

August 2008

First Parish News



Upcoming Events:

- August 23, 6pm
Lasagna dinner
- August 30, 6pm
Breakfast 8-10am
- September 7th
Sunday service
10am

Individual Highlights:

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First Parish of Northfield Unitarian Monthly Newsletter

Announcements

First Parish announcements:

Wanted: One or Two Good People With Wings!

Last year we initiated a weekly food collection for our local food pantry – Katie's Cupboard. While we did collect a good amount of food during the year I heard from a number of people that it was hard to remember to bring the cans or boxes of food each week. Also, we had hoped that some of the adults, youth or children might deliver the food and thereby make a personal connection with the pantry. This proved to be a challenge. So...I am writing to see if someone(s) might step forward to take our Sunday Food collection under your wing this year. It may be that you have an idea of how we can best collect food for Katie's Cupboard (at our Sunday Services or some other way....) Perhaps you could help foster a more personal connection between First Parish and the pantry. The economy hurts first the most vulnerable people (families, senior citizens etc.) and the food pantries will be needed even more this year. I am sure that our efforts will be appreciated if we find a good way to organize. If this strikes you as something that you and a friend could take on please let me know. First Parish does food well – let's get it out to the people who need it!
In faith, Rev. Marguerite

RE News: I hope everyone is having a fun summer. I am hoping to pick a day in August TBD soon to clean the RE room a bit and get rid of things that have migrated their way into the room. Ella Potee-Martin has already signed up to help and we would both think the more the merrier! I will be making a run to the Greenfield dump with whatever is in there that shouldn't be. Please don't add anything in

the mean time. This will be accomplished by August 20th definitely. Thank you to folks who dropped off books for our library and I am still looking for more and will be throughout the year. There is also a wish list posted in the basement hallway of items we are looking for the RE room like kid scissors, glue, staplers, tape, etc.

For the first Sunday back, just a reminder to bring some water from where you spent the summer--maybe some Northfield rain in a jar, for example, to share for future naming ceremonies. Enjoy the last few weeks and see you soon. ~ Deb Potee

The Church of the Larger Fellowship - On Line Classes!

Here is a sampling of the UU online classes that are available from the Church of the Larger Fellowship. They are free or at a minimal cost and open for anyone interested in pursuing these topics on line. If you have wanted to take a course, here is one easy way.

A Chosen Faith: Self-Study Guide (On-going) Free

New UU: Self-Study Guide (On-going): Free

The Gospel According to Harvey. Taught by David Dawson: Aug. 4, 2008 — September 1, 2008: \$40

The Soul of Nature: A Journey into the Poetry of Mary Oliver. Taught by the Rev. Amanda Aikman: September 8, 2008 — October 20, 2008: \$40

For information about these courses and more, visit <http://clf.uua.org/learn/> or contact

The Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF), 617-948-6150, re@clfu.org

Minister's Corner

Summer is fast fading and our fall ingathering Sunday service on September 7th is almost upon us. I am acutely aware these days that before this summer is over much will have happened for each of us and in our various communities, near and far. When we gather together in September we will be, in some real way, new people to each other, even as we are becoming even more solid church friends.

Speaking personally, at the beginning of June, I had just been laid off from my hospice chaplain job and was wondering where I would be led. This "wonderment" has continued but now in August I am more familiar with this state of mind and spirit and am relishing the quiet beauty of summer and taking the time for reflection and hope for our new year together. As well, when we closed for our summer hiatus, my father was failing in health but still alive and well cared for at home. Now he has died, surrounded by his loving wife and children. We are newly grieving and newly walking into our lives without him by our physical side. Thank you for all your best thoughts and prayers that you have sent my way. Knowing about your caring makes a great difference in my own healing.

We at First Parish are also part of an association of about 1000 Unitarian Universalist churches. This summer we were stunned with the sad news of the tragic loss of life on July 20th in our sister UU church in Knoxville Tennessee. Because we are connected in love the ripple of that violence washes over us all. And yet we are also made new because of the outpouring of love that we have experienced. So many people have sent their best thoughts and prayers to all of us Unitarian Universalists and to all other members and friends of liberal religion. This love strengthens us in our loss and gives us the courage to continue to preach the belief that all people are worthy, even in the face of fear and hatred that breeds violence.

I look forward to gathering with you all again on September 7th and to hearing about how you have

been made new this summer. I invite you all to bring a small amount of water to church, water that might represent what has nourished you and your family. We will pour this water together and in doing so we will be sharing our memories, our hopes and our dreams for our future life at First Parish. Enjoy the last days of summer and come back refreshed and ready to begin again. See you all soon!

In faith,
Reverend Marguerite

Parish Committee

POT LUCK: The Parish Committee has planned a Pot Luck following the first Sunday service on September 7th. Please plan to bring something to share, stay and enjoy the good food and great company!

REMINDER: If you have not pledged for the 2008-09 church year, please see Noelle Anson. For the people that have, we appreciate it and know that it is more important than ever this year with the rising cost of electricity and oil.

The Parish Committee will meet regularly on the first Sunday of each month following the church service. These are open meetings and we welcome anyone to bring their suggestions or concerns to the meetings.

Noelle Anson
Stephanie Ciccarello
Betty Gibson
Mary Anne Ladd
Ruth Potee
Jean Shepard
Marguerite Sheehan, Ex-officio

This Month in Unitarian Universalist History

This monthly column is dedicated to celebrating some milestones and anniversaries from Unitarian Universalist history. The information is taken from the book *This Day in Unitarian Universalist History* by Frank Shulman.

August 1, 1818

Maria Mitchell was born in Nantucket Massachusetts. She was a noted astronomer, and discovered the comet that is now called Mitchell's Comet. Although she never attended college, Vassar College appointed her its first professor of astronomy and director of the observatory (1865). She did not formally join a Unitarian church but she asserted her affinity with Unitarianism and attended the Unitarian church in Nantucket.

August 11, 1891

Margaret Mosely was born in Dorchester Massachusetts. She wanted to be a nurse but was refused by every hospital nursing program because she was African American. She joined and became the president of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and was a leader in the fight against McCarthyism in the 1950's. She was the first woman to chair the governing board of the Unitarian Church of Barnstable on Cape Cod and received the Martin Luther King Jr. award from the Fellowship of Reconciliation. She died in 1997.

August 12, 1750

Caleb Rich was born in Sutton Massachusetts. A staunch Baptist, he converted to Universalism after he had dreams and visions pronouncing that all would be saved and that there is no future punishment. In 1774, Rich founded what some call the first Universalist society in America in Warwick Massachusetts (just moments away from Northfield and our own First Parish!) The small congregation of 3 members grew to 10 members and Rich was ordained in 1781 and was active in organizing Universalist societies in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont.

August 20, 1828

The Brahma Samaj, a movement in Hindu similar to Unitarianism, held its first worship meeting. Many Indian historians consider its founder, Rahaj Rahmmohun Roy, to be the "father of modern India." During this time period The Reverend Jabez Sunderland, who was one of the better known ministers of First Parish Unitarian in Northfield Massachusetts, traveled extensively to India and worked closely with the Unitarian movement in the Khasi Hills of northeast India and worked for Indian self rule.

As the treasurer of the Parish Committee, it is my job to issue checks to pay all church employees and guest speakers. This means that I come to First Parish most Sundays, checks in hand, and deliver them at the end of the service. Whenever a guest speaker is scheduled (unless it is one of our own parishioners), I always wonder beforehand if there will be more than 3 or 4 people in the audience---and, more times than not, there aren't. This is truly embarrassing to those of us who are there and may feel the need to explain this lack of attendance to the speaker.

Please try to come to as many services as you can, regardless of who is speaking. We need to support all services and we can only do this if we attend them in good numbers. In a church this small, your presence is notable and when you aren't there, you are very much missed.

Thanks for listening.

Noelle