

April 25, 2007

# The Spire

The Newsletter of the First Parish Church of Norwell, Massachusetts

781-659-7122

April 25, 2007

Vol. V Issue 17

## Sunday Services – 10 a.m.

**April 29**

*Rev. Victoria Weinstein*

### **“Breaking and Entering: Reflections on Commandments Against Stealing and Against Adultery”**

Continuing with our Ten Commandments series, we consider the ways that the admonitions not to steal and not to commit adultery are connected emotionally and socially

**Ushers:** Cathy and Dan Phillips

**Pulpit Arrangement:** Marguerite Pierce **Chalice Lighter:** open

**Coffee Hour:** Lisa Messersmith and Tom Kane & Chris and Corina Silva

**May 6**

*Robin Abrahams and Rev. Victoria Weinstein*

### **“Miss Conduct Speaks:**

#### **Civility and the Social Graces In An Uncivil Age”**

Robin Abrahams, a Cambridge resident and Ph.D. in psychology who writes the “Miss Conduct” column for the *Boston Globe*, will share the pulpit with our minister. They will discourse on the abandonment of the “social graces” in our age, how vilification of political correctness has led to a terrible degradation of civility, and how their own religious values inform their work as writers who seek to address serious issues in a humorous and engaging manner.

**Ushers:** Bob and Mary Lou Sutter

**Pulpit Arrangement:** Harry Heineman

**Chalice Lighter:** open **Coffee Hour:** open

**May 13**

### **MUSIC SUNDAY**

*Music Director Gingy Grimes, The Music Committee, the Choir,  
Various Church Members, and Rev. Victoria Weinstein*

What a treat we have in store this Sunday! We will celebrate our ministry of music, share the musical talent of many church members and friends, and take up our Second Sunday offering.

**Ushers:** Kathy and Bruce Bartone

**Pulpit Arrangement:** Mary Eliot **Chalice Lighter:** open

**Coffee Hour:** Kerry Ouellett, Carrie Brandon and Amy Stephenson

## FIRST PARISH CHURCH

*of Norwell, Massachusetts*

24 River Street, P.O. Box 152

Norwell, MA 02061

**Office Hours:** 9-Noon, M&F  
9-1, T,W, Th

**PHONE:** 781-659-7122

**FAX:** 781-659-7939

**E-MAIL:**

[office@firstparishnorwell.org](mailto:office@firstparishnorwell.org)

**HOME PAGE:**

[www.firstparishnorwell.org](http://www.firstparishnorwell.org)

**Minister:** *Rev. Victoria Weinstein*  
*In an emergency, call the Parsonage:*  
781-659-7288

**Director of Religious Education:**

*Stuart Twite, 781-837-8791*

**Director of Youth Programming**

*Jennifer Anderson 617-763-2799*

**Music Director:** *Gingy Grimes*

**Parish Committee:**

*Chris Silva, Chair*

*(Home) 781-871-6819*

**Committee Members:**

*David Dube, John Meddaugh,*

*Jim Pickel, Cathy Phillips,*

*Sally Turner and Derek Sulc*

**Treasurer:** *Marta Reese*

**Collector:** *Jeannette Mitchell*

**Minister Emeritus:**

*Richard M. Fewkes*

The **deadline** for the next issue of THE SPIRE is **Sunday, May 6<sup>th</sup>**. Submissions may be emailed as an attachment to:

[office@firstparishnorwell.org](mailto:office@firstparishnorwell.org), or dropped off in hard copy or disk at the church office.

## In the Spirit

*Rev. Victoria Weinstein*

I remember Chris, a tall, shy student in my creative writing class at Hill-Murray High School in the suburbs of St. Paul, Minnesota. He submitted several assignments that were horrifically violent, obscene, misogynist nightmares, all of which I returned to him with a failing grade and the instruction to rewrite.

One day Chris came to see me after class, arrogant and angry. How could I demand that he rewrite these papers? This was *creative writing*. He was just being *creative*. I sternly informed him that not only did his papers fail to meet the expectations established by the assignments (yes, even *creative writing* has its parameters!), his efforts were offensive and disturbing. Furthermore, if he kept arguing with me about it, I would mail his papers home and let his parents weigh in on the merits of his great creative expression.

Chris left my classroom muttering under his breath. I was irritated, but certainly not fearful. I had been a schoolteacher for several years by that time and was well-acquainted with such contretemps, mostly fueled, I figured, by raging hormones.

This was before Columbine. It was before all of the schoolroom shootings that have become a far too regular feature in our national news for us to accept any longer.

We have all grieved the senseless deaths of 32 members of the Virginia Tech community. The killer was obviously mentally ill, he was a known threat, and yet no one in the administration had – or felt they had – the authority to insist that he get help. We learn that he had been a misfit throughout his youth, angry, uncommunicative, friendless, the butt of jokes, alienated, hostile, unresponsive to overtures. We know how easy it was for him to obtain two handguns, and to have his federally mandated background check cleared.

Thirty two people -- and the tormented and deranged Cho Seung-Hui --died horrible, violent deaths on April 17. This past year, thirty-thousand Americans died from gunshot wounds. Gun homicides in Boston are rampant.

Considering all of this, I resonated strongly with Tim Zagat's letter to the editor of the *New York Times* on April 19, which read, "In light of the tragic events at Virginia Tech, and in the spirit of legal clarity, perhaps we should change the language of the Second Amendment to what it has effectively become. The amendment currently states, 'A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.'

To align with what the National Rifle Association and its political handmaidens assert, let's change it to: 'As a protected part of American culture, the right of psychopaths, criminals and violent family members to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.'

At least that would be more honest." (Tim Zagat)

To quote the great Pete Seeger, "When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?"

In faith, hope and love,  
Vicki

## Meetings

**Alliance Board**, Wed., May 16, 10 a.m. in the Fogg Parlor

**Caregivers' Group**, Tues., May 22, 7:30 p.m. in the Fogg Parlor

**Denominational Affairs**, Mon., May 14, 7:30 p.m. in the Church Office

**Finance Committee**, Tues., May 8, 7:15 p.m. in the Church Office

**Music Committee**, Sun., April 29, 11:45 a.m. in the Skylight Room

**Parish Committee**, Tues., May 15, 7 p.m. in the Fogg Parlor

**Service Committee**, Sunday, May 13, 11:30 a.m. in the Fogg Parlor

## Sign up Now for The Circle Dinner Sat. May 5

You're invited to our houses! Come have dinner with 6-8 other members and friends of First Parish and get to know us better. Everyone brings part of the meal. See Peg Kitchenham at coffee hour.

Peg Kitchenham is looking for a volunteer to help her coordinate the next Circle Dinner. You need to walk around at coffee hour and ask people to sign up. I'll also teach you how to organize the list. It is not a lot of work. Please give me a call at home this week, 781-447-5831. Thanks.

### AN ALERT FOR ALL FIRST PARISH GARDENERS!

In this wonderful warm weather, many of us are rushing to our gardens. Please remember the plant sale at our all-church fund-raiser, the Spring Market, and save for us plants you are thinning! What a wonderful way to recycle!

#### SPRING MARKET

(flea market/yard sale/crafts/  
toys/jewelry/books/plants/Silent Auction)

Saturday May 12

9-2:30 rain or shine (We expect sun!)

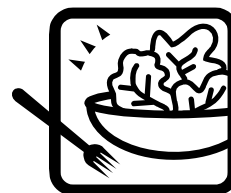
#### CALLING ALL RED SOX FANS!

How would you like 2 tickets to a Red Sox game?

The Vercollones have once again generously donated 2 of their season tickets to the Spring Market. Buy Red Sox raffle tickets- 1 for \$1 or 6 for \$5!

Tickets will be sold at the Market on Sat. May 12 and at Coffee Hours starting this Sunday (April 29!)

## ALLIANCE ANNUAL LUNCHEON AND MEETING



**WHEN: Wednesday, May 2, 2007  
12:30 p.m.**

**WHERE: Fogg Parlor**

**WHAT: Delicious homemade casseroles, salads and Brownie-ice cream dessert**

**WHY: To vote on officers for next year  
To socialize with members & friends of the Church  
How better to spend a day on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May!**

## The First Parish Book Club Reads:

Mountains Beyond Mountains:  
The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer,  
a Man Who Would Cure the World.

by Tracy Kidder.

Two discriminating regulars at Book Group have very highly recommended this excellent book. It is in paperback and readily available.

Join us Wednesday evening, May 9<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. in the Church Office. Refreshments are provided.

## Fogg Scholarship Applications Deadline of May 1<sup>st</sup>!

The Fogg Scholarship Committee is accepting applications from graduating seniors who will be attending accredited post secondary educational institutions (including trade schools) that lead to a diploma, certification or license. **Completed applications must be returned to the church office by May 1, 2007.**

## First Parish Knitters

If you were inspired by the baby caps created last fall, don't miss the newest project – Comfort Dolls being sent to AIDS orphans in Africa. Samples of the dolls are on the Service Committee Table along with a pattern to knit. This doll, made from leftover pieces of yarn, can be knit in about an hour. Return finished dolls to the table and they will join others being sent to Africa this summer.

## James Library & Center for the Arts

**Jazz at the James**

**Saturday, April 28 at 7:30 p.m.**

The Felice Pomeranz Quartet.

Cool jazz at The James. See you there.

## THE HEIFER GIFT ARK PROJECT

We did it! As of Christmas, we had raised our goal of \$5,000!!! In fact, we have, to-date, \$6,241.65! Coins and bills are still turning up in the model of the ark in the Parish Hall! We are still “fishing for pennies” for the Heifer Gift Ark at the RE table! Thank you to Ed Mosher, who once again gave us a large amount of pennies, and to the anonymous person who left a bag-full of pennies! These add up! Thank you to everyone!

We have one more Heifer activity-the church school classes will hold an Animal Fair at Coffee Hour on Sunday April 29, just in time for Mother's Day! Last Fall each class talked about Heifer International and a specific animal, which they will “talk up” at the Animal Fair. A share of an animal is only \$10-\$50. What a great Mother's Day present!

Yes, we have made our goal of \$5,000, but the kids were told that they would get to be in an Animal Fair for their class animal! Let's let them have the fun and get some more money for Heifer international!

## MassEquality to meet at First Parish

The Service Committee is sponsoring a meeting of MassEquality on Wednesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 6:30 p.m. This will be an opportunity for members of the church and the surrounding community to discuss new strategies in the campaign to defeat the anti-gay amendment and to learn of the positions of local legislators. The final legislative vote on the discriminatory, anti-gay marriage amendment is likely just weeks away.

Your help is needed at this organizing meeting. Come learn how you can get involved locally to protect equal marriage rights. We, at First Parish, are a Welcoming Congregation, dedicated to the causes MassEquality supports. Please join us. If you would like more information, please contact Kateri Nelis of MassEquality at 617-878-2364 or at [KateriNelis@massequality.org](mailto:KateriNelis@massequality.org)

## Religious Education at First Parish

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From the DRE:

What a glorious weekend! Yesterday, Earth Day, the church school and several teachers took a walk to the Norris Reservation and talked about why an Earth Day was even necessary. We talked about seeing the "same old thing" with fresh eyes—in my mind a central goal of earth day. We are fortunate to live in a place surrounded by natural beauty yet it is all too easy to take it for granted.

To get this new perspective, Ralph Waldo Emerson suggested spreading your legs, bending over and looking at the landscape upside down (we did that yesterday). Henry David Thoreau took long walks every day over the same landscape and when he needed a new perspective he started taking these walks at night.

Of course the main aspect, and primary reason earth day is necessary, is awareness of how we treat the natural world and the necessity for change. Toward that end we talked about what each of us can do (our children are very knowledgeable about these issues which should give us all hope) and we picked up trash on the side of the road on the way back to church (one of my new favorite Church School memories is the vision of watching our pre K-Kindergarten teacher, June Gustafson, meeting one of our wonderful new parents and explaining how great the church school is with a Jack Daniels whiskey bottle in her hand!)

In my children's talk yesterday, I referred to the Buddhist concept of "Beginners Mind", the approaching of all things—even things we think we "know"—with a fresh mind free of preconceptions. Though the earth is very old and sometimes seems to be too large and solid to be endangered, beginners mind lets us see that every human action has an impact, and that that impact can be for good or ill. Our church school children give me great hope that our future actions will be largely good and that the future of our planet is in good hands.

Many Blessings, stuart

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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](mailto:DREStuart@aol.com)

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### Adult Learning News

#### Blessed are those who...Attend Bible Study!

Our First Parish Bible Study, A Panorama of Life, continues on Sunday, April 29th with a study of the Sermon on the Mount. This sermon is the central statement of the religion of Jesus. Read Matthew 5-7 and join us on Sunday morning at 9:00am in the Fogg Parlor. Call or email stuart twite if you have questions or need a Bible!

The First Parish Book Club reads:

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Two discriminating regulars at Book Group have very highly recommended this excellent book. It is in paperback and readily available.

Join us Wednesday Evening, May 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm in the Church Office. Refreshments are provided.

□ If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, check here and drop in the mail. No postage is required.

**FIRST PARISH UNITARIAN**  
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Norwell, Massachusetts 02061

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# *THE SPIRE*

TIME-RELATED MATERIAL  
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## Come to the Animal Fair!

Sponsored by the church school kids and the Youth Group!

Coffee Hour-Sunday April 29

Come to learn about the Heifer International animals the classes have studied this year.

PreK-K-bees

1st & 2nd- pigs

3rd & 4th-sheep

5th & 6th-goats

7th & 8th-llamas

Youth Group-Heifers

Come to shop for a Mother's Day gift- a share of an animal is as low as \$5.00!

