

April 2010

First Parish News



Upcoming Events:

- April 4 ,Easter Sunday service and RE 10am
- April 11 Congregational Meeting and RE 10am
- April 18, Sunday service and RE 10am
- April 24, Country Breakfast
- April 25, Commitment Sunday, service and RE 10am

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First Parish of Northfield Unitarian Monthly Newsletter

Announcements

Music Notes from Lynne

Last Sunday we were beautifully serenaded by violinist, Dorota Wilhelmi-Kol, Director of Music Academy of Greenfield, playing spring-time music which coordinated so well with Rev. Marguerites timely and moving sermon.

Special guest musicians scheduled for April and May are as follows:

April 4 (Easter) John Hann, tenor, who will be singing seasonal music; also children/adult ensemble

April 18 Emmalouise St. Amand, soprano, graduating senior at Pioneer Regional High School

May 2 Charles Hunting, bass/baritone

May 16 Karina and Kim playing familiar tunes as violin duets

May 23 Children's Sunday special music to be announced

We hope you will make a special effort to come and enjoy all that First Parish's services offer. Bring a Friend!

~Lynne

Commitment Sunday April 25th

We will be holding a new event in place of the congregational meeting on Sunday April 25th. This will be a potluck brunch to celebrate and share what First Parish means to us all. This event will kick-off the annual stewardship drive when we renew our financial support of the church and sign up for volunteer opportunities to support the church so we can plan for the upcoming church year. For more information or to volunteer to help, contact Karina. Stephanie will be organizing the potluck portion of this event.

RE News

The children are getting ready to celebrate Easter with a poem and a song with Lynne for the first service up in the sanctuary. We are also beginning preparations for the Children's Sunday Service on the 26th of May. We have some days still available if anyone is interested in coming for a visit and to share a craft, talent or interest. Tammy has asked us to create some boxes to encourage people here at the church and during church breakfasts and special dinners to donate to Loaves and Fishes. Noelle volunteered to help cover the boxes first. Thank you, Noelle, for the help and thank you, Tammy, for the good idea! I would love to work outside a bit with the kids planting if anyone is interested in donating some plants or is willing to brainstorm some ideas to dress up the shrubbery a bit.

~Deb

Minister's Corner

Langston Hughes, one of America's most beloved African American poets, wrote about the month of April. He said "Let the rain kiss you. Let the rain beat upon your head with silver liquid drops. Let the rain sing you a lullaby." Such wonderful advice when you might want to complain about the wet weather "let the rain kiss you and beat upon your head with silver liquid drops."

April brings rain and this year it also brings Easter. Some of us focus our thoughts about Easter on its place in the natural order of the changing celestial seasons. Easter is always on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Equinox. It comes to New England in the early spring and in its own way is a celebration of new life. Others of us grab Easter by its Christian roots and ask even more questions. What does it mean that someone, or may be everyone, dies and is not forgotten? What was it like for the followers of Jesus, gathering as they did, in their sorrow and confusion, when there came a knocking at the door of the hearts, saying "Let me in. Remember me. Touch me and let me touch you. Believe in me and in what we shared together."

Easter can be like that too. It can be a knock on your door. It can be a kiss on your sorry face. It can be a gentle rain, falling on your sorrowful head, washing away your disappointments in life and pointing you toward tomorrow. It is no accident that Easter came to be celebrated in early spring, at sunrise, after the first full moon, after the Equinox. All humans, no matter our religious bent, all crave the experience, of hope and new life, consolation and encouragement, after the dark days of winter and the dark times of suffering. Human beings have the unique capacity to throw a party just when you would think we would roll over and die. Easter is one such party. Roll back the stone, roll back the rug, roll back to snowstorms and the tears of life, roll it back and dance. Spring and Easter each in its own way get us back to life.

This April we at First Parish are experiencing the loss of our own beloved Jean Shepherd who died

at Franklin Medical Center on March 26th. Jean was one of our shining stars, a gentle, optimistic and caring soul who brought her love of life to everyone she knew. We will all miss her and will feel a hole in our congregation that will not be filled by anyone. Yet Jean would want all of us to keep hope and love alive when she is gone. She loved the children at First Parish, loved her friends and family, loved music and poetry and loved the history of this place. We will be celebrating her life in a memorial later this spring. In the meanwhile, let us remember Jean on Easter Sunday and every other day. We were graced to have her with us for this many years.

Peace and Joy,

Reverend Marguerite

Pastoral Friends

Our dear friend and church member Jean Shepherd died on March 26, 2010. She was surrounded by her children and grandchildren. A memorial service is being planned for late Spring. Our sympathy goes out to her family and all her friends at First Parish and beyond.

We are glad to hear that Hilda Stewart is back home and recuperating after surgery.