

The *Meeting House* News



REVERIES

First Parish's first year of interim ministry is almost completed, with a second year agreed upon. Much has been learned and shared by us all. This interim ministry was initiated in response to the retirement of **Gary Smith**, and the choice of the congregation not to call **Jenny Rankin** as its senior minister. This decision revealed complicated considerations for the staff and members of First Parish to resolve before the search for a senior minister could be initiated.

When I arrived for my initial visit in May of 2011, the staff had just heard there would be a 20 percent cut in hours and compensation due to deficits in the annual campaign. I could feel the sadness, fear and uncertainty felt by members and staff. The direct communication of very real concerns by both members and staff inspired me to enthusiastically accept the position as your interim minister. Clearly, assuring sustainable financial health and well-being would be a major component of our interim process. By the time I began work on August 12, 2011, that financial crisis had been resolved without the cuts thought necessary. I was able to focus my attention on learning who you are, understanding leadership, staff, and First Parish's organizational structure. I quickly discovered structural challenges in governance being held together by competence, commitment, good will, and hope.



My first day in your pulpit I confirmed that I was not Gary Smith. We have been working together ever since that Sunday in September to understand the implications of that reality for First Parish. The program staff and I have worked together to sustain excellence in worship and efficiency of operations that members and friends expect and appreciate. At the same time, we have all been working to move through our interim tasks. (The Five Interim Tasks can be found on page 11 of this newsletter.) The Standing Committee and I have been working on best practices for governance, leadership development, and professional staff structure that will assure their strategic intent meets the needs of First Parish members and staff. We have engaged in an annual campaign, and made several important policy decisions, detailed, in reports to be delivered at the Annual Meeting on June 10.

The Parish Interim Team has worked with me from the start of this interim, meeting almost weekly through much of the year to integrate the 375 anniversary celebration into our interim task of coming to terms with history, to initiate listening sessions, to structure and plan the February Blitz and the Spring Forward weekend. These are all components of an ambitious plan to hear and include all of the diverse and necessary voices of First Parish in fulfilling the needs of First

REVeries continued on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

- Page 1** REVeries
In This Issue
- Page 2** REVeries, continued
Standing Committee Update
Worship Services Schedule
- Page 3** Parish Notes
- Page 4** Parish Notes, continued
Annual Meeting Notice
- Page 5** Money Matters
Partner Congregation Committee
Smith Honorary Doctorate
- Page 6** Pastoral Care News
- Page 7** MUSings
Gail Carey's Candlelighting
- Page 8** REflections and RE News
June 2012 RE Calendar
- Page 9** RE News, continued
Senior Youth News
- Page 10** SAC News and Events
- Page 11** PIT Update: Five Interim Tasks
Pipework/Music Notes, continued
- Page 12** SAC News and Events, continued
Pastoral Care News, continued
- Page 13** Summer 2012 Calendar
- Page 14** First Parish Contact Info and Staff

There is one insert at the end of this newsletter:

- ◆ 2012 Summer Worship Schedule

First Parish in Concord
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
Gathered in 1636

Parish's interim period. Together, we have learned much about what works well at First Parish and uncovered what needs attention.

Our second interim year will address those areas that need attention. We will review and strengthen the structure of governance, integrate the energy and creativity of the Spring Forward initiatives, and support the Search Committee in fulfilling its charge to find the best senior minister for First Parish. We will be integrating ideas for worship, communication, community gatherings, pastoral care, social action and spiritual development — building trust and transparency in all aspects of First Parish. We will manage the staff vacancies left by **Jane Foley** and **Faith Bade** within a sustainable financial structure. It has been my privilege to walk with you this first year and I look forward to continuing our adventure.

Much metta,

Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha,
Interim Senior Minister

STANDING COMMITTEE UPDATE

Date for the last Spring 2012 Standing Committee/Executive Team meeting, which will be held at 33 Bradford Street in West Concord is: Monday, June 11, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

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
Friday, August 24
Friday, September 21
Newsletter items should be **brief, ideally limited to 100 words**, and may be delivered, faxed or e-mailed to the church office.

- **Sunday, June 3**
- **Roots Hold Me Close** — Rev. Jenny M. Rankin
- As we bring this first interim year to a close, we will reflect on our heritage and roots that hold us, and connect us to Concord, Unitarian Universalism, and each other.
- **10:00 – First Parish Choir**
- *Welcome, Welcome* – Hardin
- *Trust the Seeds* – Alexander
- **Sunday, June 10**
- **Dreams in the Heart; Skin in the Game** — Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha
- Roots hold us close and wings set us free. Today we will reflect on our dreams for our lives, for the ones we love and for First Parish. How do we keep dreams fresh and alive in our hearts and bring them to fruition? ... By putting our skin in the game. The Annual Meeting will follow today's service.
- **10:00 – First Parish Choir, Children's Choirs and Gospel Choir**
- *Hand in Hand* – Dillworth
- *Come, Let Us Love* – Weltner
- *Blue Bird* – Stanford

SUMMER WORSHIP: ONE SERVICE ONLY AT 10:00 A.M.

- **Sunday, June 17**
- **Pam Howell**, worship leader
- Our summer worship schedule begins with **Pam Howell** leading us in worship. The sermon this Sunday will be on "I don't know," really, "I don't know." So come and find out what is just not known. Special music with **Rob Hamilton** and **Jane Barnes**, plus, Pam's favorite Bach piece of all times from *The Goldberg Variations*.
- **10:00 – Rob Hamilton, guitar, and Jane Barnes, vocals.**

- **Sunday, June 24**
- **Jim Robinson**, worship leader
- Today First Parish welcomes our former assistant minister Jim Robinson back to the pulpit. Jim served in Brewster, Mass., for 18 years, and then went to London, England, to serve our UU congregation there for six years. He is now settled in the UU congregation of Sharon, Mass.
- **10:00 – Silver Bass Trio**

Summer Sunday Services at First Parish in Concord
10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary, 20 Lexington Road, Concord
Child Care Available

Finding Your Interim Minister

Elaine, AKA **Rev. Dr. Elaine Beth Peresluha**, will be in her office at the church; her *summer office hours*:

Tuesday through Friday 9:00 to 1:00 p.m.

In addition to these office hours, Elaine makes appointments to meet with people at other times. Elaine will be on vacation July 15 through July 29.

You may contact Elaine at uurevdoc@gmail.com, or at 20 Lexington Road, Concord, MA, 978-369-9602, extension 411.

First Parish Fall Homecoming!

Potluck Picnic at 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 8, 2012

All ages. All First Parish. Bring your whole family. Visit with your friends, catch up on the summer news and meet other First Parish folk. Enjoy a sumptuous potluck picnic. This is an evening for everyone.

The party will be on the front lawns of First Parish, weather permitting; in the Parish Hall in case of rain. No admission charge. Mark your calendar now. This is an event not to be missed.

Watch for more details over the summer.

Past Sunday Services Available on CD

Would you like to listen to a Sunday service you missed, or a sermon or reading you'd like to hear again? CD's recorded from the full Sunday services may be borrowed at any time. Currently available CD's include last year's and this year's services. See the shelf to the right of the fireplace in the Parlor, where you can choose a CD and check it out by writing your name in the notebook there. Sermon recordings are also available via podcast at www.firstparish.org under Worship. Please allow up to a month after a service for recordings to be available.

Anyone Can Dedicate Sunday Flowers

If you would like to provide Sunday flowers for a memorial or celebration, please contact **Barbara Wheeler** at 978-369-9518.

The Labyrinth Project Is Back on Track

The Labyrinth Committee is very pleased to announce that after conversations with the Executive Team and Standing Committee during this year, we now have their clear support to continue plans for reinstallation of a labyrinth in the side courtyard. Also in the last year, we have been reassessing the project, exploring more possibilities for design and materials, and taking into account the various comments made at the open informational meet-



ing of February 2011. We now look forward to completing detailed plans in the coming months and bringing them to you in the fall. At that time, we will also continue the fundraising for the project that was begun earlier. Stay tuned! For questions or comments, please contact **Darien Smith** or one of the other committee members.

Ministerial Search Survey

Thank you to everyone who completed our survey. The results will be made public as soon as we finish tabulating them. As we approach the summer months, members of the Ministerial Search Committee continue working on gathering information for our packet, which has two parts. Preliminary information (the Congregational Record) is communicated online, via a UUA site, as a first step toward enticing candidates to apply to be our Senior Minister. Once someone has expressed interest, we then send them a Congregational Packet with more detailed information about who we are and what we're looking for. We will all be working over the summer on this task. If you have comments, ideas or opinions you want to share, please contact any member of the committee. Our e-mail addresses are available on our FP website page and are posted on the bulletin board outside the church office. And you can always e-mail our committee chair, **Toby Smith Ropeik**, at tsr@tobyasmith.com.

Calling All First Parish Artists

If you have a painting, pastel, drawing or printwork you would like to display in an "All Parish Art Display," please contact **Doug Baker** at the Meeting House. The exhibit will be mounted during the week of November 12, and will remain up until the week of December 10. The exhibit will be in both Gallery A (outside the Sanctuary in the stairwell) and Gallery B (on the Parish Hall stage). All displays at the Meeting House are noncompetitive and noncommercial. Depending upon the size of your artwork and the number of people who submit, we may be able to mount more than one of everyone's work. **Doug Baker**, Sacristan & Curator, can be reached at 978-369-9602, ext. 419, or at dbaker@firstparish.org.

After-Service Reflection Time

Imagine a simple gathering after each service where you could reflect on the service in a place of quiet listening and respectful dialog with a few fellow parishioners.

One of the Spiritual Experience working groups that came out of the Spring Forward retreat is planning to start up such an event in the fall of 2012 after each 11:00 o'clock service. This simple transition space would last until 12:30 or for 20 minutes, whichever comes first. If you would be interested in participating in, planning or leading such an event from time to time, or have ideas or questions, please contact **Jim Snyder-Grant** at jimsg@newview.org or 978-266-9409, or look for us at a table at coffee hour in June.

Coffee Hour Garden Party

Back by popular demand! One of the most delightful places on our First Parish campus is the Deborah Webster Greeley Memorial Herb Garden. The Women’s Parish Association cordially invites everyone to gather in the Herb Garden for a Coffee Hour Garden Party on Sunday, June 17, at 11:00 a.m., immediately following the service. Special herb-flavored snacks and beverages will be served. We are grateful to **Doug Baker** and the Herb Garden Committee for creating and maintaining this beautiful sanctuary for us. In case of rain, the gathering will be held in the Parish Hall, with special photographs of the garden. We will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Herb Garden!

Many Thanks to Craig *et al.*

The Women’s Parish Association extends hearty thanks to **Craig Nowak** for a very informative and entertaining presentation regarding evaluating antiques. Also, many thanks to all those who brought in such interesting items! Everyone learned a lot and had great fun seeing usual and unusual items. Some were worth more than expected and some were family possessions that are priceless treasures of the heart. All of them provided great learning experiences! We have all been blessed to have had Craig among us these past two years, and it was great to have Craig share his other talent as an antique appraiser. Remember: buying secondhand furniture and household items, whether they are valuable antiques or not, is a green thing to do and a good way to add interest and beauty to your home.

Hooked on Growth — Concord Area Humanists Program

On Wednesday, June 6, Mike Hanauer will be showing a 50-minute version of the documentary film *GrowthBusters: Hooked on Growth* (<http://www.growthbusters.org/>), followed by a discussion of the issues raised — particularly economic, consumption, population and urban growth.

There will be time for socializing and announcements at 7:00 p.m., and the program will start at 7:15 p.m., with discussion to follow. (At 8:45 p.m. we’ll start an open steering committee meeting, which everyone is welcome to attend.) RSVP to help with planning at e-mail pne@aol.com with “CAH MAY 2” in the subject line.

WPA Spring Flea Market/Recycle Sale

The Women’s Parish Association will hold its Flea Market/Recycle Sale on Saturday, June 9, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. If you would like to rent a table, contact **Pat Kane** at cstmcloth@yahoo.com, or 978-369-8418, as soon as possible. Tables are going fast! Table

rentals are \$35.00 a piece. We will not be doing a general collection of items, so if you want to sell items, one or two families could get together to rent a table. Snacks and lunch items will be sold throughout the day. Tell all your friends and neighbors about this popular event!

Calling All Knitters for Catnip Ball Covers

Knitters are needed for the very popular WPA Artisans Fair catnip balls to be sold at the November 3 fair. Workshops will be held in October, dates TBD. Contact **Becky Blodgett** for directions or questions at 978-369-2564 or becky.blodgett@verizon.net.

First Parish Annual Meeting

What: Participate in shaping our future at a pivotal moment in our 376-year history.

When: 11:30 a.m., June 10 (After the 10:00 o’clock worship service and a special coffee hour with a light lunch to prepare you for the meeting).

Where: Sanctuary.

Child Care: Will be available, but please register your child/children by calling the First Parish office by Thursday, June 7, to let us know the ages of your children.

Summary Agenda

- I. To vote/choose the new mission statement of First Parish as either:
 - a. “First Parish in Concord is a welcoming congregation that seeks ways to deepen spiritually, build community, and make a positive difference in the world.”
 - b. “First Parish in Concord is a Unitarian Universalist congregation that supports growth in the spirit, joy in the heart, and justice in the world.”
- II. To incorporate the new mission statement into our bylaws.
- III. To choose all Parish officers for the ensuing year (election of officers and chairs of committees)
- IV. To hear and act upon the reports of the Executive Team, the Standing Committee, the Parish Interim Team, the Trustees of Parish Donations, and others.
- V. To approve the budget for fiscal year 2012-2013.
- VI. To hear and act upon any other business that may come before the meeting.

Come exercise our historical joint covenant as a congregational polity!

Plan to attend and shape our future!

MONEY MATTERS

The church auction held on May 5 was, by all accounts, an incredible success! Congratulations to **Shawna Reid** and **Kelly Roberts**, who stepped up to chair this event and managed a crackerjack team! Not only was it a wonderful social event; it was a financial success too. We are still tallying the proceeds and expenses, so the final income figure is not available at this time; but we are confident that we will reach the goal of \$40,000, and likely surpass it. We will apply up to \$20,000 to this year's income, and the remainder will be recognized as income next year. This is a wonderful accomplishment for our church community!

I am writing this column on May 17. During the past two weeks I've participated in three financial information sessions for the congregation, hosted by our Treasurer, **Sue St. Croix**, and including presentations by the Human Resources Committee (on staff compensation) and the Trustees (on their annual contribution).

Next year's draft budget is based on our reaching our pledge goal of \$906,000. As of today, we are \$150,773 short of that goal after receiving 400 pledges. There are a lot of decisions to be made over the next few weeks leading up to the Annual Meeting.

This year, at the Annual Meeting, the congregation will decide how we will handle any shortfall in pledging. During the remainder of May and into June, the Standing Committee will determine the final possible approaches; but as of now, these are under consideration:

- Use Retained Earnings to balance the budget.
- Commit to some kind of fundraising effort in the fall to balance the budget. This may or may not include using some portion of Retained Earnings.
- Create a balanced budget based on the pledges received as of the Annual Meeting.

Please keep your eye out for FP Announces over the next ten days as we communicate both the status of pledging as well as more detail about what options will be presented at the Annual Meeting. There will be ample time at the Annual Meeting for participants to understand the implications of each of the choices. ♦

— *Melissa Perdue Gallo*

Business Manager

PARTNER CONGREGATION COMMITTEE

We all look forward to being with old friends again, while making new ones, sharing experiences together and exploring new possibilities for our evolving partnership.

— Rev. Ferenc Mikó

It's only a few months away now, when Ferenc Mikó and the 13 delegates from Keresztúr arrive at our Meeting House steps (September 20 to October 1). We still seek volunteers who can help us to properly welcome our guests, whether assisting with homestay and activity logistics, or perhaps serving as a host to a couple of our Keresztúr pilgrims for a few days, or by helping us to raise the funds needed to cover the airfare. Please contact **Ken Estabrook** at ken.estabrook@gmail.com. For biographical information and pictures of the six youths and eight adults, along with pictures of past Keresztúri pilgrimages, see: <http://bit.ly/xc0nvc>.

Dana and **Kathy Booth** are currently in Székelykeresztúr (May 17 to June 1) to celebrate Júlia Csáka's graduation and to meet with staff and Concord-sponsored students at the Berde Mózes Unitarian High School. They have agreed to bring back "something special" from Transylvania to raffle off to help us raise the desperately needed funds needed to offset our fall visitors' expenses

If you are sponsoring a Keresztúr student, do note that **Dana Booth** is our PCC Student Sponsorship Communications Facilitator, and is available to offer advice on how to "make the most" of your sponsorship. He can be reached at dana.a.booth@gmail.com, or by phone at 978-369-5702.

As always, we invite you to join us at our next Partner Congregation Committee supper meeting, which will be held at the home of **Lillian Anderson** on Thursday, June 21, at 6:30 p.m. For further information, drop us a line. ♦

Minden jót! "Best wishes!"

— **Winslow Pettingell**, PCC chair,
LondonSW11@comcast.net

Rev. Gary Smith Awarded Honorary Doctorate

The Starr King School for the Ministry, in Berkeley, California, awarded the Doctorate of Sacred Theology (*Sacrae Theologiae Doctor*) to Rev. Gary E. Smith at the school's commencement ceremonies, May 21, 2012.

Citing Gary's longtime tenure in Concord, his leadership of the UU Ministerial Fellowship Committee, his work with the UU Partner Church Council and the Jericho Road Project, Starr King President Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker said, "We rejoice in his ministry and are delighted to bestow this honor".

Religious Education as Pastoral Care

For those of you who haven't had the pleasure of watching RE classes in action, it would be easy to imagine that when the kindergartners through sixth graders leave the Sanctuary after the children's message, they eat snacks, do craft projects, and wait for their parents to pick them up. And who knows what the older kids are doing? Parents who ask (and get responses from) their children may get "we drew pictures," "we sorted socks into piles," or "we worked in the garden." What parents may not hear is that while drawing those pictures (on cards for Caring Connection), sorting socks (for inmates at MCI), or tending the vegetables (destined for Open Table), they were talking about what it means to be part of a caring community, and what it means to need support. They were exploring how it might feel to be marginalized or forgotten, and how it feels to care for people you know, and those you will never meet.

In addition to providing the child care many parents appreciate during the service, Religious Education at First Parish cares for our children, and teaches them how to care for others. They learn that their words and actions really make a difference in the world, and that they have the capacity to make others' lives better.

And our children are soaking it up. If you have seen the pride on the faces of second through sixth graders during coffee hour as they share the cookies they just baked, or the excitement with which our children participate in Secret Santa or Guest at Your Table, you can tell they understand how great it feels to do things for others. Through RE our children learn how to live our benediction, developing the sense of caring and responsibility to others that Pastoral Care at First Parish embodies.

— **Gianna Drew**

Book Suggestion

Pam Ressler recommends the following book on depression for teens, *When Nothing Matters Anymore: Survival Guide for Depressed Teens*, by Bev Cobain, RN. The author is the cousin of Kurt Cobain (of Nivana fame), who suffered from depression and was bipolar before committing suicide in the late 1990's. The book is available from the Minuteman Library Network and can be ordered through the Concord Free Public Library.

"Meeting House News" Contributors

Thank you to all of you who contributed articles to Pastoral Care this past church year: **Diane Clapp, Pam Ressler, Craig Nowak, Tracey Hurd, Sue Dobbie, Beth Norton, Ursula Kristoffy, Jenny Rankin, Berni Jenkins** and **Gianna Drew**.

— **Judy Dembsey**, Pastoral Care Advisory Council Team Leader

A New Pastoral Care Group for Women in Transition

Tuesdays, June 12 and June 26, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Many older women are at a point in their lives where they are once again in transition. They have never been this age before and they have few role models. There is no life manual to help this generation maneuver through this time of their lives.

They have memories, experiences, losses, joys, adventures, loves, disappointments, questions and decisions they could share with each other. They can benefit by talking, sharing and learning from each other. The Pastoral Care Advisory Committee invites you to join in the formation of this group facilitated by **Berni Jenkins**, a retired geriatric social worker and former director of the Concord Council on Aging. Call 978-369-2876 for more information.

It Takes a Village — Caring Connection Thanks

This year more than 60 people joined together to prepare food, give rides, write cards, deliver meals, create a terrific Tuesday supper, welcome babies, be on "on call if you need me" lists, develop a shawl ministry, create shawls, and work together to show love and care to other congregation members. We are so grateful especially to **Lillian Anderson, Jamie Atkins, Patrice Belier, Dottie Bernard, Petra Betts, Joyce Cane Biggs, Becky Blodgett, Carol Boris, Cassy Bosworth, Lillian Braden, Pat Brewer, Bev**

Pastoral Care News

continued on page 12

The Pastoral Care Team at First Parish

Walking with One Another through the Changes Life Brings

The Lay Minister for June is **Bev Bringle** at bevbringle@yahoo.com, or 978-369-479.

The Lay Minister for July is **Pat Ellis** at 978-897-5207.

The Lay Minister for August is **Diane Clapp** at d.clapp@comcast.net or 781-257-5025.

Ministers: **Rev. Jenny Rankin** (revjenny@comcast.net) and **Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha** (uurevdoc@gmail.com)
Or call 978-369-9602.

Lay Ministers:
Contact **Diane Clapp** (d.clapp@comcast.net)

Caring Connection: Contact **Tracey Hurd** (thurd@aol.com) for meals or rides.

Pastoral Care Advisory Council:
Contact **Judy Dembsey** (dembsey@verizon.net).

MUSINGS

How do you measure a year? “Five hundred, twenty-five thousand, six hundred minutes,” says the song from Jonathan Larson’s *Rent*.

This is a time when we measure a year at First Parish in Concord. We acknowledge what defines our community, ties us together and shapes our future. As I’ve been assembling the annual report for the music ministry, I find there are many musical ways to measure the year. I will highlight just a few.

Our 375th anniversary celebration included a visit to the Choir from Master Stephen Hopkins of Plimoth Colony (aka John Kemp) for a lesson in the practice of 17th Psalm singing. A group of dedicated singers, led by **Lauren Evans**, further celebrated our history with musical interludes for *No One Wore Prada*, our historical fashion show.



The Threshold Choir, our pastoral choir, became the By Your Side Singers, a name that better describes their mission and their way of being with parishioners. The singers’ partnership with the Pastoral Care ministry strengthened, bringing comfort, joy and peace through music to more parishioners.

Our Intergenerational Gospel Choir led spirit-filled worship on Martin Luther King Sunday. Singers of all ages extended the commemoration of Dr. King’s legacy by singing in the Hope Out Loud concert at UU Urban Ministry in Roxbury. The children’s choirs, under the direction of **Gail Carey**, were joined by children of First Church and Parish in Dedham. Members of our adult choir joined to sing with the Boston Community Chorus, an interracial gospel choir.

The First Parish Choir joined in two successful choir festivals. The annual Mass Bay UU Choir Festival and the first-ever “Five Choir Festival” — an ecumenical festival of choirs from five congregations in Concord — First Parish, Holy Family, Trinity, West Concord Union and Trinitarian Congregational. Two winter afternoons of uplifting music and shared faith.

And we will never forget the triumphant, multigenerational production of *Chicken Man*, collaboration between the music and social action ministry of First Parish. Kudos to composer and director **Jane Blumberg** and director **Francene Amari Faulkner**.

In May we celebrated the beautiful pipe organ that is coming to life in our Sanctuary with the performance of Zoltán Kodály’s *Laudes Organi*, an ambitious effort on the part of our choir and our organist, **Eric Huenneke**. (See Pipework on page 11 for more information about our organ project.)

Words can’t express my gratitude for the dedicated Parish musicians of all ages who participate in the music ministry or for the privilege of working with Eric, Gail and Anderson.

• It has been said, “Music is love in search of a word.”
• Perhaps music is the best way to express that appreciation.
•
• How do you measure a year? I like Jonathan Larson’s answer: “Measure in love.” ♦

Blessings,

— *Beth Norton*

Music Director

Music Is an Act of Grace

“Four years have passed since my hire as the children’s choir director here at FP Concord. When I first came to this very large church, I had no idea what to expect. I am a country girl in city boots who has known ‘small church.’ I expected a certain level of anonymity and formality, governance at a distance. What I found was warmth, collaboration and friendship. I have personally experienced this community’s loving kindness through the death of my father and brother. Time and again, I have witnessed this loving kindness extend beyond the walls of this church. I have found a great sense of belonging as a music leader here.



I believe that each time we create music together, we create beauty — as an act of peace. Music does, indeed, have many powers. Music has the power to bridge discrepant worlds — as with our UU Urban Ministry outreach. Music has the power to unite around common cause — as with our music theatre productions *Chicken Man* and *OMG Broadway*. But, most importantly, music is a conduit to the heart. Our organ lifts us up, sometimes to places of exaltation. Our adult choir helps us to embody spiritual message. Our congregational hymns serve as the heartbeat of our UU identity together. Our children ‘sing from the heart’ and, in turn, beckon us inward. It is their gift to us. Music helps us open to the Mystery. Music comes as an act of grace, because when an open heart informs our church life, our covenant is held Sacred.

Today, I light this social action candle honoring the ‘open heart’ of this congregation.” ♦

— *Gail Carey*

Children’s Choir Director

Social Action Candlelighting, Music Sunday, May 6, 2012

Music Notes/Pipework

continued on page 11

On Earth Day, **Jenny Rankin** invited me to do a reflection with her on St. Francis. I jumped at the chance. St. Francis is one of the first environmentalists and a mystic saint with whom I could easily connect as a child.

Our primal mother, the Earth, gave birth to all that is sacred “within and without” us. As human beings, we search for meaning. Why is this? What is happening here? Why now? What next? This ability to wonder about the natural world and imagine what we cannot see is the root of all our scientific discoveries. This ability creates that liminal space between mystery and science, a place of tension where humans awkwardly attempt to explain the seemingly inexplicable.



The exploration of wonder is the main topic of our Spring Term in RE for our second to fifth graders. Keeping their imagination and natural curiosity alive is important if we are going to raise competent scientists, naturalists, theorists and theologians. This ability to imagine what is not yet is primary to our human nature. It is what led to important discoveries in the physical, medical and chemical sciences. Our children must be able to wonder about possibilities that do not exist yet, or at least have not been discovered yet, if they are going to be the ones to discover new energy sources and cancer treatments. So ... are Fairy Houses important? Of course they are. They connect us to the earth and to our imaginations. They build empathy and let us listen to nature. When we



learn to listen in this way, we become better friends, better spouses, better coworkers. A good listener is priceless.

St. Francis made it simple for us. Enjoy nature. Care for its beings. Seek Truth and

live an uncomplicated, loving life. St. Francis found the divine in nature — God emanated throughout the natural world. Our Earth tries so hard to care for us, to water us, to feed us. But we are like the rebellious teenager, pushing her wisdom away. Nature is our great teacher. Let us rejoice in her wisdom and connect to her sacred rhythms. ♦

— *Pam Howell*

Director of Religious Education

June 2012 RE Calendar

Sun., June 3	10:00 a.m. ONLY Regular RE for Babies–4 years Regular RE for 2nd – 6th Grades
Sun., June 10	10:00 a.m. ONLY Regular RE for Babies–4 years

Note: To read more about leashes with invisible dogs and dogs with invisible leashes, visit the Earth Day service: <http://www.firstparish.org/cms/worship/sermons>.

Special Thanks to Dawn Van Patton

It was difficult to start the year without Carol Duane this fall. She really held the fort down in our Young Children’s program. I would really like to thank RE Council member, **Dawn Van Patton**, for stepping up for so many weeks to make sure this program ran smoothly each week. Dawn arrived early each Sunday, greeted families, made sure we were staffed appropriately and helped me with orientations and notifications. She even helped me assemble the materials each week when I was “solo” for most of the year. I can’t thank her enough, so I am asking all of you to join me in thanking her for stepping up to support this important ministry in our congregation.

Come Work in the First Parish Garden at the Community Garden This Summer!



Just because there is no RE on Sunday mornings does not mean there is no RE this summer! Our RE program at First Parish is a hands-on experience filled with wonder and play. We carry this into the summer through our First Parish Community Garden. It is five minutes from First Parish on Walden Street (across from the Court House).

Starting in June, each week on Thursday afternoons (3 to 4 p.m.) and Sunday evenings from 4 to 5, I will be present for digging, weeding, watering, planting and harvesting. These are ancient skills that connect us deeply with our environment and with our selves. Many kids have forgotten how engaging real dirt is. This is a chance for your child to experience work, to be hot, to get rained on and muddy. I do hope you can join us and experience the joy of searching for cucumbers and picking beautiful flowers for Open Table.

RE Registration for 2012-2013

Please return your forms as soon as possible so we can be ready for fall. I am really looking forward to working with you and

RE News

continued on page 9

your children. Our commitment to our children through religious education is one of the ways we keep our congregation and our faith strong and alive. If your forms are in by June 10, you will be saving Emily and me a lot of work. Late registrations are very hard to absorb with our limited staff hours.

Our Coming of Age Service

What an amazing Coming of Age service! Our youths' credos were thoughtful and spoken passionately about what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist. Their credos reflected our faith as an active one, as a faith expressed through the work of social activism.

I would like to thank **Jane Barnes** and **Heather Wilson** for leading Coming of Age this year. They did an outstanding job of leading our mentors and mentees through this COA journey. I would also like to thank **Mark Howell, Dave Elwood, Tony Rodriguez, Susan Ward, Allison Aley** and **Laurel Dogget**. Mentoring our youth is a big commitment, and these mentors truly "gave back" to First Parish. The relationships our teens make with other caring adults is incredibly powerful. These adults show up because, like many of us, they also had mentors when they were teens. Our mentors dedicated their time

because real relationships take real time and really matter in the lives of our teens.

I would also like to thank **Sarah Sharpe**, our local pottery artist and a member of First Parish. Sarah hand-made each chalice with the care that reflects the love from within our parish. We

care about our teens; we hope they carry our Unitarian Universalist values into the world throughout their lives. This chalice will be a reminder of our congregation and this journey toward our shared vision.

Youth Group Advisor

I am looking for someone who would like to step up and be a regular presence at Sunday night youth group. We have so missed the stability that **Jake Nunes** used to provide when **Mary-Wren vanderWilden** was the Youth Director. Having someone who shows up and truly gets to know each kid by name is important. While many parents have hopped in to fill this need each week since this position was cut three years ago, it is just not the same as someone who shows up each week.



SENIOR YOUTH NEWS: THE HEARD

Wow, what a year! The Heard have defined themselves as a community of adventurers, pursuing opportunity in many different shapes and sizes. From Ferry Beach to Occupy Boston to the fields of Vermont to the Trust Walk; it's been an incredible year of bonding, learning and exploration; it's been my pleasure to see the group evolve.



Last month we made headway for planning the international trips for next year. The Heard will travel to El Salvador in April 2013 on a mission of cultural exchange and there will be a youth-family pilgrimage to Transylvania in the summer of 2013. Registration for El Salvador is due on June 3, and the forms and more information can be found on the FP website.

The Heard will wrap up the year with a special recording session at Wellspring Studios on June 3, and we will celebrate with a BBQ party on June 7.

Have a beautiful summer, and can't wait for the story to continue in the fall! ♦

Yours truly,

—*Avi Salloway*

Youth Program Director

Do you have time for this? Would you like to work with **Avi Salloway** and me in providing a really stable and tight youth group? Please let me know if this ministry interests you. We have amazing teens here, and I want to provide a structure that enables them to build a strong youth group experience.

RE Council Members

Who are our RE Council members? **Alyssa Bigay, Jane Barnes, Patty Popov, Lora Venesy, Dawn van Patton, Eric Moore, Kate Svrcek, Amy Capofreddi** and **Brad Hubbard-Nelson**. They have been great all year and while we did have a lot of fun together, we also got a lot of work done. Through our discussions, we continually respond to the needs of the community and try out new ideas together. Our council meetings are a highlight in the busy RE month.

I'd like to thank **Kate Svrcek** and **Eric Moore** for being our RE Council chairs this year. Both were amazing leaders and helped me each month with various challenges in running such a large and demanding program. They were also very supportive in helping me attain my new credentialing. Join me in thanking them for their support of your RE program. **Amy Capofreddi, Brad Hubbard Nelson, Eric Moore** and **Jane Barnes** are all rolling off this year. If this work interests you, give me a call.

Thank You, First Parish.

It was not an easy decision to leave this job, but I am leaving happy to have been here and proud of our Social Action Community. I continue to be amazed at the passion and energy this community embodies, and I look forward to seeing what the “next stage” is for SAC and for First Parish. Thank you for welcoming me as a staff member, for supporting my efforts, for bringing your ideas to me, and for allowing me to share in your vision of action and interaction! This has been a crazy, challenging, yet wonderful experience and I will miss working with so many of you. ♦



— Faith Bade

Faith Bade Resigns as Social Action Program Director

Faith's last day as a staff member is May 31, 2012. To learn more about her five and a half years at First Parish, go to sac.firstparish.org/cms/news.

March with the Diversity Committee in the Boston Pride Parade on June 9

The Diversity Committee will take a group of First Parishioners to march with our FP banner in the Boston Pride Parade on Saturday, June 9 — the parade starts at noon. Please join us for this fun, family-friendly event, and help us show our support for the LGBT community. E-mail **Sara Ballard** at sara@sb.org, or sign up at coffee hour on June 3 if you'd like to participate. Those who wish may attend the Pride Service at the Arlington Street Church at 11:00 a.m. before the parade.

Community-Supported Agriculture(CSA) Farm Tour

Would you like a summer full of ripe, great tasting veggies grown with care by local farmers? Join us on June 9, 9 to 11 a.m., for two 45-minute tours with our hosts, Ben Elliot of Saltbox Farm, and Laura Sackton of First Root Farm. Learn more about why CSA helps consumers and small farmers, challenges facing farmers and some successful direct-sale farm practices such as pick-yourself crops, recipes/cooking classes and other community building activities. RSVP by June 8 to deb01742@comcast.net for directions and carpool details. Event sponsored by Gardening for Life; details at www.concordfood.ning.com.

Social Action Reflection Group, June 10, 7 p.m., at First Parish

We seek to connect our outer activism with our inner spirit. To that end, we read and discuss books that are pertinent to our search. This month we are reading Howard Thurman's *Jesus and the Disinherited*. It is a short book that discusses several aspects of the teachings

of Jesus as they relate to the spiritual life of oppressed people. Join us on June 10 at 7 p.m. to discuss this work and your own activist work within a context of spiritual reflection. For more information, contact **Mark Richards** at MarkR@UpriverMinistries.

Amnesty Group's Letters Protest Unjust Imprisonment, Abuse

At the regular monthly meeting of Group 15, the Concord-area Amnesty International group, members will discuss recent developments concerning the death penalty, LGBT rights, the prisoners of conscience the group has adopted, and other human rights issues. They will also sign and address preprinted letters to officials of repressive regimes on behalf of their citizens who have been unjustly imprisoned and abused. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 19, at 7 p.m., in the Greeley Room. All are welcome. For more information, visit www.aigroup15.org, or e-mail **Lorraine Loviglio** at loviglio@rcn.com.

You are Invited! Learn about UU India Program

Join **Jenny Rankin** and **Elaine Peresluha** in welcoming Derek Mitchell, Director of the UU Holdeen India program, who will be in Concord as part of an American trip that will give Unitarian Universalists the opportunity to meet in person with the leader of this important UU international social justice program.

On Sunday, July 8, Derek will preach at First Parish about the challenges UUHIP partners face as they oppose injustice and their groundbreaking achievements. His accounts of social change under oppression carry lessons for those seeking justice anywhere in the world.

On Tuesday, July 10, from 7 to 9 p.m., Derek will lead a workshop on the strategies UUHIP partners pursue to inspire social change in India. The workshop will explore the historical and theoretical roots of these strategies, what has worked most effectively and how the changing scenario in a globalizing India may affect future struggles. He will conclude with a dialogue on how UUHIP partners and UU's in the United States can work more closely to promote social justice at home and abroad. To register for the July 10 workshop, please call the church office at 978-369-9602 or e-mail **Cassy Bosworth** at cbosworth@firstparish.org. Deadline to sign up for the workshop is July 1, 2012. Registration is limited, first come, first serve.

SAC News and Events

continued on page 12

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, sac.firstparish.org/cms/sacemaillist; or visit the Social Action bulletin board.

The Five Interim Tasks

Coming to Terms with History. Claiming and honoring its past and healing its griefs and conflicts. First Parish celebrated its 375 years of history. Now we continue the relevance of the past as we plan a future.

Discovering a New Identity. As First Parish integrates its history with its hopes for the future, its unique identity, strengths, needs and challenges will be clear. When that identity has been clarified and embraced, the Ministerial Search Committee will know exactly what kind of minister will be able to lead First Parish into its preferred future.

Allowing Needed Leadership to Emerge by clarifying the multiple dimensions of leadership, both ordained and lay — paid and unpaid. First Parish is engaging in a process of defining its governance, understanding where and how authority is delegated, and exercised — how needs are met and decision are made. With good governance comes congregational linkage to decision making and the delegations of goals and programming to staff. Developing the leadership of the congregation to be capable and informed is an important task of our interim process.

Renewing Denominational Linkages. First Parish is renewing its connections with available resources within and beyond the UUA. You are doing this with the search process, Association Sunday and developing appreciation of the many Mass Bay District events. First Parish has enjoyed a vital UUA identity and is looked to as a leader in the denomination. That holds historic dimensions as well as implications for the future.

Committing to New Directions in Ministry, enabling the congregation to renew its vision, strengthen its stewardship, prepare for new professional leadership, and engage its future with anticipation and zest. This is the culminating awareness and possibility that comes from working through the other interim tasks. This is the bright and shining star to navigate by this coming year. It will lift your hearts and minds knowing, soon, you will have a new senior minister here to lead you toward the fulfillment of your dreams and vision. ♦

— Rebecca Curzon, Katharine Esty,
Mark Richards, Jim Smith, Sue Ryan,
Sven Olsen and Elaine Peresluha,
Your Parish Interim Team

PIPEWORK

On Sunday, May 6, we celebrated the creation of First Parish's new pipe organ as it "comes to life" in our Sanctuary. It may be helpful to review how far we've come and what still lies ahead before the instrument, as designed, is finished.

The First Parish organ was designed to be as versatile as possible within the budget given to the project by the Capital Campaign. The mandate was to create an instrument that would be successful in leading congregational singing, accompanying the choir, soloists and instrumentalists, and playing the vast array of solo organ literature in an authentic and musically satisfying manner. A goal was to use as much of the pipe work from the former instrument as appropriate and possible in the new instrument. We will be forever grateful for the inspired layout and tonal design of our organ builder, Stephen J. Russell & Co. They are especially creative in recycling useful portions of vintage pipe work from the former First Parish organ and other significant instruments. Often these pipes are reincarnated as very different sounds in new locations within the new instrument. Sometimes only the main body of a pipe is used: the pipe shortened, and nearly always a new tongue or languid made so that the speech will be precise and beautiful. The scale (circumference) of each rank of pipes has been designed with the unique acoustics of the First Parish Sanctuary in mind. This creative recycling of the pipe bodies, as well as the restoration of vintage pipe work, is very much a "green solution," in harmony with First Parish's values. The tonal design of the instrument is grounded firmly on classical principles of European organ building, while also incorporating a broad spectrum of symphonic organ sounds — which are now enjoying a renewed appreciation in the palette of pipe organ sounds among prominent American organ builders.

As of May, two divisions of the organ, the Swell and Choir, which are in expressive boxes in the back half of the organ, were nearing completion — awaiting three significant reed stops, a trompette, clarinet, and tuba. The Great division of the organ, which sits immediately behind the façade is about half complete. There are seven ranks of flue pipes presently in production to complete this division. Since the beginning of 2012, six new ranks of pipes have been installed. The basses of some reed pipes for the Pedal division are yet to come, as is the new console, for downstairs.

It is a joy to see the blossoming results of vision, patience, and persistence in the quest of First Parish and our organ builder to create a truly noteworthy and musically satisfying organ that should serve this church for generations to come. ♦

— D. Eric Huenneke,
Parish Organist

Green Notes

Mindful Living Idea: Kitchen sink disposals require lots of water to operate properly. Start a compost pile as an alternate method of disposing food waste instead of using a garbage disposal.

Mindful Living Statistic: Since the compost process works best at temperatures between 120 and 150 degrees, composting in the warmer months is easier to do. If this is your first attempt at composting, best to try in the summer.

- Bringle, Jeanine Calabria, Sue Cornwall, Holly
- Cratsley, Dave Dawson, Judy Dembsey,
- Kathleen Elcox, Lauren Evans, Lou Fackert,
- Jane Fisher, Leslie Fisher, Suzanne Foley, Linda
- Hardiman, Tricia Haut, Kate Henchman, Val
- Holt, Pam Howell, Regina Hugendubler, Jane
- Johnson, Ginger Lang, Pat Kane, Jan Lipcon,
- Marilyn Lowitt, Joy Madden, Kathy Madden,
- Kathy Mayer, Bill Maxwell, Dinny McIntyre,
- Rhoda Miller, Andrea Hubbard-Nelson, Craig
- Nowak, Sven Olson, Bridget Neale Paris,
- Louisa Paushter, Rev. Elaine Peresluha, Donna
- Peterson, Rev. Jenny Rankin, Toby Smith
- Ropeik, Kitsy Rothermel, Janet Rothrock,
- Mimi Samour, Rev. Margie King Saphier,
- Marcia Schloss, Carolyn Shohet, Darien Smith,
- Lois Suarez, Marty Wallace, Dianne Weiss,
- Holli Jones-White, and Lois Whitney.

Thanks so much for all you do for First Parish!

— Tracey Hurd
Caring Connection Team Leader

SUMMER 2012 NEWSLETTER

The September Newsletter deadline is Friday, August 24, at noon.
The Newsletter will be published Tuesday, September 4.

Office Hours: Tuesday–Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.*

Phone: 978-369-9602

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E-Mail: FPConcord@firstparish.org

Website: www.firstparish.org

• **Ministers' E-Mail:**

• Elaine Beth Peresluha: uurevdoc@gmail.com

• Jenny M. Rankin: jrankin@firstparish.org

* **PLEASE NOTE:** The office is CLOSED on Mondays.

First Parish in Concord • UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Staff

Elaine Beth Peresluha, Interim Senior Minister

Jenny M. Rankin, Minister

Melissa Perdue Gallo, Business Manager

Gary E. Smith, Minister Emeritus

Christy McKellips, Assistant to the Ministers

Tina Storey, Assistant to the Business Manager

Becky Blodgett, Affiliate Minister for Pastoral Care

Pam Howell, Director of Religious Education

Avi Salloway, Youth Program Director

- Elizabeth Norton, Music Director
- Eric Huenneke, Parish Organist
- Anderson Manuel, Youth Gospel Choir Director
- Gail Carey, Children's Choir Director
- David Huston, Music Director Emeritus
- Dan Holin, Jericho Road Executive Director
- Douglas Baker, Sacristan and Curator
- Cassy Bosworth, Office Manager
- Peggy Gallo, Volunteer Collector
- Kate Keleher, Volunteer Newsletter Editor
- Kaye Harvie, Volunteer Copy Editor



First Parish in Concord
2012 Summer Services
Sunday Services: 10:00 a.m.

DATE	SERVICE LEADER	MUSICIANS
June 17	Pam Howell Director of Religious Education First Parish in Concord	Rob Hamilton Jane Barnes R. Phipps-Kettlewell, pianist
June 24	Jim Robinson Minister Emeritus First Parish Brewster	Silver Bass Trio Al Armenti R. Phipps-Kettlewell, pianist
July 1	Jim Reynolds Member, First Parish in Concord	Pam Schweppe R. Phipps-Kettlewell, pianist
July 8	Derek Mitchell Director, UU Holdeen India Program	Tammie Foote R. Phipps-Kettlewell, pianist
July 15	Barry Andrews Retired Minister of Religious Education UU Congregation at Shelter Rock	Kristin Moore Mary Jane Rupert, pianist
July 22	Matt Meyer Percussionist and Friend of First Parish in Concord	Matt Meyer R. Phipps-Kettlewell, pianist
July 29	Mark Richards Member, First Parish in Concord	Lauren Evans R. Phipps-Kettlewell, pianist
August 5	Bob Goodearl Member, First Parish in Concord	Bob Goodearl Mary Jane Rupert, pianist
August 12	Ellen Green Harvard Divinity School Student	Joan Esch Mary Jane Rupert, pianist
August 19	Women's Circle Darien Smith	Maddie Sifantus R. Phipps-Kettlewell, pianist
August 26	Allison Palm Harvard Divinity School Student	Larry Gall R. Phipps-Kettlewell, pianist
September 2	John Petersen Member, First Parish in Concord	Nancy Ackerman D. Eric Huenneke, pianist
SEPTEMBER 9	OPENING SUNDAY Services at 9:00 and 11:00 o'clock	First Parish Choir Elizabeth Norton, director D. Eric Huenneke, organist

