



First Parish in Concord
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
Gathered in 1636

December 19, 2007
Volume 44, No. 5

The Meeting House News

REVeries

Spirit of Life, be with us now in these
December days.

In frosty air and midnight skies, stars
keep watch.

Dark comes early. We draw the curtains.
Light candles on counter and windowsill,

On Advent wreath and menorah,
Against the gathering dark.

Today we come here,

Listen to the blessing sung over the
menorah.

We take a breath and then another,

And then, the sound of this blessing sung
out into the silence:

It takes our breath away.

The beauty of this ancient tradition

Guarded and kept by nameless ones
down through the centuries.

Great Spirit, you live on northern slopes
In forests of spruce and pine, in moons
hanging full and low near mountain
peak.

Great Spirit, you travel on the winter
wind,

And you travel now to the very center
of our being.

Draw us back to that center now

Amidst all that pulls and tugs at us so,
Sometimes as if it would pull us apart.

In this season, we bring here all that we
are, and all that we are not,

All that we wish we could be.

We know we don't always get it right,
do it right,

And in this place we know we are
accepted and loved as we are,

We know we can begin again.

We come to confess,

To reflect,

To center down again in thy Spirit.

We bring today small moments of
gladness or beauty

And all the struggle and sadness in
our lives.

Most of all, we bring our longing,

Our longing for something deeper
than things.

We bring our desire for the eternal,

Our desire for wholeness or serenity or
courage, our desire for all those
unspeakable things that float through
our dreams and catch at our hearts.

Spirit of Life, in these December days,
be with us we pray.

Lead us back to our center,

Help us hold onto what is good,

Surprise us with moments that drift
up out of our ordinary days and

Take our breath away.

This is our prayer. Amen.

—*Rev. Jenny M. Rankin*

Meditation written for worship on December 9, 2007

Sunday Worship Schedule

January 6

Gary Smith, preaching
**9:00 & 11:00 – Handbell Choir
and Adult Choir**

Noah – Altschul & Solit

Te Quiero – Favero

January 13

**9:00 & 11:00 – Coming of Age
Service**

January 20

Becky Johnson, preaching
9:00 & 11:00

**Intergenerational Gospel Choir
& Adult Choir**

January 27

Gary Smith, preaching
**9:00 & 11:00 – Southern Rail
Bluegrass!**

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There are three inserts with this newsletter:
Wright Tavern Center (two-sided)
Women's Retreat Registration Form
Concord's Faith Communities

The Meeting House News, the newsletter of First Parish in Concord, is published monthly — in print and online — 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. 14	Wednesday, Jan. 23
Friday, Feb. 15	Wednesday, Feb. 27
Monday, Mar. 17	Wednesday, Mar. 26

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

FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE...

Over the next few months, members of the Nominating Committee will be having conversations with fellow First Parish members.

Do you know of someone whose light is under a basket? If so, contact a member of Nominating Committee. We would love to talk with them.

Kitsy Rothermel, chair; **Lillian Anderson**, **Donna Davis**, **Laura Graham**, **Kate Keleher**, **Patty Popov**, **Eric Read**, **Mark Richards** and **Marianne Zasa**

WELCOME!

Welcome to **Melissa Perdue Gallo**, our new Business Manager, who will begin work with us in early January.

Standing Committee Information

The Standing Committee met on December 10. Look for the minutes online at firstparish.org under Church Life (you must log on), or look for them on the bulletin board in the downstairs hall. The next Standing Committee meeting will be Monday, January 21.



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 **Robert Hilsinger** or **Charles Lowell** if you wish to recommend a topic or a speaker.

JANUARY 6

No Forum

JANUARY 13

No Forum

JANUARY 20

Concord Prison Outreach

Linda Reynolds

America has the largest per capita prison population in the world, and we in Massachusetts spend about \$46,000 per year to keep one inmate in prison. Come to the Forum to find out what Concord Prison Outreach (CPO) is doing to bring both hope and skills to these inmates, so that when they are released they don't return to crime (and prison), but become good neighbors.

The Concord Prison Outreach has received a \$3000 grant from the First Parish Social Action Committee. CPO offers a number of programs at the two prisons in our town. We will focus on several of these programs, including Alternatives to Violence. Bring your questions!

JANUARY 27

Emerson: The Ideal in America

Video and **Rev. Jenny Rankin**

Join Jenny for a viewing and discussion of the first video biography of Ralph Waldo Emerson, "America's Founding Thinker." Emerson's belief in "the infinitude of the private man" still resonates with spiritual seekers today. This DVD features interviews with well-known Emerson scholars, including Robert D. Richardson, Jr. You will never look at Emerson — or yourself — quite the same way again.

Parish Notes

SUNDAY FLOWERS

If you would like to provide the Sunday flowers for a memorial or for a special occasion, please leave your name at the office to arrange a date.

BOOK SALE

First Parish in Concord will host its second annual Book and Media Sale on Saturday, February 9. Donations of gently used books, DVD's, videos and CD's are welcome. Please leave your contributions in the box in the coatroom. Please call **Jason Truluck-Williams** at 781-354-8664, or e-mail at jason@jasontw.com if you have any questions. Children's items are especially welcome.

FROM THE TRANSYLVANIA PARTNER CHURCH COMMITTEE

Boldog új évet kívánunk! (We wish you a Happy New Year!)

The new year brings new opportunities to work and be in community with our friends in Székelykeresztúr.

Interfaith Project: Just before the holidays **Rosie Nevins** brought us a wonderful opportunity for a multiethnic, interfaith project to promote peace by creating new ways to commemorate Bözödújfalú, Rev. József Szombatfalvi's home village, destroyed by the Ceausescu regime.

Financial Assistance: In addition for continuing to support our ongoing programs, we are investigating the needs for financial assistance for the considerable renovations to the historic building that will become the new Community House. Images of the building, the initial work and the architectural plans can now be found on the First Parish photo gallery at firstparish.org/photos/gallery2/v/PCC-pics/.

Pilgrimages: We have confirmed our long-range strategy for our visits to each other for the foreseeable future. This includes annual visits to Keresztúr and visits from Keresztúr every second or third year. See the paragraph below for this summer's plan. For September we plan on hosting a delegation of six to eight Keresztúri, culminating in celebrating Transylvanian Unitarian Thanksgiving together on Sunday, September 28.

We are organizing a small group (8-10) to travel to Keresztúr this summer to help with the renovation of the Community House (which includes their Parish Hall, Women's Center, Youth Center, archives, library and minister's office, as well as a dormitory) and to do a bit of travel in Transylvania. Come to a meeting on Tuesday, January 22, to explore the possibilities, or contact **Rodger Matlage** or **Lillian Anderson**, PCC cochairs, for more information.

Look for updates on these initiatives in the coming months. If you have questions or are interested in participating in any of them please contact either of us.

Minden jót!

IN MEMORIAM: NATALIE WEBBER GULBRANDSEN

The Denominational Affairs Committee calls your attention to the passing of Natalie W. Gulbrandsen, who served as moderator of the UUA for eight years during the presidency of William F. Schulz. Natalie died at her home at the age of eighty-eight on October 17. According to Bill, "For her, the cause was what was most important. She was not fussy about receiving personal notice or acclaim. It was about the success of the movement or the organization." When age kept her from traveling across the country and around the world supporting social justice causes, she stayed home

PARISH NOTES continued on page 10

Money Matters

Every year, all of us, as members of the First Parish community, pledge money to support the work of the church. It's an annual rite of passage. And a very important one.

Donations to the church go directly to form the annual budget. Other than a contribution from the trustees every year that is derived from endowment income, there is no other source of money. The ministers and staff look each year at the amount of the pledges, form a budget estimate, and present the resulting budget for a vote at the Annual Meeting in June. That's the money for the year.

Last June, the budget we had to vote was very tight. There was a \$4,000 cut in the music program, church office hours were reduced, and the RE program was cut by \$4,000. Of course we are surviving, but some of you may have felt the effects of the reductions.

Our Pledge Year 2008 starts early next year. All families and individuals will receive a letter and pledge form in the mail on February 1. This mailing will give some particulars about the usage of the funds, and some guidance for those who don't have a clear idea of how much to give. We're emphasizing e-mail this year, along with several fundraising events. You'll hear more from some members during the services in February. Our Celebration Sunday, the official end of the whole process, is March 2, 2008. We hope that everybody will have pledged by then.

You can pledge by mail, bring your pledge form to the office (saving yourself \$.41), or bring your pledge form to Celebration Sunday on March 2.

We're all in this together. We're all obliged to do our part to the extent that we can. This obligation represents good stewardship and is an opportunity to show our support and keep our church going strong. We're all so proud of our beloved church community and the good that we do in the world. Our gifts do come back to us in so many ways. Please do your best to help make this year's Pledge-2008 campaign succeed!

—**Dave Dawson** and **Mary Ellen Connell**,
Pledge-2008 Cochairs

Pastoral Care News

According to the book, *Celtic Devotional*, the celebration of the Winter Solstice (December 22) during the season of Samhain is "traditionally associated with the remembrance of the ancestors, with the coming of death and the conception of new life. In the human growth cycle, Samhain corresponds to the period of old age when wisdom, freedom of spirit and clarity are experienced. Samhain is a good time to celebrate the lives of wise elders, all those whose actions and ideas have brought resolution and peace, all holy ones whose sacrifice has brought new life and opened spiritual thresholds to all."

Instead of trying to forget our losses, the season of Samhain invites us to embrace our losses by remembering our ancestors and loved ones. Here are some ways to remember loved ones around the holidays: tell stories behind the ornaments on the Christmas tree, if you observe Hanukkah, recall a memory of the deceased on each of the eight nights that light the menorah, purchase a favorite book of the deceased and donate it to your local library, wrap a favorite keepsake of the deceased or a framed picture and give it to another grieving member in the family, make a donation to a favorite charity in the person's honor.

Recognizing how painful grieving can be, **Francie Nolde** and I held a workshop called "Coping with Loss during the Holidays." In our grieving, the uncomfortable question often arises, "Who am I now without _____?" During the workshop the participants came up with a list of activities they had done as they explored their sense of self. Here are some of them: Join groups at First Parish; live in the moment by knowing what you know and feeling what you feel; integrate the past into the present; change from being the "giver" to being willing to ask for help and to receive help; learn to say "no" and learn to say "yes;" give yourself permission to cry and scream — a lot; indulge yourself — get a massage, eat a chocolate sundae; exercise — get a trainer, learn to exercise in healthy ways; try something new — piano lessons, etc.; let people know you are spending the holidays alone — many families enjoy inviting new people to their Christmas dinner; change how you traditionally spend the holidays; go away for the holidays; call a homeless shelter offering to serve the Thanksgiving/Christmas meal.

In "the mess and mystery" of this holiday season, may our hearts be filled with gratitude for all that is.

In faith,

—*Margie King Saphier*

MARGIE'S MISSION TRIP TO EL SALVADOR

Last month I went to El Salvador with the Sight and Bite Team to offer free eye and dental care to the companeros (the rural poor) in two communities: Cabanitas, in the city of Apopo outside San Salvador and Suchitoto, which is in the mountains near Honduras. The Sight and Bite Team was begun 15 years ago by Dr. Peter Abell, dentist, and Dr. Jenifer Ambler, optometrist. Both are members of Rotary Club in Brattleboro, Vermont, as well as the UCC church. The UCC church is a sister church to the Lutheran Church in Cabanitas. With that relationship established, Peter contacted Rotarians in San Salvador, telling

PASTORAL CARE continued on page 10

Music Notes

SINGING IN THE NEW YEAR: INTERGENERATIONAL GOSPEL CHOIR!

On Sunday, January 20, 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 coled 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 Wednesday evening, January 16, from 7:30 to 9:00 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 20.

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.

MUSIC EVENTS COMMITTEE — UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Saturday, February 23, 7:30 p.m. — White Heat — swing and dance band featuring jazz of the 1930's and 1940's. A Music Events Committee Cabaret presentation.

Sunday, February 10, 7:00 p.m. — Sarasa — internationally acclaimed chamber music ensemble.

Details will appear in subsequent monthly and Sunday newsletters.

MUSings

First Parish marked a major milestone this fall when the Standing Committee approved a contract with Russell & Co. organ builders of Chester, Vermont, to rebuild the organ that has served us for over a century. Many parishioners have spent countless hours over the last decade to bring us to this point, and we are thrilled to have found a builder so uniquely qualified to carry out this significant project.

Those of you who attended the November presentation of the Organ Committee will have learned firsthand of the Russells' passion for organbuilding and their training and experience as pipe makers in Europe. With these special and highly developed skills, Stephen Russell and his colleagues will be able to rebuild and rescale much of the pipe work from our current organ, integrating it into a new organ design to support our music ministry more effectively into the new century. The familiar wood facade will be incorporated in the new design, pushed back a few feet, and the console (where the organist plays) will be movable. This will allow for greater flexibility in our use of the balcony space for the choir, the bell choir and instrumental groups, and will support the entire music ministry. The proposal and contract specifications are truly outstanding in every detail. To view the November presentation by the Organ Committee, see our website, firstparish.org/cms/files/CapitalCampaign/foc_presentation_11-27-07.pdf.

The visible work on the organ and surround is slated to begin about a year from now, and should take most of 2009 to complete. An organ project of this magnitude presents myriad challenges and opportunities to a music ministry; fortunately, we have ample time to prepare and make plans for the period of time that the organ is under construction.

We would like to express our great appreciation to the work of all the organ committees over the past ten years, but especially to the Capital Campaign Organ Committee. This group brought top-notch integrity and dedication to this task and put in countless volunteer hours. They worked painstakingly to identify and visit the work of appropriate organ builders for this project, prepare a request for proposal, and evaluate the submitted builder proposals. The final choice of builder and design was joyfully clear and unanimous.

We would especially like to extend our deep gratitude to you for supporting this project with your votes and contributions to the Capital Campaign. Future generations will surely look back and thank us for the vision and commitment it took to make this happen.

Lastly, we are happy to say that after some reapportioning of his weekly duties within the music program, Eric has agreed to stay on as organist. He looks forward to seeing this wonderful instrument come to fruition as a permanent legacy to this historic church.

Blessings,

— *Beth Norton & Eric Huenneke*

Social Action Community News and Events

THOUGHTS ON SOCIAL ACTION

What does the name "Social Action Community" convey to you, our First Parish members? According to Webster's, *social* can mean "of or pertaining to society" or "pertaining to welfare work" and *action* can mean "the state



or process of acting or doing." Does this adequately express all that we do? Every day our

church members are involved in changing society and making the world a better place, in a wide variety of ways, both within and outside of the church. Because of the actions of you, the members of this church, concrete change happens. So many lives were touched this past holiday season alone, through Secret Santa, Community Teamwork of Lowell, the mitten tree, Gulf Coast Works, Open Table, Heifer, uusc, Concord Prison Outreach and Fair Trade.

And more change is happening. A dedicated group of lay volunteers, led by **Jim Reynolds**, is organizing a mission trip in April 2009 for then-8th & 9th graders, with the goal of raising our whole community's awareness of, and education on, El Salvador's history, culture, and issues faced today. The community kickoff of this program will be on Social Action Sunday, January 6, 2008, with a guest visitor from El Salvador, Rosa Anaya.

Many individuals and families continue with their own social action projects and causes. **Nico Calabria** (age 13!) recently raised over \$75,000 for a wheelchair program by completing a climb up Mt. Kilimanjaro. The **Aley** family is working on social action projects, as a family, for a total of 12 months to raise money for an international relief organization. First Parish members are making a big — and bigger! — difference in the world and are truly living our benediction.

Check out [.firstparish.org](http://firstparish.org) and click on Social Action to see improvements to the website: Current Events shows volunteer opportunities and information on upcoming programs; Current Programs highlights ongoing programs; Grants and Grants History lists recent and past grants with application information; Projects Funded provides links for some grant recipients; and UUSC raises awareness of Service Committee programs.

Please contact me with causes and concerns at FBade@firstparish.org.

— *Faith Bade*
Social Action Associate

OXFAM DINNER VOLUNTEER NEEDED

First Parish Youth and the Social Action Community are teaming up to create an OXFAM dinner here at First Parish this winter. We are looking for an adult volunteer to lead our team. If interested, contact **Faith Bade**, FBade@firstparish.org,

SUCCESSFUL JERICHO ROAD RIDE

Thanks to the many First Parishioners who helped make this year's Jericho Road Ride a big success. Over 95 riders raised more than \$50,000 to support Jericho Road's work in Lowell and expansion to other communities in New England, with 44 percent of our riders and nearly 100 percent of our volunteer workforce coming from First Parish. Thank you to everyone for their participation, boosterism, fundraising and enthusiasm. Special thanks to board members **John Boynton** and **Philip vanderWilden** for extraordinary fundraising!

THE HOMELESS CHILD IN SCHOOL

The Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness will hold its fourth annual forum on January 27, at the Trinitarian Church in Concord, from 7:00 to 8:45 p.m. This year's forum — The Homeless Child in School — will feature Robyn Frost, Executive Director of the Mass. Coalition for the Homeless; Mary William, Program Director of the Homeless Student Initiative for the Boston Public Schools; and Laurie Burnett, Homelessness Education Coordinator for the Framingham Public Schools. Learn what can be done to help the estimated 96,000 children in Massachusetts without permanent homes. For information call **Jane Blumberg** 978-369-8520.

CONCORD PRISON OUTREACH FORUM — JANUARY 20

America has the largest per capita prison population in the world, and we in Massachusetts spend about \$46,000 per year to keep one inmate in prison. Come to the January 20 Forum to find out what Concord Prison Outreach (CPO) is doing to bring both hope and skills to these inmates, so that when they are released they don't return to crime (and prison), but become good neighbors. We will focus on the various CPO programs, including Alternatives to Violence, at the Sunday Forum, at 10:10 am in the Parlor. Bring your questions!

APRIL YOUTH SERVICE TRIP TO NEW ORLEANS — ADULT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We are looking for an adult lay leader or leaders, possibly with prior

SOCIAL ACTION COMMUNITY 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/, 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.

From Our Intern Minister

I have taken these last few weeks to appreciate and evaluate this community internship time. I am here for such a short time, and you who build and maintain this community have chosen it for much longer. You could become satisfied with your work and look no further for inspiration. And yet, you have chosen to support the wider community of faith by training me and other future ministers. You also support the work of justice beyond your walls by organizing committees and nonprofits and donations. This month, as I give thanks for the teachings you have offered, and as I plan the second half of this internship, I wish you all a happy new year.

— *Becky Johnson*

Jericho Road Intern Minister

SOCIAL ACTION COMMUNITY

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experience on a Gulf Coast Works trip (formerly Bridge to Biloxi), to join us in organizing our April vacation mission trip to the Ninth Ward in New Orleans. If interested contact **Mary Wren vanderWilden** (vanderWilden@verizon.net) or **Faith Bade** (Fbade@firstparish.org).

SIGN PLEDGE JANUARY 6, AND HELP CLOSE GUANTÁNAMO

What can you do to help end torture and illegal rendition, restore habeas corpus, and shut down Guantánamo Bay? One thing you can do is to come to the Amnesty International table at coffee hour on Sunday, January 6, to sign a pledge stating your Commitment to Human Rights. Pledges will be sent to Washington and delivered to the White House on January 11, the sixth anniversary of the first detentions at Guantánamo Bay. Amnesty's goal is to overwhelm the White House with 500,000 signed pledges. Questions? Call **Lorraine Loviglio** at 978-371-0914.

YOUTH AND ADULT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR APRIL UUUM VACATION CAMP

First Parish is collaborating with other suburban/urban UU churches to provide an April 2008 day camp at First Church in Roxbury for 40-50 Roxbury elementary school children. Join together to provide the kids with a safe, enriching environment while easing their parents' lives! Volunteers are needed: youths to be assistant counselors from Monday to Friday, April 21-April 25 (community service credit), and adults with educational design experience. Project planning is led by Roxbury/Winchester youth groups. Interested Concord youth and adults may attend the planning meeting Saturday, January 12, 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Contact **Mark Richards** at 978-897-9674 or e-mail mark.s.richards@verizon.net for information and transportation.

JOIN US FOR THE UU URBAN MINISTRY WEEKEND, FEBRUARY 1–3

UU Urban Ministry at First Parish Poetry Blast — Friday, February 1 at 7:00 p.m.!

Join the UU Urban Ministry at First Parish for a Poetry Blast! From middle school to old school, bring your best poetry or your best interpretation of your favorite poet, spoken or sung. Poets from the UUUM's Roxbury Youth Program and United Souls will be on hand to share their work for an evening of humor, tears, reflection and inspiration. Don't miss this event for the whole family on Friday, February 1, 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Admission is \$10 per person or \$20 per family. Proceeds benefit UU Urban Ministry general fund. Contact **Claudia Nimar** at cnimar@aol.com or **Mark Richards** at mark.s.richards@verizon.net for more information.

FUNDERBURG SCHOLARS DINNER FEBRUARY 2

Save Saturday, February 2, for the Funderburg Scholars dinner at church! 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. Wine and cheese at 6:30 p.m., dinner by **Caroline McCloy** at 7:15! For questions, contact **Loretta Ho Sherblom** at loretta@lhsbenefits.com.

JOIN GUEST PREACHER REV. JOHN HICKEY ON FEBRUARY 3

Rev. John Hickey will be preaching on Sunday, February 2. After the 11:00 a.m. service, he will be in the Chapel for a talk back session to answer your questions and offer additional information about the work of the UU Urban Ministry. Contact **Mark Richards** at mark.s.richards@verizon.net with questions.

Reflection and RE News

A credo. A personal statement of one's deepest beliefs. This is what we ask of our Coming of Age participants. To declare publicly, in front of our congregation of diverse backgrounds and diverse spiritual paths, where they fit in the broad spectrum of Unitarian Universalist sources and principles.

This year marks a turning point in our Coming of Age program. We have been fortunate to have two amazing leaders, **Cynthia Ellis** and **Deb Welch**, who have embraced the vastness of our Unitarian Universalist roots and woven them into an already rich curriculum. Together, we are building a program that provides an understanding of our faith community, while giving our youth the time and space necessary for introspection.

During this program, our youth wrestle with questions such as, Who am I as a person? Who am I as a member of my family? Who am I as a friend? And Who am I as a member of First Parish? Questions that would make each one of us stop and reflect upon our own spiritual journey, our own pilgrimage to this faith community.

Our seven principles guide us in our daily living. These shared principles are the covenant that holds us together. Our six sources — unlike our principles — invite us to choose. Here there is no one way, nor dogma about how we define ourselves in relationship to these foundational roots. For some of us, our roots in Christianity and the Hebrew scriptures inspire us. Others find spiritual direction in earth-centered practices. Still others find peace in the richness of other world religions such as Buddhism. There are many whose pilgrimage involves the principles of science and humanism. And then there are some who find inspiration in our own prophetic men and women, people like Emerson, Thoreau and Peabody.

Our Coming of Age program provides our youth with knowledge about our faith, tools with which to carry on a path of personal reflection. Each teen will travel this path to prepare a personal statement of belief. I hope you will be in church on January 13 to witness this spiritual event in the lives of our First Parish youth.

— *Pam Howell*

WORKSHOP ROTATION #3: STORIES FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES — NOAH'S ARK

Our third rotation will begin on January 6, with a special children's message involving the bell choir and the choir. This is something new for all of us and we are looking forward to working together to deliver the story of Noah to our children.

JANUARY RE CALENDAR

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Sun., Jan. 6 | Regular RE Pre-K– 6th Grade 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
7th Grade Buddhism 11:00 a.m.
8th Grade OWL 4:00-7:00 p.m.
9th Grade COA 4:00 -6:30 p.m. |
| Sun., Jan. 13 | Regular RE Pre-K – 6th Grade 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
7th Grade Buddhism 11:00 a.m.
8th Grade OWL 3:00-7:00 p.m.
9th Grade COA Service 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. |
| Sun., Jan. 20 | Regular RE for Pre-K 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
Intergenerational Service K-6th Grade 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
No 7th Grade Buddhism
No 8th Grade OWL |
| Sun., Jan. 27 | Regular RE Pre-K – 6th Grade 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
7th Grade Buddhism 11:00 a.m.
8th Grade OWL 4:00-7:00 p.m. |

This rotation will have five weeks of workshops. In Art, they will be making clay animals and creating the Ark scene. In Drama, they will be watching films about the story of Noah, listening to Bill Cosby give his impressions of the story of Noah, and viewing pieces of the National Geographic documentary of the discovery of an ancient civilization under the Black Sea. In Worship, children will be experiencing the joy of Jewish folk dancing. Real Stuff will provide our kids with the opportunity to make useful objects for those still in need in Biloxi. And in Games, we will be exploring the story of the Tower of Babel and making our own towers.

It takes a lot of work and coordination to put these vibrant workshops together. We are so fortunate to have the extraordinary talents **Liz Davis-Chaffin**, our Workshop Rotation Coordinator, and **Jane Barnes**, our RE Administrator.

COME TO COMING OF AGE SUNDAY ON JANUARY 13

Mark your calendars now for January 13 and join us for the Coming of Age (COA) worship services at 9:00 and 11:00 o'clock. Many people tell us that these services are a highlight of the church year. On this day, 14 ninth graders will stand before our congregation and present their credos. You will not want to miss the opportunity to hear what these wonderful young people have to say about their beliefs and dreams. On this special Sunday, we will recognize and honor the "coming of age" of these teens into young adults.

The purpose of the COA program is to help our youth understand more about themselves with a supportive mentor and explore what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist. These young people have spent the past four months meeting with their mentors — adults who volunteer from our congregation — learning more about the UU faith

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Senior Youth News

The one thing I have learned in working with youth is that you have to be flexible and go with the flow! Last spring I prepared a calendar for the 2007–2008 year in good faith, but we have to change a few dates because of final exams, “Battle of the Bands” and music competitions. So mark your calendars with these **big changes**:

The Youth Winter Retreat will be the weekend of February 8–10

The annual Youth Worship Service will be April 13 (lock-in to rehearse on April 11)

The YAC has planned a terrific January with something for everyone!

- Sun., Jan. 6 Sister Rosa Anaya will speak about social action in El Salvador
- Sun., Jan. 13 Snow Tubing at Nashoba Ski Area – permission slips on the website
- Mon., Jan. 21 Movie Night – Michael Moore’s “Sicko”
- Sun., Jan. 27 Reduce final exam stress with **Pam Ressler**

It’s been a great winter for social action for our youth. In December, the youth worked hard to make and sell tie-dyed T-shirts as a fundraiser to support the education of our Transylvanian student. We are planning a youth trip to Common Cathedral in February — a truly moving experience for our youth and chaperones alike. We are also putting together a youth trip to New Orleans to continue the rebuilding effort with Gulf Coast Works — watch your mail for details.

Final exams are at the end of January for most of our youth. It is a stressful time as they try to remember/relearn/cram in everything they learned in the fall. Our seniors are in the dark, never-ending days of January and February, waiting to hear back from colleges. 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 2008!

—*Mary-Wren vanderWilden*

Membership Corner

THE PHOTO DIRECTORY IS COMING!

We hope you will sign up to have your photograph taken for our new pictorial directory. You can sign up in the Parish Hall during coffee hour or in the hall outside the office during the week. There are still slots available on December 28 and 29, and January 8 and 9. We welcome all members and friends to have their photos taken. For inclusion in the directory, a pledge in the last year is appreciated. Every family or individual who has a photo taken will then receive one free 8 x 10 color photograph plus a free directory.

RE NEWS continued from page 8

and its sources. They have stretched themselves mentally by thinking deeply about their values and beliefs and physically by participating in a ropes course and an afternoon “solo” outdoors.

We are most grateful to our thoughtful and dedicated mentors: **Doug Wilson, Tammie Foote, Abby Russell-Prior, Donna Vaillancourt, Jason Truluck-Williams, John Sheffield** and **Suzanne Foley**. Come see us January 13. —**Cynthia Ellis** and **Deb Welch**, COA coleaders

RE ORIENTATION SCHEDULE FOR 2008 RE

Caregiving, Story Play and Spirit Play Rotation Terms 4 and 5—February 5, at 7:30 p.m.

Workshop Rotation #4 – Wednesday, February 6, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. – **Please note, this is a new date!**

Coming of Age Mentor Orientation, 8th Grade – Sunday, February 10, 2:00 to 6:30 p.m.

TURKEY FRY THANK-YOU!

On Sunday, November 18, 14 7th and 8th graders fried and baked turkeys and made table decorations and goody baskets for the Open Table’s Thanksgiving dinner. A big thank-you to the kids for participating in this annual social action project. A special thanks to all the families who provided the turkeys or made monetary donations, enabling us to donate 10 turkeys to the Open Table! Also, many thanks to the adult volunteers for their help that afternoon: **Mark Howell, Kris Yerby, Maile Hulihan, Deborah Hulihan** and **Jeanine Calabria**. Extra thanks go to **Pam Howell** and **Faith Bade** for supporting this project and providing supplies. —**Suzie Weaver**

Women's News

WPA LUNCHEON: EMERSON IS COMING TO FIRST PARISH!

Join old and new friends on Tuesday, January 22, for a luncheon sponsored by the Women's Parish Association. A critically acclaimed impersonator will portray Ralph Waldo Emerson as he delivers his speech on self-reliance. All men, women and interested youth are welcome. A hearty soup and dessert buffet will be served. Social time will be at 11:30 a.m., with lunch at noon. The cost is ten dollars. Contact **Dian Pekin** by January 17 for reservations, child care or ride requests at 978-263-0426 or pekindc@comcast.net.

THE WOMEN'S AM/PM BOOK GROUP

The January selection for the Women's AM/PM Book Group is *Midnight's Children*, by Salman Rushdie. The evening session will be held Monday, January 28, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.; and the morning session on Tuesday, January 29, from 9:30 to 11:00 a.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, contact **Darien Smith** at darien@smithquest.com. The books and dates for 2008 are as follows:

February 25 (p.m.), 26 (a.m.)

*Bobbed Hair and Bathtub Gin:
Writers Running Wild in the Twenties,*
Marion Meade

March 24 (p.m.), 25 (a.m.)

The Memory Keeper's Daughter,
Kim Edwards

April 28 (p.m.), 29 (a.m.)

One Thousand White Women, Jim Fergus

May 19 (p.m.), 20 (a.m.)

The Year of Magical Thinking,
Joan Didion

PARISH NOTES continued from page 3

and opened her checkbook in support of many. We are greatly indebted to her for her dedication and inspiration. Please refer to the UUA's website for further information on this remarkable woman's life. —**Dian Pekin**, for the Denominational Affairs Committee

POETRY BOOKS FOR SALE

There are a few books of poetry, entitled "Love is Enough," by **Deborah Greeley** available for sale by the Women's Parish Association. The price is four dollars. Contact **Dian Pekin** at 978-263-0426 or pekindc@comcast.net if you would like to buy one.

SIGN UP FOR JANUARY SEASONAL DINNER PARTIES

Make new friends at the January Seasonal Dinner Parties on Saturday, January 19. The parties are informal potluck suppers for 8-10 people, held in participant's homes. This is a great opportunity to become better acquainted with new people and deepen relationships with old friends. The dinners are open to adults — both couples and singles. Hosts provide an appetizer and beverages, guests bring the dinner. Sign up at coffee hour on January 6 or 13. For more information, contact **Carolyn & Barry Copp** (cbcopp@comcast.net), (978) 287-0492.

WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN COORDINATING THE SEASONAL DINNER PARTIES?

Volunteers are needed to coordinate Seasonal Dinner Parties for the '08-'09 church year. Training will take place this spring. This is a great way to get to know more people at First Parish. Please contact **Carolyn Copp** (cbcopp@comcast.net), (978) 287-0492 for more information.

PASTORAL CARE

continued from page 4

them of his vision to provide free eye and dental care. Through the support of the Rotary, the Sight and Bite Team is able to store large equipment, generators, portable dental chairs, dental equipment, etc.

I learned about the Sight and Bite Team through Dr. Jane Pentheny, an optometrist who is a member of the UU congregation in Quincy, Massachusetts. Like Jane, I fell in love with El Salvadoran people as soon as I met them. El Salvador is the land of smiling faces, warm, caring, thankful hugs, but also a land of people with a quiet dignity in the midst of heartbreaking poverty and the emotional and physical scars of a 12-year civil war that ended 15 years ago. Two years ago I met two wonderful women, Rosa Anaya, who works for social justice in her country, and Sister Peggy O'Neill, who is the founder of Centro Arte para la Paz, centroartes.org. Rosa will be coming to First Parish January 6 (see Faith Bade's column on page 6). Sister Peggy is a vivacious 69-year-old woman, who served the poor throughout the civil war (she knows Charlie Clements), and continues to do so through the Centro Arte para la Paz, whose goal is to offer the local community training in new and dynamic skills not available elsewhere in the area in order to promote self-sufficiency. The Site and Bite Team held clinics at the Centro Arte and we stayed at the hostel that it runs. The social action Grants Committee awarded Sister Peggy \$1000 as seed money for the program "Discipline with Love." My dream is that First Parish will have an ongoing relationship with the Centro Arte para la Paz. In January or February I will show my slides at a Forum, so stay tuned. — **Margie King Saphier**

January 2008 Calendar

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

Every Week...

<i>Kundalini Yoga</i>	Tuesday	9:30 p.m.
<i>T'ai Chi</i>	Tuesday	6:00 p.m.
<i>Tibetan Buddhism</i>	Wednesday	9:30 a.m.
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 1/2 or 1/9)
Adult Choir	Wednesday	7:45 p.m.
<i>Kundalini Yoga</i>	Thursday	9:30 a.m. (not 1/3)
<i>Tibetan Buddhism</i>	Thursday	7:30 p.m.
Men's Group	Saturday	7:30 a.m.
YRUU	Sunday	7:00 p.m.

<p>Tue Jan 1 Holiday — Office closed</p> <p>Wed Jan 2 7:00 Youth Advisory Committee</p> <p>Thu Jan 3 7:00 <i>Stress Reduction Maintenance</i></p> <p>Sun Jan 6 4:00 Coming of Age 4:00 Our Whole Lives</p> <p>Mon Jan 7 7:00 Jericho Road Board Meeting 7:30 RE Council</p> <p>Tue Jan 8 9:00 WPA Board Meeting 3:00 <i>Tea & Poetry</i> 7:30 Special Events Committee</p> <p>Wed Jan 9 7:00 Youth Advisory Committee</p> <p>Fri Jan 11 11:30 <i>T'ai Ji</i></p> <p>Sat Jan 12 9:00 Photo Club</p> <p>Sun Jan 13 10:00 Calvin College Visit 3:00 Our Whole Lives 7:00 Social Action Council Board Meeting</p> <p>Mon Jan 14 12:00 Newsletter Deadline</p> <p>Tue Jan 15 7:00 Amnesty International 7:00 Denominational Affairs</p> <p>Wed Jan 16 5:30 <i>Gentle Yoga</i></p> <p>Thu Jan 17 10:00 <i>InterPlay</i></p>	<p>Fri Jan 18 7:00 <i>Partner Yoga/Date Night</i></p> <p>Sat Jan 19 Seasonal Dinner Parties (off-site)</p> <p>Mon Jan 21 Holiday — Office closed 7:00 Standing Committee</p> <p>Tue Jan 22 11:30 WPA Luncheon 7:30 Diversity Movie</p> <p>Wed Jan 23 9:00 Newsletter Mailing 9:30 Pastoral Care Council 12:15 <i>Listening for God</i> 5:30 <i>Gentle Yoga</i> 6:00 Cabaret</p> <p>Thu Jan 24 6:30 Seventh Grade Dinner/ Buddhist Meeting</p> <p>Fri Jan 25 Women's Retreat 1 (off-site) 7:30 <i>Rise Up Singing</i></p> <p>Sat Jan 26 3:00 Pastoral Care</p> <p>Sun Jan 27 4:00 Our Whole Lives 7:00 YRUU</p> <p>Mon Jan 28 7:30 <i>Women's AM/PM Book Group</i></p> <p>Tue Jan 29 9:30 <i>Women's AM/PM Book Group</i></p> <p>Wed Jan 30 5:30 <i>Gentle Yoga</i></p> <p>Thu Jan 31 10:00 <i>InterPlay</i></p>
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First Parish in Concord

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

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JANUARY 2008 NEWSLETTER

The February Newsletter deadline is Monday, January 14, at noon.
The Newsletter mailing is Wednesday, January 23.
News items should be limited to 100 words.

Don't Miss...

**CHRISTMAS EVE AT FIRST PARISH
MONDAY, DECEMBER 24**

- 4:00 Children's Choir
- 5:30 Gospel Choir
- 7:00 Handbell Choir
- 9:00 Adult Choir

The services are geared to different ages, from families with very young children at 4:00 p.m. to the traditional musical service at 9:00 p.m. All services will conclude with the traditional candlelighting and singing of *Silent Night*.

**First Parish in Concord • UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
Staff**

- Gary E. Smith**, Senior Minister
- Jenny M. Rankin**, Minister
- Margie King Saphier**, Associate Minister for Pastoral Care
- Rebecca M. Blodgett**, Affiliate Minister for Pastoral Care

- Pam Howell**, Director of Religious Education
- Jane Barnes**, Religious Education Administrator
- Liz Davis-Chaffin**, Workshop Rotation Coordinator
- Carol Duane**, Program Coordinator for Young Children
- Mary-Wren vanderWilden**, Youth Program Director

- 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
- Rebecca Johnson**, Jericho Road Ministerial Intern

- A. Bigay**, Assistant to the Ministers
- Douglas Baker**, Sacristan and Curator
- Jane Johnson**, Office Manager
- Melissa Perdue Gallo**, Business Manager
- Peggy Gallo**, Financial Secretary and Collector
- Caroline McCloy**, Director of Member Services
- Faith Bade**, Social Action Associate
- Kate Keleher**, Newsletter Editor
- Kaye Harvie, Jane Johnson**, Newsletter Staff

FIRST PARISH BOUILLON VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Would you like to help bring the tasty bouillon to church again this winter? What it takes is: Someone to get the ingredients and make the bouillon before the 9:00 o'clock service (so it brews during the service) and to serve it at the first coffee hour. And someone to serve at the second coffee hour and clean up afterward.

We have a few volunteers from last year, but need more help. If you are interested in being part of this First Parish winter tradition, e-mail **Kel Keleher** at kel@rkeleher.com.

Church Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 9:00 to 3:00
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Fax: 978-369-8701
E-Mail: fpconcord@aol.com
Website: firstparish.org

Ministers' E-Mail:
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Jenny M. Rankin: revjenny@comcast.net
Margie King Saphier: mksaphier@comcast.net