

June 2009

First Parish News



Upcoming Events:

- June 7, Flower Communion Sunday service and RE 10am, Rev. Sheehan
- June 14, Follow the Labyrinth, meet at 10am
- June 20, Strawberry Solstice Supper, 6pm
- June 21, Annual Meeting, 10am

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First Parish of Northfield Unitarian Monthly Newsletter

Announcements

Parish Committee Announcements

Sunday, June 21, 2009, 10 am - First Parish Unitarian Annual Meeting

Sunday, July 12, 2009 - Annual Church Pot Luck Picnic - at the Betty's house. More details to follow!

If you are interested in serving on the Parish Committee, Board of Trustees, a sub-committee or hold an office at First Parish please be in touch with Mary Anne.

Follow the labyrinth at Lynne's place in New Hampshire

A reminder that we are going to the labyrinth on June 14th. We can meet at the church at 10. Take lunch, beverage, sunscreen and bug spray. Wear long pants with socks over the cuffs to keep out ticks. hoes, rakes, a push lawn mower would be great, extra rocks (not stones), There are printed maps at the church if you want to go on your own-it's tricky, however.

Solstice Supper

Strawberry Solstice Supper, Saturday, June 20th 6:00 pm

Fundraiser for Northfield Food Pantry and Loaves and Fishes

Pasta, fresh salads and strawberry shortcake

Can you help? Contact Ruth.

Minister's Corner - Flower Celebration on June 7th!

Have you ever heard the expression "Say it with flowers"? Flowers can say "I love you" and "You are in my prayers" and "Please forgive me" and all kinds of other phrases. I know that when times have been hard that I have delighted to open the door and find flowers left there by a friend. Flowers really do say something that words cannot.

Our Unitarian Universalist churches also have traditions that bring forth the language of flowers. We leave flowers on our altars, bringing beauty and perfume into our worship. We offer flowers at our memorials as a way of saying "life will go on." And near the end our church year, we gather and celebrate, or commune, with flowers, as a way to say "keep your faith with you" while we are separated during our summer recess. This year we will be having our flower celebration in Northfield on the 1st Sunday in June. This breaks a bit with tradition as we usually have this ceremony on our last Sunday (which this year is June 21st, when we will have our Annual Meeting.) On June 7th you are each invited to bring a flower to church to add to our "communal bouquet." We will bless these flowers and each other and then distribute them so that you take home a flower that another friend contributed. In this way you leave the service having both given and received a thing of beauty.

This tradition was started by the Reverend Norbert Capek, during the tyranny of the Nazi reign in Czechoslovakia. Capek envisioned a world where each person is an individual of worth, beauty and esteem and we all come together in community to build a world of intentional diversity – a bouquet of many different flowers. This is a tradition that we hold on to because it speaks volumes even our day, when so many of us are still encouraged to blend in, to speak or think in a certain way, and when unusual ideas are suspect. In this way the flower celebration is a ritual that testifies to our Unitarian Universalist faith.

So, come to church on June 7th. Earlier this spring we talked about how it is "inch by inch" that our garden grows. On the 7th we can harvest some of the signs of our faith and our loving community. It should be a wonderful day and a great beginning of saying "See you in September." This summer I will be in the area in July for emergency pastoral care and attending a few meetings (while preparing for our next year services) and will be on vacation camping for most of August. And, just to whet our appetites for ritual, lets all remember to collect a bit of water from our summer travels so that come September we can gather again, this time sharing water, as we open our church year.

~Reverend Marguerite

This Month in Unitarian Universalist History

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

June 3, 1870,

Norbert Capek (see my Minister's Column in this newsletter!) was born in Bohemia (now Czechoslovakia.) During World War II he was imprisoned and murdered at Dachau for speaking out against the Nazis. He devised the Flower Celebration, saying that even in the worst of times, we can still share beauty.

June 7, 1929

Frederick Hosmer, a Unitarian and great hymn writer, born in Framingham Massachusetts, died on this day.

Hosmer was known for composing many hymns that we sing today, including the hymn "I cannot think of them as dead" that many churches sing on Memorial Day Sunday.

June 18, 1873

Susan B. Anthony, the famous Unitarian suffragette was fined \$100 for voting in Rochester New York, but she refused to pay and the fine was never collected.

June 28, 1889

Maria Mitchell, an American astronomer and the first woman to be a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, died on this day. She discovered what is now known as Mitchell's Comet. Mitchell attended the Unitarian church in Nantucket.

Church News

Updates from your Board of Trustees

- The Board always welcomes anyone who'd like to attend a meeting - our meetings are open to all and we value everyone's input. The next meeting is July 19th (time and location TBA). Come and find out how much fun it is to be At Large!

- We are keeping a close eye on the progress of the paint job, which is including various essential repairs to the building as problems are discovered. Fortunately (so far) there have not been any significant setbacks and the work is progressing nicely. Look for "the lift" out front carrying the painters up to the heights of the steeple.

- The Board is spearheading an effort to switch out our old, inefficient light bulbs with new, energy-saving bulbs. You can help by participating in our forthcoming "Bulb Drive." Details to come - meanwhile, look forward to "adopting" your very own bulbs and helping First Parish save money and energy.

- Our ongoing collaboration with the Parish Committee continues with enthusiasm and productivity. Joint meetings between the Board and the Committee are planned throughout the year; all are welcome to attend.

- Two new joint committees have been established by members of the Board and the Parish Committee. The first is a Fundraising committee dedicated to new and innovative ways of raising badly-needed capital for the church. Exciting new plans are already being drawn up to address this age-old problem. The second is a Grants committee, dedicated to taking advantage of as many different available grants as possible. Anyone with grant-writing expertise is welcome to join this committee or serve as a consultant; help and input is always welcome.

- Michael

Annual Meeting

The **Annual Meeting** will be in June. At this meeting we hear reports from the committees, review the proposed budget and elect new officers and members of different committees. We are a very small group and so it is very important that we all do our share. Please seriously consider taking this opportunity to serve in one of the many positions:

Moderator (1-year)
Clerk (1 year)
Auditor (1 year)
Treasurer (1 year)
Parish Committee (3 years)
Board of Trustees (3 years)
RE Committee (1 year)
Ministerial Committee (1 year)
Program Committee (1 year)

If you have any questions, please call a member of the Parish Committee.