

In the Spirit*Rev. Victoria Weinstein*

Oprah, Oprah, Oprah, what could you be thinking? You have been our priestess of secular culture for years now, and we have had good cause to trust your judgment. But in your embrace of “The Secret,” you are promoting an incredibly vapid and even harmful brand of New Age spirituality that claims that all we have to do is think positive thoughts and we can manifest anything we want in our lives.

Oprah, this isn't anything new and revolutionary: a more respectable version of this was done by Norman Vincent Peale back in the 50's, by the Course in Miracles founders in the 1970's and by Shakti Gawain in the 80's in her best-seller, *Creative Visualization*. But this newly-packaged, wildly irresponsible New Age nonsense you're hawking has something that none of those other versions had: it has your imprimatur, and for that reason, hundreds of thousands – maybe millions -- more people will investigate “The Secret” and take it seriously. And it shouldn't be. In a world where systemic oppression is the root of many evils, and where many people are uninvited to the table of power and privilege, where environmental toxins make so many of us sick, and where our lives are inextricably wound with unhealthy others who may be the source of many of our problems, it is not just ignorant but cruel to say, “the energy you put into the world -- both good and bad -- is exactly what comes back to you. This means *you* create the circumstances of your life with the choices you make every day.” As Peter Birkenhead of Salon.com points out, there is a serious ethical issue present in the fact that Oprah Winfrey, “from a studio within walking distance of Chicago's notorious Cabrini Green Projects, pitches a book that says, ‘The only reason any person does not have enough money is because they are blocking money from coming to them with their thoughts.’

Yes, thoughts are important. Positive thinking has its merits. There is a kernel of truth in the Law of Attraction, but not enough substance to warrant the basis of an entire spiritual philosophy. “The Secret,” in being chock-full of outrageously stupid claims (Moses, Abraham, and Jesus were “prosperity teachers” and millionaires? Reeeeeeally?), failing to acknowledge the reality of interdependence and the moral imperative of “loving thy neighbor as thyself,” is not a Secret any of us needs to keep.

In faith, hope and love,
Vicki

Caring Corner

We are very happy to welcome **Judy Bond** and **Jim Bond** as the newest members of our congregation. Judy and her son Jim live in Hanover, and signed the book in early March.

Meetings...

Alliance Meeting, Wed., March 21, 10 a.m. in the Parish Hall

Alliance Book Review, Wed., March 28, 10 a.m. in the Fogg Parlor

Caregivers' Group, Tues., March 27, 7:30 p.m. in the Fogg Parlor

Denominational Affairs, Monday, March 26, 7:30 p.m. in the Church Office.

Membership Committee, Monday, March 19, 7:30 p.m. in the Fogg Parlor.

Parish Committee, Tues., March 20, 7:00 p.m. in the Fogg Parlor

Adult Learning News

One spiritual practice that you could take up during Lent is to attend one or more of our adult learning offerings. Here is what is coming up!

Blessed are those who...

Attend Bible Study!

Our First Parish Bible Study, *A Panorama of Life*, continues on Sunday, April 1st with a study of the Beatitudes. These petitions are central to the teachings of Jesus and can be a vital part of our spiritual lives today. Read Matthew 5: 1-11 and join us on Sunday morning at 9 a.m. in the Fogg Parlor. Call or email stuart twite if you have questions or need a Bible!

Third Thursday Poetry Night at the James continues this Thursday, March 15th, at 7 p.m. Read your own poetry, your favorites, or just come and listen. Hope to see you there!

ALLIANCE NEWS

The March program is going to be a very special event. (Note that this is a change from the program brochure.) Louise Beaudreau, a naturalist from the South Shore Natural Science Center, will be presenting a program featuring reptiles that are native to the South Shore and will be bringing live animals. Come, stroke a nice, cool, smooth snake or pat some warm furry animals! All are welcome. The meeting will be on Wednesday, March 21st in the Parish Hall. Refreshments will be served at 10 with a short business meeting and program to follow. We hope you will come and bring a friend.

!ATTENTION!

The snow-cancelled February Book Review with Winnie Lou Rounds has been rescheduled for March 28th at 10 a.m. in the Fogg Parlor.

On Monday, April 2nd at 1:30 p.m., all ladies are invited, through the Alliance to the First Parish Church in Plymouth for their annual Interfaith musical program. always very nice, then followed with refreshments and conversation. If you would like to attend, call Barb Meacham, 781-659-2940 by March 26th so she can RSVP a head-count to them.

The Piano Concert to benefit the Organ Restoration Project, which was scheduled for Saturday, March 17 at the James Library, has been postponed. Rogerio Santos hopes to reschedule the concert at a later date in June. If you have already purchased tickets, please see Bob Detwiler for your refund.

FOGG LECTURE

On Sunday, April 15 at 7:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall, Peter Kelly-Detwiler will speak on **Policy Responses to Climate Change, and Implications for the Individual**". His presentation outline is:

- ❖ What does science tell of climate change?
- ❖ How is the world responding?
- ❖ Data points from Australia, Lloyds of London, etc.
- ❖ How is the U.S. responding?
- ❖ What are the implications?
- ❖ How can we as individuals respond?

Peter is the Sr. Director, Energy Technology Services: Constellation New Energy. He is responsible nationwide working with corporations and municipalities on designing plans for energy reduction an/or the use of renewable energy technologies.

He has been selected as the Earth Day speaker (April 22nd) at the Scituate Unitarian church and is working with the Duxbury UU church in implementing a plan for integrating the use of energy saving fluorescent light bulbs in church households. They have already ordered 200 of these bulbs with the hope of ordering more in the future.

Fluorescent energy-saving light bulbs can be purchased from Elizabeth Lewis in the Parish Hall at Coffee Hour. Each six-pack of bulbs are sold for \$6.00, a very good price. These are supplied to us at cost by Peter Kelly-Detwiler. The church will make 25¢ a light bulb which will go to outreach or use by the Environmental Committee.

Peter has also volunteered his services to audit a home for ascertaining energy savings. This will be auctioned off at our church "Goods and Services Auction" to be held on Saturday, March 24th.

SERVICE COMMITTEE

*"...to minister to each others needs
and to those of humanity..."*

The Service Committee thanks all of you for your generous contributions to the Second Sunday outreach for the Clinton Foundation Pediatric AIDS Initiative. Second Sunday contributions were over \$1400 from the congregation. The Service Committee rounded up the contribution to \$2,000. In addition, the Fogg Committee made a very generous contribution of another \$1,000. In total, the church raised \$3,000 for the Pediatric AIDS Initiative to provide affordable life saving antiretroviral therapy to children in the developing world. Thank you Church!

The new Parish Directory of Members, Friends and Young People has been completed.

Pick up a copy at Coffee Hour or visit the Church Office and we will give you one.

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

Paper Goods: towels, toilet paper, facial tissues, paper napkins (we can break up large packages) **Also,** fruit juices, canned dog food, dry cat food. **General Needs:** instant coffee, tea bags, school snacks such as juice boxes and pudding packs, canned ravioli, luncheon meats, canned carrots, canned white potatoes, instant mashed potatoes, shampoo, shaving cream, dishwashing liquid, laundry detergent, toothpaste, house cleaning supplies.

Religious Education at First Parish

From the DRE,

This past Sunday left me with a feeling that I always get on Sunday—gratitude. I am deeply grateful to be a part of such a wonderful and rich community. First, of course, are the spiritual, moral and intellectual rewards of our Sunday Church Service, the Church School, and the chance to see many good friends. Then later in the afternoon, I attended another in an excellent series of concerts at the James.

The James Library was established by First Parish Church from a donation by Josiah James, a South Scituate native then living in Chicago. The minister of First Parish at that time was singularly qualified to make the most of this generous donation. Rev. William Fish had a burning desire for moral, intellectual, and social reform. James' donation allowed him to build a library that served as parish hall and cultural center. Constructed in 1873, it began with 600 books, many selected by Rev. Fish. The James also served as a Parish meeting place. At the concert yesterday, I sat next to Eleanor and Richard Gaudette who have been a part of First Parish for several decades. Eleanor Gaudette told me her memories of Church Suppers at the James and of attending Sunday School there as a child. It was a joy to talk to them both.

Today the library contains an art gallery, holds outstanding musical concerts and literary events and, of course, houses an excellent store of books including several of the original 600 volumes.

Very few corners of the world are as fortunate as ours. If you want personal, spiritual, intellectual, cultural, musical, artistic, or literary opportunities, you need look no further than our own First Parish Church and James Library and Center for the Arts. If you have never stopped in, do so and visit with our outstanding Library Director Caroline Chapin, check out the books and visit the current art gallery show. It is my honor to serve on the James Library Board of Trustees, so if you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask. And for more information on:

Rev. Fish: <http://www.firstparishnorwell.org/history.htm#fish>

James background: http://www.firstparishnorwell.org/jameshist_st.doc (a history written by a member of our Parish Committee, Sally Turner)

The James Today: <http://firstparishnorwell.org/james.html>

In Gratitude, stuart twite (DRE)

We welcome all new members of all ages. It gives us great joy that you are here! If you have any questions about our programs, please don't hesitate to call or email me at:

Stuart Twite: H-781 837 8791, Church-781 659-7122, or DREStuart@aol.com

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Donation list

SERVICE AUCTION 2007

March 24, 2007 at 6:30 pm

<u>Item #</u>	<u>Donor</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Value</u>
1.	Parish Committee	Reserved Pew for Xmas Eve (1 each service)	Priceless
2.	Chris Kitchenham	Family Beach Membership to Cedar Hill, Duxbury	\$ 55
3.	Linda Goodwin	Gift Certificate to Mezzo Mare Restaurant – Hull	\$50
4.	Rev. Vicki	Tea, cookies & a serious Tarot reading (min.\$20)	\$ 75
5.	Elizabeth Robinson	Pet Sitting stay, up to 4 days – 1 animal & charcoal Portrait of your pet.	\$ 60
6.	Joyce & Jim Pickel	7 course French meal for 6 - Nov. 17 - \$50 per person	\$100/couple
7.	Sue Robinson	Once a month Homemade Bread (\$25 min.)	\$ 50
8.	Carol Neely	To-die-for pound cake (3 separate ones) Take tonight.	Priceless
9.	Betsey Detwiler	Two tickets to Buttonwood Books & Toys, Cohasset, coffee with the Authors, June_____	\$30
10.	Peg Carpenter	French Tablecloth (5'x8') & 6 napkins (\$15 minimum)	\$75
11.	Detwilers	Dinner at the Detwiler's for 6 (\$50 per person)	\$ 100 /couple
12.	Rev. Vicki	Walden Picnic & history tour for 6 (\$60 min.)	\$ 250
13.	Rick & Cindy Casey	Marco Island, Florida – 1 week in their 2 BR poolside condo, May 1-Dec.1. (min. \$500)	\$1000
14.	George Goodwin	Recane 1 hand-woven chair to 80 holes (min.\$75)	\$ 200
15.	Larry Baker	Weekend at NH lake vacation home w/kayaks (min\$100)	\$300
16.	Paul &Netta Vercollone	2 Red Sox Tickets (date not yet known)	\$ 100 each ??
17.	Bob Detwiler	Stock (\$100min.)	\$200
18.	Bob Sutter	“Toast the Morning” – 2 loaves toasting bread	Yummy
19.	Gingy Grimes & Frank	2 hours of viola & piano background music (\$100min) (will repeat)	Priceless
20.	Paul & Netta Vercollone	Two hour sunset cruise for 4 on Pontoon boat on North River w/wine and cheese	???
21.	Nancy Fuller	Round of Golf at Marshfield Country Club for 2 or 3 (playing with member -Nancy) (Min \$100)	\$240

22.	Mary Lou Sutter	1 pint freshly made pesto	yummy
23.	Helen Keeler	Weekday trip to MFA for 3 w/lunch & tickets to to Edward Hopper exhibit optional (min. \$50)	\$135
24.	Cathy Harder-Bernier	One hour of Personal Training at SSYMCA (\$25)	\$45
25.	Mary Lou Sutter	12" cherry bowl (Min. \$60)	\$150
26.	Paul & Netta Vercollone	5 separate car wash packages to Verc Briteway on Route 53, Norwell	\$18 each
27.	Paul Coolidge	2 BSO (Boston Symphony) tickets (\$75 min. for two)	\$60 each
28.	Bruce Bartone	1 hour guitar lesson (use of instrument, including child size)	Priceless
29.	Peter Fairbanks	Free Energy Conservation Audit - up to 100,000sq.ft.	\$5,000
30.	Chris & Corina Silva	Cruise Boston Harbor in 36' sailboat w/refreshm. families welcome	Priceless
31.	Donna & George Wilson	Campsite near Newfound Lake, NH, trout stream (min.\$20)	\$20 night
32.	Danny & Karen Bernier	24 hours of pet sitting in our home (with our chocolate lab) (min. \$5) Call our mom Cathy to schedule.	\$10-15
33.	Conor Detwiler	Family photographic portrait by noted photographer (min. \$100)	\$200
34.	Joanne Howard	Custom mat & frame artwork or photo (min. \$20)	\$ 40
35.	John & M. Selby	Harwichport cottage, 1 st , 2 nd , or 3 rd .weekend in June. (no college students) (min. \$200)	\$ 250
36.	Roberta Fairbanks	3-90 minutes of basic knitting lessons (6.5 hr.)	\$60
37.	Elizabeth Lewis	Handmade mother's bracelet	
38.	Peg Kitchenham	25"x30" unframed print of "The Giant" by N.C. Wyeth	\$40
39.	Rick Railsback	Picnic Cruise for up to 6 on 26' bassboat (min.\$125)	\$250
40.	John Meddaugh	18 holes Golf at Pinehills – 3 tee times w/cart (\$75 ea.)	\$105/each
41.	Bob Detwiler	2 Tickets to dress rehearsal of "Marriage of Figaro" (\$50 min for two)	\$ 50 each
42.	Joanne Howard	Hand knit and felted tote bag (Min. \$20)	\$40
43.	Peter Detwiler	Home Energy Audit & conservation (min. \$25)	\$50-100
44.	Jackie Magazu	Repair Gift Certificate to Midway Auto, Abington	\$100

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THE SPIRE

**TIME-RELATED MATERIAL
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

SEE YOU AT THE AUCTION – SATURDAY, MARCH 24 AT 6:30 P.M.! **PARTIAL LISTING OF AUCTION GOODS AND SERVICES ON PGS. 6 & 7!!!**

- Sun., Mar. 18 Bible Study, Fogg Parlor 9 a.m.
Morning Worship, Church School, Youth Group, Babycare 10 a.m.
Coffee Hour 11 a.m.
Forum in Fogg Parlor 11:30 a.m.
- Mon., Mar. 19 SSHAGLY, Skylight Room 7-9 p.m.
AA, Parish Hall 8:30 p.m.
Membership Committee, Fogg Parlor 7:30 p.m.
- Tues., Mar. 20 Parish Committee, Fogg Parlor 7:00 p.m.
- Wed., Mar. 21 Alliance Meeting, Parish Hall 10 a.m.
- Thurs., Mar. 22 Choir Rehearsal, Skylight Room 7:30 p.m.
- Fri., Mar. 23 Ballroom Dancers in Parish Hall
- Sat., Mar. 24 Yoga in the Skylight Room 9:30 a.m.
Goods and Services Auction in Parish Hall
- Sunday, Mar. 25 Morning Service, Church School, Youth Group, Babycare 10 a.m.
Coffee Hour 11 a.m.
SPIRE DEADLINE
- Monday, Mar. 26 SSHAGLY, Skylight Room 7-9 p.m.
AA, Parish Hall 8:30 p.m.
Survivors' Group, Fogg Parlor 7:30 p.m.
Denominational Affairs, Church Office 7:30 p.m.
- Tues., Mar. 27 Caregivers' Group, Fogg Parlor 7:30 p.m.
- Wed., Mar. 28 South Shore Cluster, Braintree 6:30 p.m.
Alliance Book Review, Fogg Parlor 10 a.m.
- Thurs., Mar. 29 Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m.