net.

BRIDGE TO BILOXI HOUSE REBUILDING COMPLETE!

Many thanks to all at First Parish who made contributions of time and money to help rebuild Cynthia and Dan’s house in Biloxi this fall. The family was able to move into their new, fully rebuilt and painted house by Christmas! Look for pictures of their completed home posted on the bulletin board opposite Faith Bade’s office. More work trips are coming soon, as well as another house to rebuild this spring. Stay tuned! For more information, contact **Katharine Roberts** at katharine_roberts@msn.com.

VOLUNTEER OPENINGS AT JERICO ROAD

Jericho Road is seeking qualified volunteers to engage in collaborations with Lowell nonprofit organizations. We have many opportunities currently available in a number of areas of expertise; the one below is for a new client looking for web design expertise.

The Lowell Day Nursery offers quality day care to low income residents of Lowell. The nursery does not have its own website and needs a website designer/builder to help lend more visibility with clients, funders and the public. This site is envisioned as a simple brochure-type website.

INTRODUCING FAITH BADE

First Parish would like to welcome **Faith Bade** as our new Social Action Associate. Faith began working part-time in November, collaborating with the ministers and staff and the many dedicated Social Action volunteers of First Parish to invigorate our Social Action program. With Faith’s help, we hope to improve member awareness and involvement, increase program coordination and organization, and generate an even stronger Social Action impact as we “go out into the world.” Faith and her family have been members of First Parish for four-plus years, and her three children participate in our RE program. Faith brings to this position organizational and leadership skills, professional business and “start-up” experience, and an ability to make connections and get things done. She has volunteered extensively in Concord and looks forward to applying her energy and enthusiasm to our Social Action program. Faith would like to speak with any members about Social Action at First Parish. Please feel free to call her at the church, e-mail her at FBade@firstparish.org, or approach her at coffee hour with ideas and comments. We look forward to enhancing our Social Action program and welcome Faith as an integral part of our vision of excellence.

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/, e-mail our Social Action Associate, **Faith Bade** at FBade@firstparish.org, or check out information on the SAC bulletin board downstairs in the church.

Wright Tavern Center

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



Open House Reception
Sunday, January 7, 2007
2:00 to 5:00 p.m.
Parish Hall

The Wright Tavern Center invites you to a special event to launch our winter session at First Parish in Concord. Come meet our wonderful presenters and sample our expanded menu of course offerings. Tasty treats will also be provided. See you there!

Watch your mailboxes for the new Wright Tavern Center winter course catalog with complete descriptions of all courses, presenters, dates and times. For your convenience, the catalog is also posted on our website at www.WrightTavern.org. Questions? Please contact Wright Tavern Director **Mary Elizabeth Wheeler** at 978-369-9602 or FPtavern@aol.com.

Standing Committee

On Sunday, December 3, 2006, at a special meeting held in the Sanctuary, the parish voted to approve the proposed design for the building improvement and expansion to the Meeting House. The vote was 156 for, 8 against, and 11 abstaining. There was also a vote on an amendment presented by **Phil Villers**, which would have required that the design for the restoration of the organ be brought to the full parish for final approval. This amendment failed by a vote of 52 for and 114 against the amendment. The organ design has been researched over a period of many years with the participation of many committees, and we are confident that the current committee will use all of the accumulated past knowledge and add to it with their own careful research. We thank the members of the Building and Organ committees, **Melissa Gallo** and **Don Dembsey**, who chair this effort, and all of the parishioners who attended the meetings that resulted in this important vote. As the new year approaches, we hope you will all make plans to invest in the future of First Parish by including the Capital Campaign in your giving for the next five years.

As the work progresses, please continue to ask questions and to check out the official First Parish website, first-parish.org, for up-to-date information on the building plans and the Capital Campaign. Just log in, find the menu "Church Life," and click on "Capital Campaign." If you have not yet registered, please go to the website and register today — it is the perfect way to stay in touch with the important events at First Parish!

Happy Holidays, on behalf of the Standing Committee!

Submitted,

— *Sue Beck*, Clerk

Membership Corner

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

Sixteen people have signed our membership book to become members this fall — **Patricia Pratt, Laurie and Richard Corelle, Suzanne and Charles Rutstein, Gladys Linnard, Betsey Eltonhead, Tim McInerney, Michael Murphy, Danielle Miller, Todd and Elena Rossi, John Hall, John and Diane Moore and Karen Kashian**. Welcome to you all. As I heard **Gary Smith** saying to one of you when you signed the book, First Parish is a richer place because you are here.

Jenny Rankin will be leading another Minister's Orientation on Monday evening, January 29, at 7:00 p.m. Please call or e-mail me to let me know if you would like to attend. If you attended this fall's New U but missed the Minister's Orientation, this is your chance. You can reach me at memberfp@aol.com or 978-369-9602. Hope to see you there.

— *Caroline McCloy*

AFFINITY GROUPS — NEW, ESTABLISHED, POTENTIAL

Are you interested in playing games? **Peter Lowitt** is currently organizing a Games Affinity Group. Do you enjoy seeing movies but can't make plans in advance? Would you like to have a list of people who are willing to be called at the last minute, then join Spur-of-the-Moment Moviegoers. Sign up for Women and Money, a discussion group using ideas from the book *Overcoming Underearning* by Barbara Stanny. Or join an established Affinity Group such as: Bridge, Dancing, French Conversation, Jewish Awareness, Kayaking, Needleworkers, Photography, Spanish Discussion/Social and Writing Down the Bones (creative writing).

Let's get some of these potential groups started: Bicycling, Concerts, Dollhouse Miniatures, Humanists, Kayaking, Museums, Painting, Planning a Productive Retirement, Scrapbooking, Theater, Theological Discussion, Walking and Writing Down the Bones (creative writing evenings or Saturday). Stop by the Affinity Groups table at coffee hour on Sunday, January 14, or contact **Judy Dembsey** at 978-263-3272 or dembsey@surfglobal.net.

WINTER SEASONAL DINNER PARTIES—SATURDAY, JANUARY 27

Sign up at coffee hour on Sundays, January 14 and January 21, or by calling **Carolyn and Barry Copp** at 978-287-0492 (sbcopp@comcast.net). The sign-up deadline is 1 p.m. (sharp!) on Sunday, January 21. The dinner parties will take place on Saturday, January 27. These potluck dinners of 8 to 10 people will be held in participants' homes. Each evening promises delicious food, beverages and spirited conversation. The hosts provide an appetizer and beverages. The guests bring the main dish, salad and dessert. Don't miss this delightful evening!

Reflections and RE News

When I reflect on this year in religious education, I can't help but think of the people who support our programming. Of course the usual suspects come to mind — **Gary, Jenny, Jane Barnes, Liz Davis Chaffin, Carol Duane** and **Mary-Wren vanderWilden**. And who else? Why you, our volunteers, who show up each Sunday, ready to work with our collective children.

But there is a group who is often overlooked — A group that provides the ballast for our RE program. This is the RE Council. This group of people watch over our RE program. They navigate religious education through changing enrollment, volunteer staffing, curriculum direction, changing staff and, this next year, transition through the construction of new physical space for First Parish. These are people who work in the background. They research ideas, meet with people, make phone calls and shape the spiritual direction of our program.

As we begin our year together, I am excited about working with our council to create an engaging and stable curriculum during this construction period. The council and I may be reaching out to some of you, tapping your special skills and talents in order to create a vibrant program for next year. There will be challenges, but we see many more opportunities. We can experiment with mixed-age groupings, large group presentations, drama, outdoor activities, and the list goes on.

You may be wondering who is on the RE Council. The council is fortunate to have **Allison Aley, Deb Welch, Sue Ryan, Suzie Weaver, Karen Economopolous, Stephanie Cox Suarez**, and is chaired by **Lisa McLean** and **Ted Hanselman**. Please take a moment to thank these parents who work so hard to make Sunday morning a spiritual and meaningful time for your children.

— *Pam Howell*

OUR YOUNGEST CHILDREN NEED CARE

We are still struggling to fully staff our Caregiving (0-2 years) and StoryPlay (3-4 years) classrooms.

Many parents have mentioned how much they have enjoyed our Workshop Rotation model and how reasonable the volunteer commitment is this year. Maybe some of you could do a second rotation with our youngest kids? Also, we welcome empty-nest parents or caring adults who are not parents to our cooperative religious education

program. Here at First Parish we care for the spiritual needs of our children together. We can limp through the year by grabbing a parent at drop-off time, but that is not the best way to establish consistent and nurturing care for our youngest members. So, if you are able to help during Rotation 4 or Rotation 5, please give Jane Barnes a call at 9787-369-3104. Thanks.

WORKSHOP ROTATION

We are just about to begin our third rotation, which will focus on the Hebrew scriptures and specifically the story of Daniel and the Lion's Den. We will be constructing maps, using cloth puppets, "building" a Bible, drawing cartoons and going on "trust walks." These workshops will be very hands-on and interactive for kids.

Please note, the orientation for the fourth rotation is on Thursday, February 8 with refreshments at 7:15 p.m. and the orientation beginning promptly at 7:30. According to our first three rotations of teachers, the orientations have been essential in understanding the curriculum and the logistics of the rotation.

THE DECEMBER HOLIDAY RE EVENT WITH DAVID ZUCKER

A special thanks to **David Zucker** for sharing his unique and heart-warming talents with our youth in December. It was a great way to celebrate the completion of two rotations together.

7TH GRADE YOUNG ACTIVISTS

Our 7th Grade Young Activists will be meeting two times in January. On January 7, they will be organizing and counting the funds collected for Guest at Your Table. If you still have a box at home, please bring it in. It is not too late. We would like to have lots of change and cash of any amount for them to count on the 7th.

On January 21, our Young Activists will spend their session advocating for a variety of philanthropic organizations. Why are they important? How do they touch our lives? What can we do to help them? Where will we put our Social Action funds? These are questions our Young Activists will be exploring, putting their UU values into action.

8TH GRADE WAYS OF WORSHIP (WOW) PROGRAM

I hope you and your family were able to experience the 8th Grade worship service, "Bits and Pieces of Godspell." We have received many positive comments from adults, kids and parents. This service was a gift to our congregation and truly intergenerational in nature.

Our 8th graders and their leaders reflected heavily on Jesus and his UU values. They used these reflections to shape a worship service that gave depth to our understanding of the parables from the New Testament. This meaningful experience for our youth and our congregation could not have been attained without the incredible dedication and ministry of our lay leaders — **Barb Caddell, Rob Castillo, Tracey Hurd, CC King, Jay Vogt** and **Jennifer Hurley-Wales**.

Programs like these cannot be successful without additional support. We also thank two essential parent volunteers: **Candace Nelson** for communications and organizational support, and **Deborah Bain** for her professional photography during the social action projects.

RE NEWS continued on page 9

Senior Youth News

At our last youth check-in, it was funny to hear the diverse reactions to winter. Some dread the snow, cold and dark. Others live for the chance to ski, play in the snow and snuggle by the fire. But the one thing they all agree on is that the best part of winter is *No School* on snow days!

There is a lot going on for youth in January. Please look at your monthly newsletter *What's the Deal* or look at the youth calendar at firstparish.org to find out what we are doing at YRUU. We will be meeting on the following days in January:

Sunday, January 7: Discussion about College with YRUU Alums

Monday, January 15 Open Table Speaker

Sunday, January 21 Texas Hold 'Em Night

No YRUU on retreat weekend, January 26–28

At the end of January we will go to the **Reillys'** house in Madison, New Hampshire, for our Winter Retreat. It's an amazing experience for the group to keep warm with no heat and make do without running water. While we're up there, we do everything from relaxing by the fire to hiking up a mountain — whatever the youth need to rejuvenate. The retreat forms are online at firstparish.org; click on Youth.

We are planning a youth trip to Common Cathedral in February. I need a couple of parents to help with driving and chaperoning. It's truly a very moving experience to be at Common Cathedral with our youth. I am also working with **Faith Bade**, our new Social Action Associate, to look at possible service trips we could do as a youth group over April break. We need a parent (or other adult) who would help us organize this. If you are interested, then please give me a call.

Those youth going on the Youth Pilgrimage to Transylvania are planning their big Bingo fundraiser for Friday, February 9. Get your tickets at coffee hour at the end of January.

For most of our youth, final exams are at the end of January (right before our retreat). It is a stressful time as they try to remember/relearn/cram in everything they learned from the fall. It is our hope that the Youth Group can be an oasis of peace, a refuge of good friends and a place to let loose during these stressful times.

May you have a wonderful 2007!

—*Mary-Wren vanderWilden*

RE NEWS continued from page 8

6TH GRADE YOUTH GROUP & THE JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP

Mark your calendar! The Annual Snow Tubing event with Tri-Con Church will be Sunday, February 4, from 5 to 7 p.m.

9TH GRADE COMING OF AGE

COA will officially begin with a potluck dinner and “lock-in” at First Parish on January 5, beginning at 5:30 p.m. Parents and kids are both invited for the dinner part. Only mentors and kids will be sleeping over. We are looking forward to the unfolding of a new year with our Coming of Age youth.

RE JANUARY CALENDAR

Friday, January 5 5:30 p.m., Coming of Age Opening Dinner and Lock-In

Sunday, January 7 Regular RE for 0-6th graders
11 a.m., 7th Grade Young Activists — Parlor
4:00–7 p.m., 8th OWL Program

Sunday, January 14 RE for 0-4 year-olds

Intergenerational Service — No RE for K-7th grade

Sunday, January 21 Regular RE for 0-6th graders
11 a.m., 7th Grade Young Activists — Parlor
3:45–7:00 p.m., 8th Grade OWL Program

Sunday, January 28 Regular RE of 0-6th graders
No 7th Grade Program
2:00–8:30 p.m., 8th Grade OWL Program

UPCOMING RE ORIENTATIONS FOR WORKSHOP LEADERS AND GUIDES (SECOND TO SIXTH GRADES)

Orientation is critical to the success of our Workshop Rotation program. For each rotation, all leaders and guides must attend or schedule a time to meet personally with either me or **Liz Davis Chaffin**, our Workshop Rotation Program Coordinator. If one person doesn't know the expectations, it could really throw the whole program off.

Orientation Schedule for '06–'07 RE:

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

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

SAVE THE DATE! ROCK 'N' ROLL BINGO IS BACK!

This wonderful event will take place on Friday, February 9, from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Come play the game and dance at this terrific fundraiser for the July Youth Service Pilgrimage to our partner church in Transylvania. Tickets: \$10 per person, \$35 per family. Details are coming!

Women's News

WOMEN'S RETREAT

All First Parish women are invited to attend one of the Senexet House Women's Retreats. Please see the insert for all the information you need to sign up for this year's retreats.

THE WOMEN'S AM/PM BOOK GROUP

The next meetings of the Women's AM/PM Book Group will be Monday evening, January 29, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.; and Tuesday morning, January 30, from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. The book is *The Birth of Venus*, by Sarah Dunant. All women of First Parish are warmly invited to read the 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. These are the books and dates for 2007:

February 26 (p.m.) and 27 (a.m.)	<i>The Spiral Staircase</i> Karen Armstrong
March 26 (p.m.) and 27 (a.m.)	<i>Independent People</i> Halldor Laxness
April 23 (p.m.) and 24 (a.m.)	<i>The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down</i> Anne Fadiman
May 21 (p.m.) and 22 (a.m.)	<i>Snow Flower and the Secret Fan</i> , Lisa Sees

WPA LUNCHEON MEETING AND FIRST PARISH HISTORY PRESENTATION

Join old and new friends at noon on Tuesday, January 23, for lunch and an informative presentation about the history of First Parish by **Doug Baker**. Bring your own sandwich. Dessert, coffee and tea will be served. All men and women of First Parish and their friends are invited. Reservations are not necessary.

THANK YOU, SUE BECK, AND THE HARMONIC DIVERSIONS!

The Women's Parish Association extends heartfelt thanks to **Sue Beck** and the Harmonic Diversions (**Sara Ballard, Donna Vaillancourt, Jane Fisher, Abby Russell Prior, Darien Smith** and **Laura Graham**) for another outstanding program of holiday songs prior to our annual Christmas Tea. Your creative arrangements and unique harmonies brought pure joy to all in attendance. Thank you for sharing your musical gifts with us!

Classified

HOUSE SITTERS AVAILABLE

Available January 1, 2007 — Husband and wife. High school chemistry teacher (Ph.D. inorganic chemistry) and historic preservationist (master's degree in historic preservation) available and willing to take care of your home this winter. Their dogs are part of the package too! If you are in need of capable housesitters for this winter, please call **Sheryl Blair** at 978-369-9749.

January 2007 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>Bones for Life</i> [®]	Monday	1:15 p.m. (not 1/1 or 1/15)
<i>Kundalini Yoga</i>	Tuesday	9:30 a.m. (not 1/2 or 1/9)
<i>T'ai Chi</i>	Tuesday	6:00 p.m. (not 1/2 or 1/9)
<i>Awakening the Inner Voice</i>	Tuesday	7:00 p.m. (not 1/2 or 1/9)
<i>Rise Up and Call Her Name</i>	Tuesday	7:30 p.m. (not 1/2 or 1/9)
<i>Tibetan Buddhism</i>	Wednesday	9:30 a.m. (not 1/3 or 1/10)
<i>Aging with Spirit</i>	Wednesday	9:30 a.m. (not 1/3 or 1/10)
Bell Choir	Wednesday	1:00 p.m.
Junior Choir	Wednesday	4:30 p.m.
Chalice Choir	Wednesday	5:00 p.m.
<i>Houses of Healing</i>	Wednesday	7:00 p.m. (not 1/3)
<i>Kripalu Yoga</i>	Wednesday	7:30 p.m. (not 1/3 or 1/10)
Adult Choir	Wednesday	7:45 p.m.
<i>Kundalini Yoga</i>	Thursday	9:30 a.m. (not 1/4 or 1/11)
<i>With Our Own Hands</i>	Thursday	12:00 p.m. (not 1/4)
<i>Aging with Spirit</i>	Thursday	7:00 a.m. (not 1/4 or 1/11)
<i>Tibetan Buddhism</i>	Thursday	7:30 p.m. (not 1/4 or 1/11)
Gospel Choir	Sunday	10:00 a.m.
YRUU	Sunday	7:00 p.m. (Monday on 1/15, not 1/28)

Mon Jan 1	Holiday—Office Closed	Sun Jan 21	3:45 OWL A and B
Tue Jan 2	9:00 WPA Board Meeting		7:00 YRUU
	6:00 <i>T'ai Chi Drop-In</i>	Mon Jan 22	12:00 Newsletter Deadline
	7:00 YRUU	Tue Jan 23	12:00 WPA Lunch
Wed Jan 3	7:15 RE Council	Wed Jan 24	7:30 <i>InterPlay</i>
Thu Jan 4	7:00 Human Resources Committee	Thu Jan 25	9:30 <i>Poetry as a Path to Self-Reflection</i>
Fri Jan 5	5:30 COA Lock-In		4:00 <i>Kundalini Kids</i>
Sun Jan 7	2:00 Wright Tavern Open House		5:00 <i>Kundalini Kids</i>
	4:00 OWL A and B	Fri Jan 26	7:30 <i>Rise Up Singing</i>
	5:30 Youth Service Project		Women's Retreat II (off-site)
	7:00 YRUU		Youth Retreat (off-site)
	7:00 Laramie Project Auditions	Sun Jan 28	2:00 OWL A and B
	7:30 Neighboring Faiths Team	Mon Jan 29	9:30 Pastoral Care Council
Mon Jan 8	7:00 Standing Committee		7:00 Minister's Orientation
Tue Jan 9	9:30 <i>Kundalini Yoga Drop-In</i>		7:00 A Seder for Tu B'Shevat
	6:00 <i>T'ai Chi Drop-In</i>		7:30 Women's AM/PM Book Group
	7:30 Neighboring Faiths Meeting	Tue Jan 30	9:30 Women's AM/PM Book Group
Wed Jan 10	6:30 Partner Church Committee		7:00 <i>Awakening the Inner Voice</i>
	7:00 Youth Advisory Committee		7:00 <i>Stress Reduction</i>
Thu Jan 11	9:30 <i>Kundalini Yoga Drop-In</i>	Wed Jan 31	9:15 Newsletter Mailing
	7:00 Intergenerational Choir Rehearsal		12:15 <i>Listening for God</i>
	7:30 Laramie Project Auditions		7:30 <i>InterPlay</i>
Sat Jan 13	9:00 Photo Club	Thu Feb 1	9:30 <i>InterPlay</i>
Sun Jan 14	10:00 Calvin College Presentation		4:00 <i>Kundalini Kids</i>
	4:00 Needleworkers		5:00 <i>Kundalini Kids</i>
Mon Jan 15	Holiday—Office Closed		7:00 Human Resources Committee
	7:00 YRUU	Fri Feb 2	9:30 <i>Stress Reduction</i>
Tue Jan 16	7:00 Amnesty Chapter Meeting		7:00 OWL Meeting
	7:00 Senior OWL	Sat Feb 3	6:30 Funderburg Scholarship Dinner
Thu Jan 18	9:30 <i>Poetry as a Path to Self-Reflection</i>	Sun Feb 4	12:30 Pastoral Care Lunch
	9:30 <i>InterPlay</i>		4:00 COA Meeting
	8:00 Emily Dickinson Presentation		4:00 6th Grade Event (off-site)
Fri Jan 19	11:30 <i>T'ai Ji</i>		7:00 Sarasa Concert
	1:30 <i>T'ai Ji</i>	Tue Feb 6	9:00 WPA Board
	Women's Retreat I (off-site)		7:00 <i>Stress Reduction</i>
Sat Jan 20	7:00 Amnesty Coffee House		



First Parish in Concord

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FEBRUARY 2007 NEWSLETTER

The next **Newsletter deadline** is **Monday, January 22**, at noon.
The Newsletter mailing is Wednesday, January 31.
News items should be limited to 100 words.

Don't Miss...

**WRIGHT TAVERN CENTER FOR
SPIRITUAL RENEWAL
OPEN HOUSE**

Sunday, January 7, 2007

2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Come meet the course presenters for the winter session, ask questions and sample classes.

**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, Religious Education Administrator

Liz Davis-Chaffin, Workshop Rotation Program Coordinator

Carol Duane, Program Coordinator for Young Children

Mary-Wren vanderWilden, Youth Program Director

Debra Dunnington, Youth Program Coordinator

Elizabeth Norton, Music Director

Eric Huenneke, Organist

Martha Goodman, Handbell 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

Faith Bade, Social Action Associate

Kate Keleher, Newsletter Editor

Kaye Harvie, Jane Johnson, Newsletter Staff

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