

September 2009

# First Parish News



## Upcoming Events:

- September 6, Sunday service and RE 10am, "Gathering Again: A Water Communion"
- September 12, ArtsFest Booth
- September 13, Guest speaker Sam Richardson, Buddhism service. Sunday service and RE 10am
- September 20, Sunday service and RE 10am, Rev. Marguerite Sheehan
- September 26, 6pm Breakfast 8-10am
- September 27, Sunday service and RE 10am

## Individual Highlights:

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*First Parish of Northfield Unitarian Monthly Newsletter*

## Announcements

### First Parish announcements:

#### Northfield Food Pantry

Remember to bring canned or dry good each Sunday for the hungry in our own Franklin County. The youth will collect these foods as part of our Sunday Offerings and will be taking these contributions to the Northfield Food Pantry.

#### Water Water Everywhere

September 6th is our Ingathering Service and Water Communion. On this first Sunday of our church year we will gather together to participate in a simple ceremony for which you are invited to bring a small amount of water from your summer adventures (including the many days of rainy weather!) We will blend the waters together, symbolizing the connections of our faith community and the many sources of inspiration that we draw on in our UU traditions.

#### Save the Date

Saturday, September 12th is the Annual ArtsFest at Green Trees Gallery. As in past years, First Parish will have a Food Booth

#### Chalice Sundays: Sing, Reflect, Listen: All That and More!

This year at First Parish we are going to be trying something a bit new. Once a month we will be having a "Chalice Sunday." This is a lay lead service, with a theme chosen by a church member or friend, a short reading, and a few questions for the congregation to reflect on. In many ways it will feel like our usual Sunday service, without the sermon and

with your input! We will listen to Lynne's beautiful piano playing. We will sing our hymns. The children will have a story. And we will also have time to reflect and "talk back" about a topic.

This is a Sunday version of the Conversation Circle that we have been having for the past two years. The participants of that Circle agreed that the opportunity to reflect together on spiritual or religious (however you conceive of "spiritual or religious") questions was too good to keep for an evening group and would be suitable for a Sunday service. Those of you who have been interested in the Conversation Circle but could not come because of child care or who found coming out in the evening to be a challenge, will get to participate on these Sunday mornings!

Reverend Marguerite will be starting off with a Chalice Sunday on September 20th to model this type of service. And then it will be up to you, the members and friends of the church, to keep it going! Join us in this new type of Sunday service. Bring the children. Bring a friend. Bring your heart and your mind! Our Unitarian Universalist chalice can symbolize many things including freedom of religion and freedom of speech. What better name could there be for a Sunday service where the lay members and friends gather to reflect on our own questions of meaning. Chalice Sunday - Something new for a new church year.

~Rev. Marguerite Sheehan

# Minister's Corner

Welcome back as we gather together as a community of faith after our summer hiatus. Summer is fast fading. Labor Day is upon us, and so, with that call to action, we come back to church, back to community, back to worship and church breakfasts and dinners and fellowship and all the activities that help define who we are at First Parish.

This year we begin our services on Labor Day weekend – September 6th. This is a week earlier than usual, so set your clocks and set your calendars. We will be gathering with our traditional “water communion” where you are invited to bring to church a small (small!) sample of water that represents your summer. It may be water from the faucet – representing your delight to have had more time at home this summer. Or perhaps it is water from a puddle, reminding us of all the rainy days of summer and the sense that goodness is overflowing in your life. Or perhaps it is a bit of water from a place where you swam, or fished, or sat in quiet, or sailed into the big blue sea. That water might represent relaxation, rejuvenation, joy, even bliss.

So come to church on September 6th and bring a container of water and let us know what it means to you. This is not a travelogue although you might tell us if you traveled. It is a bit of you, to be mixed with a bit of everyone else, and if we are lucky, that water will be used later this year in the dedication of some of our children. In this way we gather again, share our blessings, and pass them on to the next generation.

I am looking forward to this year for many reasons. I want to gather round the church building and look up at the beautiful restored clapboards; repainted, and renewed. I want to walk with you as you look even more closely at how we welcome the stranger into our midst and how wide we open the doors. I want to join with you in your creative ideas for fun(d) raising and I want to listen to how you talk to each other and the people of Northfield about your church, what it means to you and to the

town and to the world. I want to kick off our new “Chalice Sundays” where you will be getting the opportunity to not just listen to a sermon but participate in reflecting on a message. Last year we talked about the idea of having a “bring a friend Sunday.” How about starting with Sunday September 6th? Bring yourself, bring a friend, bring some water, and bring your hopes, your dreams and your big ideas to church. First Parish is a haven in a storm, a center in our town, a heart filled, and nourishing community. Come on September 6th and begin again.

In Peace and Anticipation.  
Reverend Marguerite

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## Parish Committee News

From the Parish Committee:

The Parish Committee will be meet on the 1st Sunday of each month following the church service. Our meetings are open and you are welcome to bring any suggestions or concerns to our attention.

PC members:

Noelle Anson  
Karina Berenson  
Stephanic Ciccarello  
Betty Gibson  
Mary Anne Ladd  
Ruth Potee  
Jean Shepard  
Mo Spaulding  
Lynne Warrin, ex-officio  
Marguerite Sheehan, ex-officio