



First Parish in Concord
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
Gathered in 1636

The Meeting House News

REVeries

Dear Friends,

One of the things I love to do is collect words. Words that matter to me. Words that are beautiful or true (for me). They are words that take my breath away or make my eyes fill up with tears, or they are funny or they make me think. Words about courage or hope or the holy in the midst of ordinary things like flowers on the kitchen table.

I have collected words in haphazard ways probably all my life. Now I'm trying to put them in one place. One day I hope to give some of the words that I treasure to my children.

So I was interested a few years ago to read about Emerson and his "common-place book." That's what he called the book where he collected poems, quotations, scraps from books or the newspaper or everyday conversation, as well as his own work, drafts of letters or essays.

He started the book when he was 17 years old, and this is what he wrote on the first page:

"These pages are intended at their commencement to contain a record of new thoughts (when they occur); a receptacle of all the old ideas that partial but peculiar peepings at antiquity can furnish or furbish; for tablet to save the wear and tear of weak memory, and in short, for all the various purposes and utility, real or imaginary, which are usually comprehended under that comprehensive title Common Place book."

I know that some of you have favorite "sayings" or poems or prayers. Words that you return to for courage or hope, to help you get through a rough time, or simply the rhythm of the day to day. I'm wondering if you would be willing to share some of these "favorite words" with me. We could make a First Parish "Commonplace Book," if you will, of words that matter to us, as a community. It could be a spiritual resource for us all.

So I invite you to send along some words that matter to you, to revjenny@comcast.net or by mail to 20 Lexington Road. Tell me if you want your name used or if you'd like your offering to be anonymous. And thank you.

We are a community of courage and hope. Now more than ever.

—*Jenny Rankin*

Please see page 7 for information about our ongoing monthly series.

GOING DEEPER SPIRITUALLY: Monthly Thematic and Theological Queries for the People of First Parish in Concord

Sunday Worship Schedule

February 1
Coming of Age Service
9:00 & 11:00

February 8
Gary Smith, preaching
9:00 & 11:00 – Folk Music Service
Life Is Like a Mountain Railroad

February 15
Angela Herrera, preaching
9:00 & 11:00 – Handbell Choir

February 22
Margie King Saphier, preaching
9:00 – Lauren Bedau Evans, alto
11:00 – First Parish Choir

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There are two inserts with this newsletter:

- Wright Tavern Center courses
- Funderburg Scholars Dinner info

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
Friday, Feb. 13	Wednesday, Feb. 25
Monday, Mar. 16	Wednesday, Mar. 25
Friday, Apr. 17	Wednesday, Apr. 29

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

Standing Committee Information

The next Standing Committee meeting will be held off-site on Monday evening, February 9. Please look for the monthly minutes online at firstparish.org under Church Life (you must log in) or on the Parish News bulletin board.

From the Intern Minister

I'll bet you wouldn't guess that I spent nearly a year in a prison. Well, to be exact, I wasn't there all the time. Just about four hours per day. It was a nine-month internship at a maximum-security men's prison with their Buddhist chaplain, a young mother like me, named Karuna. I remember driving to the prison for the first time, filled with anxiety. "Inherent worth and dignity," I repeated to myself. I wondered to what degree my principles would be tested.

Despite my nervousness, I wanted to be there. With over a million people incarcerated, I knew a significant percentage of our country's population was invisible to me, and I wanted to see them. But I soon learned that inmates aren't the only invisible ones. Incarceration also stigmatizes and undermines families, producing a voiceless, despairing class of people all around us who must also be brought into view.

There were many other surprises too. I was as shocked by the poetry and dreams of the prisoners as I was by the violence that broke into their days. (It's one thing to hear about this in the media, and another thing entirely to sit in the room, or stairwell, or dining hall where it happened yesterday and could happen again at any moment. Then you start to get a glimpse of what it is like to live with no safe space.)

But what stands out the most is the day Karuna asked a circle of ten men to name a time they felt loved. I wondered if some would say they never had. But that's not what happened. Instead, all of the men named a time, and more than half of the men identified a time they felt loved inside the prison, by their fellow inmates. When they were sick, or had lost a loved one on the outside, or had been harmed, someone had been there for them. Some of the men were even attending hospice training, so they could care for dying prisoners, who up until that point would simply have died alone in the "sick unit."

I was and still am amazed at the places love can spring up in this world. Where love dominates, hate cannot get a foothold. But where hate is pervasive, love can still show up at any time.

May we take the spirit of love into all the corners of our lives, and may love be yours this spring in both familiar and unexpected places.

In faith,

—*Angela Herrera*

Sunday Forums

Because of the ongoing renovations, Forums have been suspended for now. Please call **Charles Lowell** or **Robert Hilsinger** about future topics.

Parish Notes

HEIFER GIFT CARD THANK-YOU

Dave and Diane Clapp extend thanks to all First Parishioners who purchased Heifer gift cards in December. Your contributions raised \$885.00 and were greatly appreciated.

DON'T MISS THE SECOND ANNUAL TRIVIA NIGHT

It's Saturday, January 31, at 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Put on your thinking caps for this question!

What famous person said, "You have nothing to fear but fear itself"?

Answer: John F. Kennedy, Gary Smith, William Shakespeare, Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Anyone high school age or older can play. Come and enjoy a fun night out with your First Parish friends and compete to win some fun prizes. We'll have snacks and drinks and some interesting questions that we hope will stretch your brain. Sign up by contacting the office, or **Lillian Anderson** at 978-369-1468 or lillianand@comcast.net. Tickets are \$15.

SINGERS NEEDED FOR THE RETURN OF CASINO NIGHT — SAVE THE DATE!

Casino Night will return to First Parish on May 1 and 2. We will again present gambling for fun along with a Vegas-style cabaret production. All interested singers are invited to meet on Sunday, February 22, at 7 p.m. Rehearsals will be mostly on Sunday and Friday nights, with some weeknights thrown in, and will begin on February 27. You must be available May 1 and 2 as well as some nights during that production week. Questions? Contact **Sue Beck** at 978-369-8445 or sbeck345@comcast.net.

FIRST MEETING OF THE EMERSON FORUM

The Emerson Forum will hold its first meeting on February 2, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Concord Public Library. The purpose of the forum is to provide a continuing presence at First Parish in Concord for dialogue on the essays and thinking of Ralph Waldo Emerson, and how they speak to us today. The Emerson Forum is meant to bring together, in an informal, nonacademic atmosphere, a community of participants drawn from the members and friends of First Parish. Due to limited space, please register in advance with **Mel Bernstein** at 781-259-9926.

WPA LUNCHEON MEETING—FEBRUARY 24

Join old and new friends on Tuesday, February 24, for lunch and enjoy an "armchair trip" slide presentation to the Galápagos Islands with **Ginger Lang**, who has just returned from an exciting journey there. A sandwich and dessert buffet will be served in our own Parish Hall at noon. All First Parish women and men and their friends are welcome. The charge is eight dollars. Contact **Dian Pekin** at pekindc@comcast.net or 978-263-0426 by February 20 for reservations, child care arrangements or transportation.

PARISH NOTES continued on page 10

Pastoral Care News

In *Pocketful of Miracles*, Joan Borysenko writes “The lessons and practices (spiritual) of February comprise the Way of the Heart ... Practicing loving kindness with awareness and owning our projections is one way to restore our place in the Great Web of Life.” In the Jewish tradition, visiting the sick with an open heart and mind is a *mitzvah* or good deed, which brings balance to the one visited and the one doing the visiting. But there are many ways to be with another in the journey of life. Below are upcoming opportunities.

Cancer Support Group: On February 10, we’ll be starting a drop-in group for First Parish members and friends who have been diagnosed with cancer. Participants will have an opportunity for reflection, sharing experiences, and exploring common concerns with other members of the First Parish community. The gatherings will be held on the second Tuesday of each month from 6:00-7:30 p.m., and will be facilitated by **Donna Davis**. There is no registration or fee. Whether newly diagnosed, in treatment, or in remission — you are welcome to participate.

Emergency Preparedness: On two consecutive Tuesdays, February 24 and March 3, from 7 to 9 p.m., Concord’s Fire Chief Ken Willette and **Debbie Bier**, coordinator for Concord’s Citizens Emergency Response Team, will help you make your home ready to “weather” many types of emergencies. Concord was fortunate in December when it mostly missed the ravages of the ice storm. Next time we may not be so lucky. So come learn concrete, hands-on ways you can help yourself, your family, your neighborhood and our community. An optional third meeting will help you construct a home emergency kit (date and details to follow). Please call the church office to reserve a space for this important free workshop. It is limited to 20 participants.

Special Thanks: Our appreciation goes out to **Brenda Fingold**, who spoke to the pastoral care lay ministers and the parish visitors about the book *Prepare for Surgery, Heal Faster*, by Peggy Huddleston. Many First Parishioners have used Huddleston’s techniques to prepare themselves for surgery and found them very helpful. Brenda left a copy of the book and meditation CD for the pastoral care library. Please contact me if you would like to check them out.

Covenant Groups: The training of facilitators will begin soon so groups can begin in February or March. If you would like to join a covenant group, e-mail me at mksaphier@comcast.net.

—*Margie King Saphier*

Money Matters

Each year the Trustees make a contribution to the annual operating budget. The contribution is based on a formula adopted by the Trustees in FY02, although for at least the past two years the contribution has exceeded the amount calculated using the formula. The Trustees very kindly gave us one year’s notice that this coming fiscal year’s contribution (for FY10, July 2009 through June 2010) will be reduced by at least \$30,000. This was before the economic downturn.

How do we use the Trustees’ contribution to the operating budget? The Trustees are responsible for managing not only the endowment, but also the real estate First Parish owns, and their contribution goes directly to the stewardship of our physical plant — i.e., the Meeting House. The contribution from the Trustees for this year was \$180,000; the budget for all of our property, plant and equipment line items (including personnel) for this year is \$188,594. As you may recall, the annual budget for maintenance does not cover the total maintenance requirements of the Meeting House; hence the accumulated deferred maintenance items included in the Capital Campaign. We hope to build the maintenance endowment up to a level where it will offset at least maintenance requirements, but in the meantime, we will be challenged this year in our Annual Campaign to make up the difference between the Trustees’ contribution and our property, plant and equipment expenses. Your gift to our Building Maintenance Fund is welcome. Please contact me for details.

—*Melissa Perdue Gallo*

END OF THE YEAR GIFTS MADE IN HONOR OR IN MEMORY

Thank you to everyone who responded to our end-of-the-year letter asking you to “hold on to what is good” by giving generously to First Parish. We would like to recognize the following gifts made in honor or memory of loved ones.

Chad and **Barbara Gifford** made a gift in memory of their daughter, Nancy Gifford Watson.

Douglas and **Mary Ellen Wilson** made a gift in honor of their children, **Adrienne**, **Celeste** and **Arthur**.

Rich Higgins and **Jenny Rankin** made a gift in honor of their children, **Emily**, **Charlotte** and **Nick**, and in memory of their mothers, Jean P. Rankin and Doris Higgins.

Karen Kashian made a gift in honor of **Doug** and **Diana Baker**.

Mary Hastings made a gift in memory of **Hugo Logemann**.

Bob Harper made a gift in memory of his wife, **Nancy Allen Harper**.

Wright Tavern Center

The Winter session at Wright Tavern delves into the creative art of improvisation with exciting courses in writing, music, theater, storytelling and design. Our emphasis is twofold: the spiritual journey and the power of articulating our experiences in the context of community; and the dynamics of leadership and how we come to know ourselves as leaders.

We all have moments of spiritual awakening and renewal that are lost or forgotten in the challenges of the day to day. Only when something — a story,



for Spiritual Renewal

a song, a poem, a character, a phrase, a thought, a feeling — sparks our memory do we recall some of the deeper experiences that have profoundly influenced the course of our lives. Creative and spiritual practices are designed to gain access to these

extraordinary and cherished moments, and support their integration into our “ordinary” lives. With that intention in mind, a variety of programs will bring these experiences to light to be recognized, shared, witnessed and celebrated.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM WITHIN THE FIRST PARISH COMMUNITY:

In February, **Rev. Jenny Rankin** completes the Margaret Fuller Seminar in preparation for the Tracing the Transcendentalists in Italy trip in March; and the Emerson Forum holds its first meeting at the Concord Public Library. Spirit in Practice: Workshops of UU Adults begins at First Parish in Weston with **Mary Elizabeth Wheeler** and Edi Pasalis. Please call if you are interested in joining this class.

Public Narrative, a powerful process that explores the art of leadership and translating values into action, was recently introduced to First Parish by our Ministerial Intern **Angela Herrera**. In support of this valuable and courageous work, we kick off our March programs with **Sean Kavanagh** presenting Authentic Leadership Presence for Lay Leaders; the Spiritual Autobiography course with **Angela Herrera** begins the next evening. In keeping with the spiritual autobiography and creativity theme, **Merill Comeau** follows in April with Making Art Out of Life.

Our visiting presenters also contribute to our creative arts and leadership theme. In February, author Ray McGinnis from Vancouver, British Columbia, offers two workshops: Write Way to Wellness and Writing the Sacred. The power of story continues in March, as Rev. Carl Scovel once

WRIGHT TAVERN CENTER continued on page 7

MUSings

As I write here to update you on the organ project progress, the bright sunshine is reflecting off the beautiful white blanket of snow that spread over our region just yesterday, and we are at the beginning of a new year where much hope abounds for change and a fresh outlook and approach to solving the world’s myriad challenges.

It’s hard to believe that it’s been a year now since the contract was signed with Russell & Company organ builders of Vermont. Many of you are asking if the organ work was completed while all the construction work was being done downstairs. Quite the contrary . . . Although we were able to fend off inflation by purchasing many custom parts and supplies for the new organ during 2008, no actual construction work has begun yet. This is



because Russell & Company is a small New England organ builder with a handful of full-time employees. They take great pride in giving attention to all the details that go

into creating a beautiful musical instrument, one at a time. When the contract was signed, we were in line for construction to begin this year on the new chassis for the organ, with new independent wind chests for each individual division. These tonal divisions are small, complete organs in themselves, corresponding to each keyboard of the organ. They will combine and blend to make one beautiful choir of sounds to more adequately and beautifully support the congregational singing of our hymns and the performance of the larger works of the organ repertoire.

Everything is basically on schedule as I write this; we will most likely have our old organ through the spring. During the summer months, all the pipes that will be saved will be removed to the builder’s shop for rescaling, rebuilding and voicing. The space will then be prepared during the early summer, with the individual divisions and ranks of pipes being gradually installed during the late summer and continuing on through the autumn. We hope to have quite a bit of the organ playable by Christmas, but fine tonal finishing of the pipes will proceed until everything is musically adjusted to fit the acoustical space of the Sanctuary.

So, while much remains that seems uncertain in the world at large in this new year, you can rest assured that much good is in store for organ lovers at First Parish in Concord and the community. Due to your steadfast support of this musical vision, we can look forward to seeing and hearing this new musical incarnation unfold and come to fruition during the last quarter of the year.

In peace and gratitude,

—Eric Huenneke

Social Action Community News and Events

I recently attended a powerful meeting organized by **Tony Rodriguez** and **Janet Donovan**, two chaperones for the April Youth Service Trip to El Salvador. We watched excerpts from a documentary on the El Salvadoran civil war, secretly filmed and smuggled out of the country in the 1980's. I found so striking the dedication of the El Salvadoran people, the young age of the fighters, and the desperate longing for change. Our youth will meet these people in just over two months. They will change the lives of Salvadorans and themselves as they assist Sister Peggy with her work, helping El Salvador move forward beyond the trauma through art and peaceful living. Thanks to you and our First Parish community this amazing opportunity is available.



—*Faith Bade*

THANKS FROM ALL OF THE GUESTS AT YOUR TABLE

This year we collected \$2,355 during the holiday season with UUSC's Guest at Your Table program. Thank you to all who participated. For more information on becoming a member of our denomination's service committee, visit www.uusc.org.

TAKE ACTION ON GAZA AND MINIMUM WAGE WITH UUSC

The UU Service Committee is asking you to take action on two issues. You do not need to be a member in order to participate. The first issue is the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Go to www.uusc.org/gazastatement to send an e-mail to United States government officials urging that they work to establish a cease fire in Gaza. The second issue, in partnership with Let Justice Roll, is moving forward to increase the minimum wage to \$10 by 2010. Visit www.letjusticeroll.org/faithletter.html for information and to sign a letter in support of a higher minimum wage.

HELP NEEDED THIS SPRING FOR UUSC PROJECT

The UUSC Committee is planning a project this spring that will raise awareness of the humanitarian crisis in the Sudan. We hope to make this an all-church project, so volunteers of all ages are welcome. If you would like to help, please contact **Sue Beck** at sbeck345@comcast.net or 978-369-8445.

THANK YOU FROM A LOWELL HOMELESS SHELTER

Thank you, thank you. In December **Bill Seaver** took 21 large bags of clothes and two suits to a homeless shelter in Lowell. The manager of the shelter was most appreciative of your donations. Homelessness knows no season, so please keep on bringing bags of gently used clothes to Bill's porch at 294 The Valley Road, Concord. Contact **Bill Seaver** at 978-369-7319 with questions.

INTERGENERATIONAL SOCIAL ACTION SERVICE ON MARCH 15

Individuals, families, and all ages are invited to share their stories with us and participate in this very special service. You can read a full description of the concept in **Pam Howell's** Religious Education News on page 8. Please contact **Faith Bade** or **Pam Howell** with any questions.

SAC CANDLELIGHTING

Is social action part of your spiritual practice? Would you like to share with the congregation what motivates you to participate in or support social action? Families and individuals are invited to light the Social Action candle on any given Sunday, describing their spiritual inspiration in one or two sentences. Please contact **Faith Bade**, Social Action Program Director, at FBade@firstparish.org, to discuss your possible participation.

EL SALVADOR SERVICE TRIP IS COMING IN APRIL

The April 2009 service trip will be here before you know it! Youth will meet again on February 9 at 7 p.m., with a final packing meeting for parents and youth on March 29 at 7 p.m. The final payment of \$700 is due on February 1, payable to First Parish in Concord and sent to **Faith Bade**. Please make sure your vaccinations and passport are current. Contact **Faith Bade** at FBade@firstparish.org with any questions.

NEW ORLEANS SERVICE TRIP MEETINGS

The NOLA trip is coming up fast! A meeting of chaperones was held on January 25. Youth will meet on March 1 at 5:30 p.m. and April 5 at 5:30 p.m. A half-day construction workshop will be scheduled in early April. Final payment of \$550 is due on February 13, payable to First Parish in Concord and sent to **Faith Bade** (FBade@firstparish.org) or **Mary-Wren vanderWilden** (vanderwilden@verizon.net).

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/; visit the Social Action bulletin board; or e-mail our Social Action Program Director **Faith Bade** at FBade@firstparish.org.

again graces First Parish during Lent, with a course on Parables: Christian Kÿans. The Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream Symposium follows Carol Hohle’s January Living Green series theme with a profound inquiry into our individual and collective relationship to environmental sustainability.

Also in March, guitarist Louis Arnold and PlayBack troupe True Story Theater bring us Stories from the Heart, a benefit for the Wright Tavern Center. Volunteers to support this event are welcome!

Visit the Wright Tavern Center website at www.wrighttavern.org and contact us at FPTavern@aol.com. Please check out our online registration and let us hear your feedback. For short course descriptions, please see the Wright Tavern insert in this *Meeting House News*.

In spirit,

—*Mary Elizabeth Wheeler*

Director

Going Deeper Spiritually

Monthly Thematic and Theological Queries for the People of the First Parish in Concord

SERIES VI, 2008-2009

Note: *Following the lead of All Souls Unitarian in Tulsa, Unity Church in St. Paul and the First Parish in Weston, we continue this month a series of reflections, each month of the year focusing on a particular theological concept. Worship during the month will include at least one Sunday where this concept is explored. We hope the suggested topic for the month will find its way into our small group gatherings and into our conversations, even at home.*

February 2009: **LOVE** — We are accustomed to thinking about images of romantic love in February, but this time of year is also an opportunity to think more broadly about love. It is a paradoxical word, in that it can be thrown around casually as in, “I love chocolate!” just as easily as it can become the topic of sincere spiritual reflection. “Love your neighbor,” Jesus said, and some have said that God is love. Meanwhile, we receive mixed messages about what it means to love. Consider the following quotations:

Love is an act of the will, not a warm feeling or a clever expression of experience. True love requires you to deny yourself and seek to meet your beloved’s needs.

—Unidentified Author

For one human being to love another; that is perhaps the most difficult of all our tasks, the ultimate, the last test and proof, the work for which all other work is but preparation.

—Rainer Maria Rilke

But I always think that the best way to know God is to love many things.

—Vincent van Gogh

Questions:

- What is your reaction to the first quote? How has self-denying love been depicted in your experience? What problems does it pose? Could it be a helpful concept in an age and culture that emphasizes individuality?
- How does our experience of love change over the course of our lives? Do you think it will continue to change for you?
- How does the concept of love fit into your spirituality? Is it a spiritual practice? What does it look like to practice loving one another?

Reflection and RE News

“Dad, why do we go to church?” Is this a familiar question in your family? It was in ours.

I have been thinking about that question a lot lately and I probably would have answered it differently a month ago.

My family has been coming to First Parish for ten years. We were drawn here. We were drawn to its vision of peace and diversity, to its commitment to a covenant based on principles and social action, to its request that we live out our faith in the wider world. These values spoke to us then and we hold them dearly now.

We came to First Parish because we wanted a strong religious education for our children. We were looking for a program that instilled a sense of personal integrity while growing a connection to a wider loving community. Life is more than work, school and sports. The driving force behind the things that we do comes from our inner resource, our unique and ever-growing sense of self and soul. We wanted to belong to a place that touched those places in ourselves and our family.

We came to First Parish because we loved the people who also came here. We felt we could offer something to our congregation and that this congregation needed us in ways that were different from our “weekday” lives. And so, it was a surprise to us when I realized that we would, suddenly, need First Parish just as much as it needed us.

When my husband **Mark Howell** was injured last month, we felt held by our First Parish community. Cards, well wishes, meals and rides for teens — all were deeds of love and care for our family. It was a stressful time, but to be cared for by those we love filled our hearts at a time when life fell upon us in an unwelcomed way. Despite the gravity of the injury, I am happy to report Mark is making a full recovery.

“Why do we come to church?” Well, I come because of the awe-inspiring interdependent web of humanity it creates. I come because I want to be present for you, just as you all were present for our family in our time of darkness and uncertainty.

With thanks,

— *Pam Howell*

FEBRUARY RE CALENDAR

- Sun., Feb. 1 Regular RE for Babies–6th Grade, 9 and 11 a.m.
COA Service for 7th and 8th Grade, 11 a.m.
8th Grade OWL, Parlor and Wright Tavern, 1:00–5:30 p.m.
- Sun., Feb. 8 Regular RE for Babies–6th Grade, 9 and 11 a.m.
7th Grade Neighboring Faiths, Wright Tavern, 11:00–1:30 p.m.
8th Grade OWL, Parlor and Wright Tavern 4:00–7:00 p.m.
- Sun., Feb. 15 Regular RE for Babies–6th Grade, 9 and 11 a.m.
- Sun., Feb. 22 Regular RE for Babies–4 years, 9 and 11 a.m.
Kids in Action for K-6th Grade, 9 and 11 a.m.

TELLING OUR SOCIAL ACTION STORIES — A WORSHIP SERVICE ON MARCH 15

So often at First Parish we hear stories of some of the interesting things our parishioners are doing outside the walls of our church. Some are big, but many are small acts of kindness that make a difference in the everyday lives of people around us. We have been celebrating several of these stories in our religious education program this year. We have also included some of these stories in our Sunday morning message to children. Perhaps some of you will remember the Wheelchair Mission with **Nico Calabria** and **Emmanuel**, or the **Aley** family and their work for The Heifer Project, or our Youth Service trip to New Orleans.

Faith Bade, our Social Action Program Director, and I were talking last year and thought it would be interesting to offer the congregation an opportunity to share some of their stories of their own social action work and its impact on others and themselves. Stories can be from children or adults. They can be in the form of music, poetry, pictures or story. We are open to your ideas. This is an intergenerational service, so stories need to be suitable for all ages.

If you have something to share, please contact me (fpdre_pamhowell@mac.com) or **Faith** (fbade@firstparish.org). Our greatest strength is the inspiration we give each other. When I tell a story, the first question a child asks is, “Is this story true?” Real stories from real people are the best of all.

UPCOMING ORIENTATION DATES

These orientations are for the teachers of each of the programs.

Orientation Schedule for Babies to 7th Grade Teachers in the Wright Tavern

- Babies–1st Grade, Terms #3, #4 and #5:
Thursday, February 5, 7:30–8:30 p.m.
- 2nd–6th Grades, Spring Term #4:
Thursday, March 12, 7:30–9:30 p.m.

During each orientation, we will cover safety and first-aid information, review classroom rituals, obtain “substitution” lists and allow time for you to meet with your term’s teachers.

RE NEWS continued on page 10

Partner Church Committee

We are still seeking volunteers to represent us at the June 11 graduation for the high school in Székelykeresztúr. The Partner Church Committee will provide a small stipend for this trip. If you currently sponsor a student (especially if he or she will be graduating) and would like to learn more, please contact either of our PCC cochairs.

Work has mostly halted for the season on the Keresztúr Unitarian Community House. It will recommence with the spring thaw when the custom windows will be installed and interior work completed. A sponsorship program with naming rights is being set up for the final push and a dedication is anticipated for the fall. Stay tuned for further information.

In January **Rodger Mattlage** and **Pat Brinkman** hosted Balázs Scholar Rev. Endre Nagy and his wife Éva. In addition to a number of meetings with the UUPCC and at the UUA and engagements in the area, events featuring Rev. Nagy were held at First Parish in Bedford and First Parish in Weston. For more about the Balázs Scholarship program at the Starr King School for the Ministry, be sure to surf over to <http://tinyurl.com/97ahtw>.

Next summer's Youth Service Pilgrimage (YSP) group is meeting regularly for its journey to Székelykeresztúr (July 9–21). For ongoing updates, please refer to the Senior Youth News.

Minden jót mindenkinek! (Best wishes to everyone!)
—**Lillian Anderson** and **Winslow Pettingell**
Cochairs, Partner Church Committee

Senior Youth News

February marks our half-way point in the church year. Coming of Age has finished, youth have settled into the school schedule after the craziness of fall, and winter has slowed things down. The Youth Leadership Team and I want to encourage all youth to come check out a youth group on Sunday night even if they have never been before or haven't been since September. We have youth drop in at all points in the year, which is not unusual. Bring a friend — UU or not — if that's easier. You can see what we are doing by going to the First Parish website and clicking on the Youth Calendar under RE.

Our calendar for February offers lots of fun this cold month.

Feb. 1 Winter Retreat (No YRUU)

Feb. 8 Texas Hold 'Em Night — Welcome to all Coming-of-Age 9th graders!

Feb. 15 No YRUU — public school vacation

Feb. 22 Make Your Own Pizza and Cookies Night

We are planning for two service trips this year. The Transylvania Youth Pilgrimage group is busy planning their Bingo Night fundraiser for Friday, March 13 (mark your calendars now). They have also been learning about the history, geography and culture of Transylvania. The New Orleans group will be learning construction skills to prepare for their work rebuilding homes in the 9th Ward.

February can feel like a long month for youth as many wait for college acceptance letters and realize that there is still half a school year to go before summer — and it's cold and dark. What a great time to drop by Youth Group to connect with different people, laugh and talk about interesting things. It's truly a welcoming place.

—*Mary-Wren vanderWilden*

WINTER TERM FOR 2ND-6TH GRADERS

This term we will be exploring several winter themes: the gift of story, dreaming, habitat and the awakening of nature to spring. We are very excited about the programming we have developed for this term. We have been working closely with **Kate Crosby**. Kate is a member of First Parish who also works with the Nature Connection in Concord. Together we have developed a series of lessons that focus on shelter and care. What do animals need to feel safe in the winter? What do we need to feel safe? What do animals dream about? What do we dream about?

We will be building a thicket as a habitat for wildlife, we will be creating crafts from nature, and we will be telling our winter stories and winter dreams. I do hope your child can be part of this unique and special experience.

Week 2, Feb. 1: Dreaming in Winter

Week 3, Feb. 8: Animal Dreams

Week 4, Feb. 15: Shelter in Winter

Feb. 22: Kids in Action, Green Sanctuary Project

Week 5, Mar. 1: Spring Is Hiding

PARISH NOTES

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**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER—CONCORD
COMMEMORATION**

World Day of Prayer, an event of informed prayer and social justice action, has taken place in nearly every nation for decades. Concord area faith communities will hold our World Day of Prayer 2009 Service this year at the Trinitarian Congregational Church, 54 Walden Street, Concord, on Friday, March 6, at 11 a.m., followed by a festive luncheon at noon. All are invited.

Reservations are not required. This year's service was written by the WDP Women of Papua New Guinea, whose fascinating arts and cultures will be celebrated and whose social needs will be highlighted.

ROCK 'N' ROLL BINGO IS COMING!

Fun for the whole family!

Friday, March 13, from 6:00–8:30 p.m.

Save the date!

Women's News**WOMEN'S AM/PM BOOK GROUP**

The February book for the Women's AM/PM Book Group is *The History of Love: A Novel*, by Nicole Krauss. The evening session will be held Monday, February 23, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.; and the morning session, Tuesday, February 24, from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. Please note that due to construction at First Parish, the discussions will be held at the following homes:

Monday, February 23, 7:30 p.m., at the home of **Steph Chiha**, 80 Stone Root Lane, Concord

Tuesday, February 24, 9:30 a.m., at the home of **Darien Smith**, 124 Hill Street, Concord

All women of First Parish are warmly invited to read the current book and join one or both of these discussions. If you would like to be added to the Women's Book Group e-mail list, please contact **Darien Smith** at darien@smithquest.com or 978-369-1471.

Dates and books for 2009 are as follows:

Mar. 30, 31 *The Witch of Portobello*, by Paulo Coelho

Apr. 27, 28 *Grandmother's Secrets: The Ancient Rituals and Healing Powers of Belly Dancing*,
by Rosina-Fawzia B. Al-Raw

May 18, 19 *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*, by Barbara Kingsolver

June (TBD) Potluck and suggestions for next year

Classified**BABY-SITTER AVAILABLE**

Experienced high school junior available to baby-sit. Has taken care of babies as young as three months and children up to ages eleven and twelve. References available. Call Hannah at 978-369-9329 if interested.

February 2009 Calendar

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

Every Week...

Men's Group	Saturday	7:30 a.m.
Gospel Choir	Sunday	10:00 a.m.
YRUU	Sunday	7:00 p.m. (not 2/1 or 2/15)
<i>Kundalini Yoga</i>	Tuesday	9:30 a.m. (First Parish in Weston)
<i>T'ai Chi</i>	Tuesday	7:00 p.m.
Bell Choir	Wednesday	1:00 p.m.
Junior Choir	Wednesday	4:25 p.m. (not 2/18)
Chalice Choir	Wednesday	5:15 p.m. (not 2/18)
Adult Choir	Wednesday	7:45 p.m.

ALL EVENTS TAKE PLACE AT FIRST PARISH UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

<p>Sun Feb 1 Women's Retreat II, (<i>off-site</i>) YRUU Retreat (<i>off-site</i>) 1:00 Our Whole Lives class and dinner</p> <p>Mon Feb 2 7:00 The Emerson Forum (<i>Concord Public Library</i>)</p> <p>Wed Feb 4 7:00 <i>Spirit in Practice: Workshops for UU Adults</i> (<i>First Parish in Weston</i>) 7:00 Youth Advisory Committee</p> <p>Thu Feb 5 12:00 <i>Margaret Fuller Seminar</i> 7:30 <i>Living Green: Spiritual Practices</i> 7:30 RE Orientation</p> <p>Sat Feb 7 6:30 Funderburg Dinner</p> <p>Sun Feb 8 12:00 Neighboring Faiths 4:00 Our Whole Lives 5:30 Transylvania Trip Meeting</p> <p>Tue Feb 10 3:00 <i>Tea and Poetry</i> 6:00 Cancer Support Group</p> <p>Wed Feb 11 12:15 <i>Listening for God</i> 4:00 Our Whole Lives</p>	<p>Fri Feb 13 12:00 Newsletter Deadline 12:30 <i>T'ai Ji</i> 7:30 <i>Write Way to Wellness</i></p> <p>Sat Feb 14 9:00 <i>Writing the Sacred</i> 9:00 Photo Club</p> <p>Mon Feb 16 Holiday—Office Closed</p> <p>Sun Feb 22 7:00 Audition for Casino Night</p> <p>Mon Feb 23 7:30 <i>Women's AM/PM Book Group</i> (<i>off-site</i>)</p> <p>Tue Feb 24 9:30 <i>Women's AM/PM Book Group</i> (<i>off-site</i>) noon WPA Luncheon</p> <p>Wed Feb 25 9:15 Newsletter Mailing 7:00 <i>Spirit in Practice: Workshops for UU Adults</i> (<i>First Parish in Weston</i>)</p> <p>Thu Feb 26 7:00 Dhamma Brothers Film</p> <p>Fri Feb 27 7:30 <i>Rise Up Singing</i> 7:30 Rehearsal for Casino Night</p>
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First Parish in Concord

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

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Concord, MA 01742

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FEBRUARY 2009 NEWSLETTER

The March Newsletter deadline is **Friday, February 13**, at noon.

The Newsletter mailing is Wednesday, February 25.

News items should be limited to 100 words.

Don't Miss...

TRIVIAL PURSUIT NIGHT!

Saturday, January 31

7 p.m. in the Parish Hall

FUNDERBURG SCHOLARS DINNER

Saturday, February 7

6:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall

WPA LUNCHEON

Tuesday, February 24

At Noon in the Parish Hall

Ginger Lang will speak about her trip to the Galápagos Islands.

First Parish in Concord • UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Staff

Gary E. Smith, Senior Minister

Jenny M. Rankin, Minister

Melissa Perdue Gallo, Business Manager

Margie King Saphier, Associate Minister for Pastoral Care

Rebecca M. Blodgett, Affiliate Minister for Pastoral Care

Angela Herrera, Ministerial Intern

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

Anderson Manuel, Youth Gospel Choir Director

Gail Carey, Children's Choir Director

David Huston, Music Director Emeritus

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

Faith Bade, Social Action Program Director

Kate Keleher, Newsletter Editor

Kaye Harvie, Jane Johnson, Newsletter Staff

SPECIAL OFFICE HOURS

During February school vacation week, Tuesday through Friday — February 17, 18, 19 and 20 — the office at First Parish will be open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The office will be closed on Monday, February 16, for the Presidents' Day holiday.

Church Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 9:00 to 3:00

Phone: 978-369-9602

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