



First Parish in Concord
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
Gathered in 1636

The Meeting House News

REVeries

March is an unpredictable month, a transition month that brings us from winter to spring. It has all the bluster of February, yet holds within it the promise of the first day of spring. March can seem like a long and bleak month. This year the season of Lent occurs in March. Lent is the season of preparation for resurrection of the earth, represented by Jesus in the Christian tradition at Easter. It is a time for reflection on our life and preparation for future growth and rebirth.

When my daughters were small, we lived in Vancouver, British Columbia, the land of long, cold, rainy winters, and March came at the end of a very long gray season. The rainy period was endless, dragging on for six months, making it difficult to take the children outdoors for fresh air and physical exercise. With snowy winters, parents can bundle up the kids and go sledding, go skiing or ice skating. In the freezing rain, even with boots, slickers and umbrellas, playing outside was out of the question; it was just too cold.

One of the things we did to help with cabin fever, besides spending lots of time at the community pool for family swims, was a weekly dinner with two other families. Each of the five adults took turns cooking, and we rotated among the three houses. Our children looked forward to the dinners and a night out during the week. This is where Emily and Becca practiced and learned table manners, and how to have a conversation with others during mealtime. We laughed together, shared stories, and got a night off from cooking. These shared mealtimes are something my adult daughters still talk about today; they represent memories of our extended family in the Pacific Northwest.

In March, there are many events for families and individuals planned at First Parish to build memories, to share food, worship and ideas with other congregants. "Marvelous Mondays" happen every week, and begin with appetizers at 6 p.m. and dinner at 6:15 p.m., starting on March 5. Marvelous Mondays are a great opportunity for families to take a night off from cooking (there will be a small charge to cover expenses) and to enjoy the companionship and pleasure of dining with other First Parish members. Dinner will be followed by a short worship service called Vespers at 7:00 in the Chapel. Vespers services include songs and readings, and are family friendly. Afterward, Carl Scovel will join us to talk about the Gnostic Scriptures, from 7:30 to 9:00.

March can seem interminably long, but we can make the most of this wonderful congregation's energy and enthusiasm for community building to combat the month's dreariness. The ways we engage with one another over a shared meal, with worship, and by learning with one another builds the connections we need to feel alive and connected to that web of existence that connects us all.

I am grateful for the many ways we experience the richness of all that Life offers in this special community of First Parish. Participating in Marvelous Mondays is another way to mine this precious jewel and to enjoy the collective journey we call Life.

So, hopefully, see you on Monday!

—Sally Hamlin

Sunday Worship Schedule

March 4

Celebration Sunday!

Jenny Rankin, preaching
9:00 – Adult Choir and Junior
Choir

Wake Up! – Clevenger

We Are One – Tate

11:00 – Handbell Choir and
Chalice Choir

Turn the World Around – Bellafonte

Tuya es la Gloria – Sylvester

March 11

Jenny Rankin, preaching

9:00 – Silver Bass Trio

11:00 – Adult Choir

Yonder Come Day – arr. Hardin

Now I Walk in Beauty – arr. Smith

March 18

Charlie Clements, preaching

9:00 – Adult Choir

Si somos Americanos – Alarcón

Te Quiero – Favero

11:00 – Gospel Choir

This Little Light of Mine

– arr. Manuel

Kimbaya – arr. Manuel

March 25

YRUU, service leaders

9:00 & 11:00 – Youth Musicians

COME BUILD A DREAM!



See page 2 for the
latest update on
the Capital
Campaign.

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Annual Seder Dinner

There are two inserts with this newsletter:
Wright Tavern Center News
Transylvanian Concert and
The Laramie Project (2-sided)

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, Mar. 19	Wednesday, Mar. 28
Friday, Apr. 13	Wednesday, Apr. 25
Monday, May 21	Wednesday, May 30

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

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE: BUILDING A DREAM

Reminder: Please periodically check the website to keep tabs on the fundraising total.

Building construction is now scheduled to begin in the spring of 2008. The delay provides more time for the staff to prepare for the transition and for the Building Committee to navigate the time-consuming public hearing process.



The Organ Committee has narrowed its list of potential organ contractors. But because the organ work hinges on the timing of the building construction, the Request for Proposals (RFP) will not be released until the timing of the organ work can be more closely estimated.

Leadership fundraising continues and general fundraising will begin in April 2007. Three more solicitors were trained last month.

Because the Capital Campaign is in a quieter phase, we will continue to offer updates each month in the *Meeting House News*. But we are putting the mid-month order of service updates on hiatus until campaign activity increases.

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.

MARCH 4

No Forum
CELEBRATION SUNDAY!

MARCH 11

No Forum

MARCH 18

Department of Peace Update
Pat Simon and **Jason White**

Pat and Jason will give a progress report on state and national activities to establish a U.S. Government Department of Peace and what individuals can do to support related efforts.

MARCH 25

War and Peace in Iraq and Beyond
Peace Activists

This Forum will concern itself with the prospects for peace in Iraq, with an update on the various activities of local and national activists who are working toward a sustainable peace in the region.

Parish Notes

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER — MARCH 2

World Day of Prayer, an event of informed prayer and prayerful action, has taken place in almost all nations for decades. Concord faith communities will hold their World Day of Prayer 2007 Interfaith Service this year at First Parish on Friday, March 2, at 11 a.m. in the Sanctuary, followed by a free celebratory luncheon in the Parish Hall. All men and women and interested children are invited to attend this historical event. This year's service was written by the World Day of Prayer Women of Paraguay, whose magnificent arts and cultures will be celebrated. Classical guitarist Aaron Larget-Caplan will play some of Paraguay's most famous music. Please contact **Dian Pekin** at 978-263-0426 or pekindc@comcast.net by February 24 to arrange for child care or transportation.

GATHER TOGETHER ON FOUR MARVELOUS MONDAYS!

Bring the spirit of First Parish into your week. Please bring your entire family and friends, take a break from cooking and join with others in our vibrant First Parish community every Monday night in March. A home-cooked, family-friendly dinner will be followed by a half hour worship service in the Chapel led by First Parish ministers. All ages welcome. Children's activities and child care will be provided. To RSVP or for more information, e-mail abigay@firstparish.org or call 978-369-9602. Suggested donation: \$5 per person or \$20 per family.

March 5, 12, 19, 26 at First Parish

6:00 p.m.— appetizers

6:15 p.m.—dinner

7:00 p.m.—worship in the Chapel

SMEDVIG PAINTINGS AT THE LIBRARY GALLERY

Siri Smedvig invites everyone to the opening of her show called "Iceland: Myth & Magic" at the gallery in the main Concord Public Library on Wednesday, March 14, from 5:30-8:30 p.m. This will be an exhibit of her paintings featuring Icelandic landscape and stories from her ancestry. Please stop by and see. The show may be viewed March 1-31.

NEEDLEWORKERS GROUP Swap-It!

The First Parish Needleworkers Group invites anyone interested in textile arts and needlecrafts to a Swap-It! event in the Parlor on Sunday, March 11, from 4 to 6 p.m. Bring things you no longer need and take away wonderful treasures for your crafts! Fabric yardage, skeins of yarn, knitting needles, sewing notions, ribbon, buttons, fat quarters, patterns, kits, crochet hooks — if it's in good condition and would like a "new home," bring it! Maybe you'll find the perfect item you've been looking for, or discover a new project just waiting for you. Clean out that closet or drawer, meet others who share an interest in textile arts and crafts, and learn more about the social action projects and discussion topics of the First Parish Needleworkers Group.

CARING CONNECTION NEWS

A busy collection of First Parish cooks gathered in the First Parish kitchen to refill the Caring Connection freezer earlier this month. The freezer stores soups and meals to say "we care" for new mothers and other parishioners who are ill or in need of a helping hand. Thanks to cooks **Darien Smith, Jean Hill, Lois Suarez, Bev Bringle, Carolyn Shohet, Jane Johnson, Rhoda Miller** and **Diane Bleday**. Please call **Rev. Margie King Saphier** if you know of someone in need of a warm meal.

PARISH NOTES continued on page 10

Money Matters

We are more than half way through our fiscal year now and our budget picture continues to look positive. We have received 69 percent of our pledged income for the year, which is consistent with pledges received at this point last year. Pledge income is our biggest source of revenue, so these numbers are watched carefully to determine if we will come in on budget for the year. The other piece to a balanced budget, of course, is the expenses. We continually monitor expenses to make sure they will come in at or below budget. At this point in the year we have some expense accounts running over budget and others running below budget. Looking at year-end projections, there are a few accounts that may overrun by year-end, but these accounts will be compensated for by lower spending in other areas and additional income received through gifts.

As you know, the annual pledge campaign is in full swing. The committee has worked very hard, so please help them out by submitting your pledge before or at Celebration Sunday on March 4. The leaders of both the annual pledge campaign and the capital campaign have additional write-ups in this newsletter to keep you up to date.

—*Lisa Cole*

Business Manager

Pastoral Care News

The following two quotes are not only about what is required of us to achieve peace; they also speak to what is required of each of us to be mutually caring individuals. At this time of war, I felt these quotes were worth repeating.

“Someone once gave me a poem with a line in it that offers a good definition of peace: ‘Softening what is rigid in our hearts.’ We can talk about ending war and we can march for ending war, we can do everything in our power, but war is never going to end as long as our hearts are hardened against each other.”

—Pema Chodron in *Practicing Peace in Times of War*

“The world is divided enough by religions, culture, languages, ethnicities, tribes and nations. Even more profound are divisions between the haves and have nots, the educated and the uneducated, those whose hearts are open and those whose hearts are closed. These crushing divisions work to isolate people and rob the world of peace. The challenge is to realize our essential interdependence, our fundamental need for one another. The key to social peace and community, indeed the key to the spiritual life, is remembrance: of God, ourselves, one another. Only when we remember our inescapable relatedness to one another will peace become a reality.”

—Wayne Teasdale in *The Mystic Hours*

Like peace, pastoral care also requires a soft, open heart and the full awareness of our essential interdependence, our fundamental need for one another. On February 4, the Pastoral Care Council (**Judy Dembsey, Pam Ressler, Jiffy Read, David Pohl, Ursula Kristoffy**) hosted an appreciation luncheon for the First Parish pastoral care volunteers, celebrating the many gifts of caring each brings to First Parish. There are over 50 volunteers who help to cook or bring a meal, provide transportation, visit, send notes and cards, welcome babies and more.

We are always looking for volunteers. Can you drive a parishioner in need to medical appointments in Concord? Call the church office and give them your name and number. Please remember if you have other commitments, you should feel free to say no. There are other volunteers to call. Do you like to cook? Two to three times a year **Rhoda Miller** and **Diane Bleday** (of Caring Connection) put out the call for kitchen helpers to be part of a cook-a-thon. Last month the call for kitchen helpers went out, and **Darien Smith, Jean Hill, Lois Suarez, Bev Bringle, Carolyn Shohet, and Jane Johnson** responded. Soups, hearty chicken meals, as well as vegetarian meals were cooked, packed, and put in the parish freezer. When there is a need, a church-cooked meal is delivered by **Bev Bringle, Pat Kane** or **John Muresianu**. The meals are often delivered in paper bags decorated by the children in RE. When you receive a meal from First Parish, you are truly receiving a meal from the whole parish.

“Our inescapable relatedness” means at one time or another, we all can volunteer by calling to say, “Do you know so-and-so (or a family member) is in the hospital, has had a loved one die, just lost his/her job, or is going through a divorce?” Many parishioners already do this, and it is a great help. Confidentiality is always respected; no one appears on the pastoral list for prayer time unless permission is given. But if you need help, don’t wait for a fellow parishioner to notice; please call and ask. At First Parish we truly believe in “our fundamental need for one another,” and we find ways to live it with an open heart.

In faith,

—*Margie King Saphier*

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee (SC) met on February 12, with guests **Bob Andrews** and **Eric Van Loon** attending. We were pleased to be asked to sponsor the ordination of **Sally Hamlin**, which will take place in early June. The Capital Campaign is close to reaching an important milestone — we are almost halfway to our goal in pledges! We encourage every member of the congregation to visit the First Parish web site and register as a member of the congregation. Registering enables you to access important information and to participate in the new forum, where you can ask questions and share ideas. The Social Action Task Force presented its report, based on research of other UU churches, other area churches, and conversations with parishioners. The SC accepted the report with great appreciation and endorsed its efforts, requesting that the staff come back in the fall with ideas for making social action a more integral part of church life. The SC will have a special retreat on March 2 and 3 to discuss policy governance and to begin envisioning what First Parish can be after the new building is completed. Please look for us at coffee hour and share your ideas for the future of First Parish!

Submitted,

— *Sue Beck*, Clerk

SPACE IS AVAILABLE ON TRANSYLVANIA PILGRIMAGE IN AUGUST

There are still a few spots available on the Pilgrimage to Transylvania with the choir and **Gary Smith** in August; nonsingers are welcome as well. In addition to several locations in Transylvania, including four days with our hosts in Székelykeresztúr, we will visit Budapest and Prague. Travel dates are August 7–20; the cost is \$2700, which includes airfare, lodging, ground transportation, tours and some meals. See the itinerary on our website (firstparish.org). Please contact **Sara Ballard** (978-371-0723 or sara@sb.org) with questions, or to sign up. This will be a wonderful trip, and we welcome more travelers.

MUSings

*“For my village I am yearning
Someday there I’ll be returning;
Tell the people in Romania
I’ll come back to Transylvania”*



Exactly a year ago, I began my *MUSings* with this same quote from Bela Bartok’s *Evening in Transylvania*. At that time, the choir was just in the beginning stages of planning a return to Transylvania and our partner church in Székelykeresztúr. Now, a year later, over 40 people have signed up for our August 2007 Musical Pilgrimage. In March 2006, I wrote about how I used to feel this was just a bit of sentimental verse and how my perspective had changed since my first visit to Transylvania. Now, I am yearning to go back to Transylvania.

Since our last musical pilgrimage in 2002, our relationship with our partner congregation has deepened and our ties to our Transylvanian brothers and sisters in faith have strengthened. Our youth have created strong bonds with the youth of Székelykeresztúr and have helped immensely with work projects in that town. We were all able to share the joy of welcoming our Transylvanian guests when they were with us at Thanksgiving.

In 2002, on our first musical pilgrimage, we learned how music could quickly build a bridge between our disparate cultures and languages. I will never forget how moved I was when the youth of Székelykeresztúr greeted us with “Country Roads Take Me Home” and “O-bla-di, O-bla-dah” when we arrived. Nor will I forget the tears in the eyes of our hosts when we sang “Esti Dal” and the Székely Anthem.

And now we are preparing for another reunion, one with music at its center. On Saturday, March 10, the Adult Choir and our special musical guest, jazz pianist Laszlo Gardony, will present a concert of American and Hungarian music as part of “An Evening in Transylvania.” This event is our major fundraiser to help with the expenses of choir members who are going on this summer’s pilgrimage. It will be an eclectic evening of choral and jazz music, dancing, and **Siri Smedvig**’s fabulous violin playing. I hope many of you will come to this concert and support the pilgrimage.

And there is space for a few more pilgrims (see note at left), so if you have been contemplating this trip, but thought it was too late to sign up, think again. Please contact me directly if you have any questions about the pilgrimage.

Blessings,

— *Beth Norton*

THOUGHTS ON SOCIAL ACTION

There are many ways to describe my role here as the First Parish Social Action Associate. I am here to nurture, facilitate, coordinate, lead and support the many amazing lay volunteers who lead a wide variety of social action programs. I am here to nurture your enthusiasm

and welcome everyone to our Social Action Community. I am here to advance your cause and raise your profile



within and outside of the church. I am here to support your ideas for new initiatives and introduce you to existing or future programs. I am here because this church covenants to go “out into the world.” First Parish presents you with an opportunity — to act upon your beliefs and make a positive change in the world. You, the members of this church, create the opportunities for everyone. You come forth with ideas and run with them. We have an inspiring congregation here! Stay informed through the *Sunday News*, check out our website, firstparish.org, contact me at the church, or e-mail me at FBade@firstparish.org. “Be an activist!”

— *Faith Bade*

GLOBAL WARMING SYMPOSIUM

Saturday, March 24, is the day and CCHS is the place for Concord's first Global Warming Symposium and Fair. Keynote speaker Marc Breslow, head of the Massachusetts Climate Action Network, will kick off the day at 9:00 a.m. The 10:00 a.m. fair will feature exhibitors, vendors, presentations and information about simple, inexpensive ways you can reduce global warming, while saving money. Learn how to take advantage of many opportunities offered by our town government. Families and individuals of all ages are invited to this exciting event. We can all help make Concord and Carlisle “green communities.” Don't miss the fun! Contact CCACE, 978-318-1540, or **Berni Jenkins** at berni.jenkins@verizon.net.

DEADLINE FOR SAC GRANT PROPOSALS

The Social Action Giving committee reminds all parishioners that the deadline to submit grant applications for the spring round of grantmaking is fast approaching. If you are active with a nonprofit organization and would like to assist that organization by sponsoring a request for funding from the

church, now is the time to complete the application for consideration of your project this spring. Please refer to the social action Web page (firstparish.org/cms/content/view/205/96) for instructions on applying and to download the application, or contact **Alane Wallis** at awallis@nutter.com or 978-369-1114. Spring applications are due March 18. Thanks to your donations, First Parish has contributed almost \$75,000 to community-based organizations here and overseas. Our record is strong for providing needed resources to innovative school programs, international AIDS work, national and international public health projects, needed counseling services in our own community and many other projects.

GRASS-ROOTS ACTIONS FOR PEACE HELD ANTIWAR RALLY WITH MARTY MEEHAN

Grass-Roots Actions for Peace (GRAP) held an antiwar rally at Congressman Marty Meehan's office in Lowell, on Saturday, January 27. Over 100 activists with antiwar signs marched, some signing a letter from Meehan urging the President to end the war in Iraq. Meehan has introduced HR 353 calling for cutting off all funds above the force level as of January 9. In addition, a number of Veterans for Peace members from Concord and surrounding towns took part. First Parish was also well represented. An Iraqi war veteran spoke to the gathering following the march. Janet Vaillant, together with GRAP steering committee members, organized the rally. Both Janet and **Al Armenti** served as rally leaders.

INTERFAITH WALK FOR CLIMATE RESCUE ON MARCH 16-24

Join with UU Mass Action Network for the Interfaith Walk for Climate Rescue sponsored by Religious Witness for the Earth. Walk for an hour, an afternoon, a weekend, or the whole nine days during March 16-24, from Northampton to Boston. Register as an individual or a church team. For more information go to uumassaction.org or climatemwalk.org.

FIESTA ISLA DE NIÑOS — SATURDAY, MARCH 3

Come and join our Fiesta on Saturday, March 3, from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Parish Hall. This year we welcome Galapagos Puppets with a puppet show starting at 3 p.m., “Badger Meets the Fairies”, geared to ages 4 to 100. We will also have crafts, face painting, a bean bag toss, a bake sale and more. It is sure to be fun for the whole family. Buy tickets at coffee hour. They are \$7 in advance or \$8 at the door, \$25 maximum per family. One hundred percent of all money goes to Children's Island supporting Isla de Niños, two children's centers in Posadas and Capilla del Monte, Argentina. For more information, contact **Colleen White** at colleen@verizon.net or 978-263-1358.

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.

Membership Corner

THE NEW U IS COMING THIS MONTH

Our three-session introduction to First Parish as a faith community and Unitarian Universalism is starting up again this month. This orientation is facilitated by our ministers and lay leaders, and will take place on Sunday afternoons March 11, 18 and 25, from 4 to 6 p.m. in the Wright Tavern. Please see **Caroline McCloy** during coffee hour, e-mail her at memberfp@aol.com, or call the office if you would like to attend. Space is limited, and we offer this only twice a year, so don't miss out. Child care will be available, if requested in advance.

AFFINITY GROUPS — NEW OR ONGOING

Let's begin to think spring and warmer weather. We have a new Affinity Group forming. If you are a runner and would like company for those long 10-milers (not very fast), join the Running Group. **Elena Rossi** is the contact person; all that is needed are runners! If you would like a slower pace, join the Walking Group — they do, however, need a contact person. Can we get the Bicycling Group started? There is a large sign-up, but a contact person is needed. Don't forget about Kayaking, which has contact persons and will be ready to start in the spring.

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, 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.

Perhaps you would like to join a current functioning Affinity Group: Bridge, Dancing, French Conversation, Jewish Awareness, Needleworkers, Photography, Spanish Discussion/Social or Writing Down the Bones (creative writing). Stop by the Affinity Groups table at coffee hour on Sunday, March 4, or contact **Judy Dembsey** at 978-263-3272 or dembsey@surfglobal.net.

PLEDGE BY MARCH 4 TO THE ANNUAL CAMPAIGN AND COME TO CELEBRATION SUNDAY, MARCH 4

Please Pledge by March 4 — Come to Celebration Sunday!

If you have not yet pledged, bring your pledge to First Parish this Sunday. March 4 is Celebration Sunday, when we mark the culmination of the annual pledge season and celebrate our wonderful faith community here at First Parish. There will be a special sermon from **Jenny Rankin**, glorious music from the Choirs (and Bell Choir,) and youth and adult testimonials.



Come to the services on this special day and, by all means, stay for the extra special coffee hour receptions, featuring delicious food fare of an Asian theme.

At the *Meeting House News* press deadline, we have received \$560,000 in annual pledges — more than half of our \$1,020,000 goal. With your generous pledge, and 100 percent participation of the entire congregation, we will reach our pledge goal and fulfill our annual commitment to pay for the salaries of our ministers and staff, the programs at First Parish, and the day-to-day operational costs of the Meeting House.

Every pledge is important. Help us reduce the number of follow-up phone calls by returning your pledge card by March 4. Pledge forms are available online (www.first-parish.org) and in the church office. On Celebration Sunday, you can bring your pledge to the service or drop it off at the pledge table during coffee hour.

We look forward to seeing everyone this Sunday for *Celebration Sunday!* Thank you, if you have already pledged.

There is so much to be grateful for at First Parish.

—**Dave Dawson** and **Cynthia Ellis**
Cochairs of Pledge-2007 Team:

Margaret Adams, Mary Ellen Connell, Susan Galford, George Gagliardi, Jennifer Jacoby, Kate Keleher, David Quimby, John Sheffield

Reflections and RE News

Each time we finish a program in RE, we want to know what you and your child think about the program. Was it a worthwhile program? Did your child grow in some way? Were new friends made? Was it the right amount of time? To find out what you think, we send you a survey.

These surveys help our RE team shape our programs in a way that reflects the needs of parents and children at First Parish. We listen to what you have to say and modify programs in ways that we hope will improve them for your family.

In our Religious Education program, we are building curricula that reflect our own First Parish values. We are creating and gathering story baskets for Spirit Play. We are developing workshops for our 2nd-6th graders. We brought Young Activists to our 7th graders, allowing them to go out into the world and do something to help others. We are visiting a wide range of worship communities in Neighboring Faiths. Our Whole Lives (OWL) has been modified to include more information on the changing world of technology in our young teens' lives. We have adjusted our Coming of Age (COA) schedule in order to increase the number of retreats and reduce the number of meetings.

Many of these modifications are a direct result of observations and feedback from kids and parents in our RE programs. Some are minor changes that greatly improve these programs. Some are important changes that protect the health of our teens. Some are time changes that enable greater numbers of children and leaders to participate. We come from a long history of great RE programs at First Parish. But even great programs need modifications as communities change, as populations change, and as our world changes around us.

Our RE staff puts great effort into our programming for youth. We want it to be the best it can be and we want to give you and your child a voice in this process. **Jane Barnes** and I have worked with **Leslie Koplou** and **Dyan Urban** to develop effective surveys that can be delivered and administered electronically. We have tried to do our best at making them as convenient as possible to complete. If you and your child are involved in RE, you will be receiving surveys. You will receive a survey as a leader, as a parent and as a participant (your child).

So the next time you receive a survey from us and you find yourself thinking that you don't have much to say and your survey won't make a difference, please think again! Despite all of the work we put into this, we get only a few responses.

RE MARCH CALENDAR

Friday, March 2-3	9th Grade Coming of Age Retreat—6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 4	Regular RE for 0-6th Graders 7th Grade — off 8th Grade OWL — 3:15–7:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 11	Regular RE for 0-6th Graders 7th Grade Neighboring Faiths Baptist 9:45 a.m.–3:00 p.m. 8th Grade — off
Thursday, March 15	7th Grade Neighboring Faiths Buddhism 6:30–9:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 18	Regular RE for 0-6th Grade 7th Grade — off 8th Grade — off
Sunday, March 25	Regular RE for 0-6th Grade 7th Grade Neighboring Faiths TriCon 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. 8th Grade OWL — 4:00–6:30 p.m. 9th Grade Coming of Age — 4:00-6:30 p.m.
Thursday, March 29	RE Orientation for Rotation #5 7:30-9:30 p.m

Ironically, when there are only a few responses, those responses can change a program a lot, when maybe the majority involved didn't think the program needed to change at all. So please, take a minute to complete our survey and enable your child to complete the survey as well. It is in this way we will be able to continue to provide excellent RE programming to your child.

— Pam Howell

WORKSHOP ROTATION — THE LIFE OF JESUS

We are just beginning our 4th rotation, which focuses on the life of Jesus and his parable of the Good Samaritan. Each workshop is designed to be engaging and interactive for our 2nd-6th graders. In Art, they will be making story collages of the parable. In Drama, they will be recreating scenes from the parable. In Real Stuff, kids will be taking a skills survey and learning about the Jericho Road project. In Worship, they will be exploring the New Testament and learning about the Golden Rule. In Games, kids will be solving puzzles with the Bible.

Please note: The orientation for the fifth rotation is on Thursday, March 29, with refreshments at 7:15 p.m. and the orientation beginning promptly at 7:30 p.m. According to the teachers in our first four rotations, the orientations have been essential in understanding the curriculum and the logistics of the rotation.

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RE NEWS continued from page 8

MEET OUR NEW RE STAFF: YOUNG TEEN PROGRAM COORDINATOR, DEBRA DUNNINGTON

We are thrilled to welcome **Debra Dunnington** to our Religious Education staff at First Parish. Debbie will be working with the leaders of our 7th and 8th grade programs to ensure these leaders have the support they need to be effective. Debbie will be helping to organize curriculum binders for each of the programs. This will serve to make volunteering in these programs more manageable for our current and future leaders. Please make sure you introduce yourself to Debbie when you see her at First Parish.

JOIN OTHER FAMILIES FOR MARVELOUS MONDAYS

Tired of being “cooped up” this winter? Need a break from cooking? Come and join us for a community dinner and vespers on Mondays in March. We’d love to see you and your family.

UPCOMING RE ORIENTATION FOR WORKSHOP ROTATION #5 LEADERS AND GUIDES (2ND-6TH GRADES)

Orientation is critical to the success of our Workshop Rotation program. For each rotation, all leaders and guides must attend. If you cannot attend, please call **Liz Davis-Chaffin**, our Workshop Rotation Coordinator, to schedule a time to meet in person to review all of the material. If one person doesn’t know the expectations, it could really throw the whole program off.

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

At the end of January the youth went on retreat to Madison, New Hampshire. We left on the coldest night of the year, with temperatures around -15 degrees when we arrived. Meeting the challenges of arctic weather with no central heat or running water was truly a bonding experience! Thank you to our wonderful chaperones — **Jim Cutler**, **Sean Kavanagh**, **Rodger Matlage** and **Jim Stern** for making it a wonderful retreat; and a special thank you to our host, **Nancy Reilly**. Here are a few snapshots of the weekend that I thought you might enjoy: All 30 of us huddled around the fire with six or so layers of clothing on, youth beaming with pride after beginning a totem pole that we plan on adding to each year, and youth overjoyed after reaching the summit of Mount Chocorua with their crampons on.

On March 25, the youth will be hosting the two Sunday services — an annual tradition that we look forward to. The Friday night before our service, we have a lock-in to rehearse. However, I think the youth really come for the Chinese food dinner and jelly beans. I hope that the product will be good, but I have to say that the joy is in the collaborative process.

OUR MARCH YRUU CALENDAR LOOKS LIKE THIS:

Sunday, March 4: Plan Youth Service. If youth want to participate but cannot come, then let a youth leader or **Mary-Wren** know.

Sunday, March 11: Texas Hold'em Night

Sunday, March 18: UUSC Speaker – Social Justice

Friday, March 23: Lock-in to rehearse Youth Service; all youth are welcome.

Sunday, March 25: Youth Service at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

In March, SOWL will meet for the last time this year. Many thanks to **Peter Fischelis** and **Jiffy Read**, who through their energy and talents, truly engaged another group of senior high youth around the subject of relationships and sexuality. Since we limit participation to 11th and 12th graders only, it makes more sense to offer the class every other year. The next class will begin in fall of 2008.

As the Youth Director, it warms my heart to see myself fade into the background as the youth grow into strong leaders. This spring we will plan our leadership retreat to prepare the next group of youth leaders. Our youth program succeeds because of the wonderful leadership our youth provide, and I happily try to be an engine of support.

—*Mary-Wren vanderWilden*

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MOVIE NIGHT

The Diversity Committee will present the film "Remember the Titans" on Tuesday, March 13, at 7 p.m. Starring Denzel Washington, it's based on the true story of two Virginia schools, one black and one white, that were forced to consolidate by court order in 1971. The year is seen through the eyes of the football team, as the newly appointed African-American coach is hired as head coach over the highly successful white coach. Racial tensions flare, but eventually the team becomes the unifying symbol for the community, as the boys and the adults learn to depend on and trust each other. Refreshments will be served.

LARAMIE PROJECT PERFORMANCES

In 1998, a 21-year-old student at the University of Wyoming was kidnapped, severely beaten and left to die, tied to a fence on the outskirts of Laramie, Wyoming. His name was Matthew Shepard, and he was the victim of this assault because he was gay. "The Laramie Project" chronicles the life of the town in the year after the murder through dramatized readings of interviews with townspeople from all parts of society. Through this deeply moving theatrical experience we come to see how such a tragedy could happen, and what can be done to prevent another. The performances are Friday, March 23, at 8 p.m. and Saturday, March 24, at 2 and 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15, sold at coffee hour and at the door. For more information, please see FPDrama.org or call 978-369-9602.

THE CONCORD PROJECT: A CONVERSATION AMONG THE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY, THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

The Diversity Committee, in conjunction with the production of "The Laramie Project," will present a panel discussion on Tuesday, March 27, at 7:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Five local area panelists representing different perspectives from the LGBT community, their families and friends, will speak, and will answer questions from the attendees. **Sally Hamlin**, our ministerial intern, will be one of the panelists. A reception will follow the discussion.

FLEA MARKET AND RECYCLE SALE—MARCH 31

Get your treasures ready to donate to the WPA Flea Market/Recycle Sale, which will take place on Saturday, March 31, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., rain or shine. Gently used furniture, antiques, lamps, kitchen stuff, artwork, jewelry, clean toys are all welcome. No books, magazines, clothing, plants or sports equipment can be accepted. Items can be dropped off at the church the day before between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. Bring yourself and your friends to this fun event to search for your own treasures! A light lunch and snacks will be available throughout the day. Call **Pat Kane** at 978-369-8418 if you wish to rent a table or to volunteer your help. This is a major fundraiser and a great opportunity to give away items that you no longer need!

Women's News

WPA SPRING CONCERT AND TEA

Celebrate the coming of spring and treat yourself to a delightful recital by violinist **Siri Smedvig** with pianist **Susan Minor**. The program will begin at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, March 20, in the Sanctuary, followed by tea in the Parlor at 4 p.m. All men and women and interested children of First Parish and their friends are welcome. There is no charge for this event. Contact **Dian Pekin** at 978-263-0426 or at pekindc@comcast.net by March 17 for child care reservations or if you need transportation.

THE WOMEN'S AM/PM BOOK GROUP

The next meetings of the Women's AM/PM Book Group will be held Monday evening, March 26, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.; and Tuesday morning, March 27, from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. The book is *Independent People*, by Halldor Laxness. 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 the rest of the church year:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 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 |

Community News

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

F.I.S.H. (Friends in Service Helping) is an organization in Concord whose mission is to drive senior citizens and others in need to and from local medical appointments. Could you help us by driving one day a month or even half a day? We typically have only one to three clients per day. If interested, please call Ellen Bush at 978-369-5871, Jean Hull at 978-369-4729, Joan Neisser at 978-369-5925, or the F.I.S.H. answering service at 978-359-2244, and we'll gladly get back to you.

March 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.
Marvelous Mondays	Mondays	6:00 p.m.
<i>The Other Bible</i>	Mondays	7:30 p.m.
<i>Kundalini Yoga</i>	Tuesday	9:30 a.m. (not 3/27)
<i>T'ai Chi</i>	Tuesday	6:00 p.m.
<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>	Tuesday	7:00 p.m.
<i>Tibetan Buddhism</i>	Wednesday	9:30 a.m.
<i>Living Deliberately</i>	Wednesday	9:30 a.m. (not 3/28)
Bell Choir	Wednesday	1:00 p.m.
Junior Choir	Wednesday	4:30 p.m.
Chalice Choir	Wednesday	5:00 p.m.
<i>Kripalu Yoga</i>	Wednesday	7:30 p.m. (not 3/28)
Adult Choir	Wednesday	7:45 p.m.
<i>Kundalini Yoga</i>	Thursday	9:30 a.m. (not 3/29)
<i>Poetry as a Path to Self-Reflection</i>	Thursday	9:30 a.m.
<i>Kundalini Yoga for Children</i>	Thursday	4:00 p.m. & 5:00 p.m.
<i>Living Deliberately</i>	Thursday	7:00 p.m. (not 3/29)
<i>Finding Your Calling</i>	Thursday	7:30 p.m. (not 3/29)
<i>Tibetan Buddhism</i>	Thursday	7:30 p.m.
<i>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</i>	Friday	9:30 a.m.
Gospel Choir	Sunday	10:00 a.m.
YRUU	Sunday	7:00 (not 3/25)

Thu Mar 1	9:30 <i>InterPlay</i>	7:30 Laramie Project Rehearsal
	Noon <i>Brown Bag Walden</i>	7:30 Green Sanctuary
	7:00 Human Resources Committee	Fri Mar 16
	7:30 Laramie Project Rehearsal	11:30 <i>T'ai Ji</i>
Fri Mar 2	11:00 World Day of Prayer Service and Lunch	1:30 <i>J'ai Ji</i>
Sat Mar 3	2:00 Fiesta Isla de Niños	Sun Mar 18
Sun Mar 4	12:15 Nominating Committee	4:00 New U
	1:00 OWL A and B	6:00 Laramie Project Rehearsal
	5:30 Youth Service Project	12:00 Newsletter Deadline
	7:15 Laramie Project Rehearsal	6:00 Marvelous Mondays Dinner
Mon Mar 5	9:30 Pastoral Care Council	7:00 Marvelous Mondays Vespers
	6:00 Marvelous Mondays Dinner	Tue Mar 20
	7:00 Marvelous Mondays Vespers	3:00 WPA Spring Concert and Tea
	7:00 Jericho Road Meeting	7:00 Amnesty Chapter Meeting
Tue Mar 6	9:00 WPA Board Meeting	7:30 Denominational Affairs Committee
	7:00 Senior OWL	Wed Mar 21
	7:30 Special Events Committee	12:15 <i>Listening for God</i>
Wed Mar 7	7:00 Youth Advisory Committee	7:00 Laramie Project Rehearsal
	7:15 Religious Education Council	Thu Mar 22
	7:30 Special Events Committee	Noon <i>Brown Bag Walden</i>
Thu Mar 8	11:30 <i>Lunch with the Alcotts</i>	7:30 Laramie Project Rehearsal
	7:30 Laramie Project Rehearsal	Fri Mar 23
Fri Mar 9	9:30 Pastoral Care Lay Ministers	7:30 <i>Rise Up Singing</i>
Sat Mar 10	9:00 Photo Club	5:30 YRUU Lock-In
	7:30 "An Evening in Transylvania"	8:00 Laramie Project Performance
Sun Mar 11	3:00 Laramie Project Rehearsal	Sat Mar 24
	4:00 New U	9:00 <i>A Balm in Gilead</i>
	4:00 Needleworkers Swap-It!	9:00 Youth Service Rehearsal
Mon Mar 12	6:00 Marvelous Mondays Dinner	2:00 Laramie Project Performance
	7:00 Marvelous Mondays Vespers	8:00 Laramie Project Performance
	7:00 Standing Committee	Sun Mar 25
Tue Mar 13	8:30 Life Line Screening	11:30 Neighboring Faiths Lunch
	7:00 Diversity Committee Movie	4:00 New U
Wed Mar 14	6:30 Partner Church Committee	4:00 OWL A and B
	7:00 <i>Stress Reduction Drop-In</i>	4:00 Coming of Age
Thu Mar 15	9:30 <i>InterPlay</i>	Mon Mar 26
	Noon <i>Brown Bag Walden</i>	6:00 Marvelous Mondays Dinner
	6:30 Neighboring Faiths	7:00 Marvelous Mondays Vespers
		7:30 <i>Women's AM/PM Book Group</i>
		Tue Mar 27
		9:30 <i>Women's AM/PM Book Group</i>
		7:00 Diversity Committee
		Wed Mar 28
		9:15 Newsletter Mailing
		Thu Mar 29
		Noon <i>Brown Bag Walden</i>
		7:30 RE Orientation
		Sat Mar 31
		8:00 SAC Grants Committee
		9:00 WPA Recycle Sale



First Parish in Concord

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

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MARCH 2007 NEWSLETTER

The April Newsletter deadline is Monday, March 19, at noon.

The Newsletter mailing is Wednesday, March 28.

News items should be limited to 100 words.

Don't Miss...

AN EVENING IN TRANSYLVANIA

Saturday, March 10, 2007

7:30 P.M. in the Sanctuary



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

ANNUAL FIRST PARISH SEDER— SATURDAY, APRIL 7

As in other years, everyone who attends will be involved in the preparation in some way, be it shopping, cooking, serving or cleanup. Besides having fun working together, we manage to keep the price down. Tickets will be sold the last three Sundays in March at coffee hour and in the First Parish office during the week. Space is limited, so buy early! Tickets are \$18 for adults (13 and up); \$6 for children (6-12); children under 6, free. For more information, contact Rhoda Miller at 978-369-6639 or rhodamill@aol.com.

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

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