

January 23, 2008

The Spire

The Newsletter of the First Parish Church of Norwell, Massachusetts

781-659-7122

January 23, 2008

Vol. VI Issue 10

Sunday Services – 10 a.m.

Jan. 27: Former Interim Minister, Rev. Jan Knost in the pulpit.

Feb. 3: Founders Sunday: "The Democratic Principle" *Rev. Victoria Weinstein*

On this anniversary of the gathering of our congregation in 1642, we will celebrate the use of the democratic process in our religious lives, considering it in conjunction with our Fifth UU Principle, "The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process in our congregations and in society at large." Don't think that voting is a spiritual issue? Come and hear the minister argue otherwise.

Feb. 10, 17 & 24: A Lenten Sermon Series on Healing

Feb. 10: "Out of Control" SECOND SUNDAY *Rev. Victoria Weinstein*

We place a tremendous amount of value on the sense that we're in control of things, events and relationships in our lives. Buddhism teaches that all control is an illusion. Are we ready to consider that? How might it heal our lives to do so? Bob Neely, a former member of the Peace Corps, will be giving our Faith Journey.

Our offering this week goes to Women for Women International which provides women survivors of war, civil strife and other conflicts with the tools and resources to move from crisis and poverty to stability and self-sufficiency, thereby promoting viable civil societies.

Feb. 17: "Unlimited Love" *Rev. Victoria Weinstein*

Many of us are raised with the idea that we have to earn love; an emotional belief that we carry into adulthood with very serious consequences for physical and emotional health. We will turn to our Universalist heritage for spiritual insights regarding the unlimited love of God/Universe, a teaching that is meant to better equip us for inner life and the life of relationships, and to prepare us for an easier, more compassionate transition into old age and death.

Feb. 24: *Rev. Victoria Weinstein*

"Now Hear This: The Healing Power of Compassionate Listening"

As the Pastoral Caregivers and I work together to train them to "walk the parish" as spiritual caregivers and friends, we talk a lot about the power of attentive listening and presence. When someone is really suffering, what can listening do? It's so passive! Can I really be a healing presence when I'm doing nothing but listening? Come meet our new PC's and reflect on this question together.

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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:

John Meddaugh, Chair

(Home) 781-659-2901

Committee Members:

Melody Barlow, David Dube,

John Meddaugh, Cathy Phillips,

Jim Pickel, Derek Sulc

and Sally Turner

Treasurer: *Marta Reese*

Collector: *Jeannette Mitchell*

Minister Emeritus:

Rev. Richard M. Fewkes

The **deadline** for the next issue of
 THE SPIRE is **Sunday, February 3rd** .

Submissions may be emailed as an
 attachment to:

office@firstparishnorwell.org, or
 dropped off in hard copy or disk at
 the church office.

The new edition of the Parish List of Members,
 Friends and Young People will be produced
 during the month of February.
 Please take a moment at Coffee Hour during the
 next week or two to check your listing as it currently
 appears in our database
 and pencil in any changes!

CARING CORNER

Our minister is on vacation and will be back in the office on
 January 30th. If you need pastoral support, please call Misty-
 Dawn Shelley at 774-230-5550 or Stuart Twite at the church office.
 Judy Bond is the chair of our Pastoral Caregivers Team and is
 available at 781-826-9039.

Our condolences to Chris Silva and his family on the death of his
 mother, Evelyn Bishop Silva. A memorial service was held at First
 Parish on January 14.

Friend and former Music Director at First Parish, John Riley,
 passed away after a long illness in the first week of January. His
 funeral was held on Saturday, January 19 at the chapel in
 Stonehill College, where he and his wife Margaret were married.
 We remember John fondly. May he rest in peace.

Nominating Committee

There are multiple vacancies on the horizon for which First Parish
 has need of candidates. Perhaps you or someone you know
 would be interested in serving on one of these leadership
 committees. They are:

Parish Committee

Denominational Affairs Committee

Fogg Endowment

James Library and Center for the Arts

Finance Committee

South Scituate First Parish Fund

Nominating Committee

If you are a church member and are interested in any of these
 positions or in finding out more about them, please call Clayton
 Handleman, Bob Detwiler, Phyllis Buell, Scott Babcock or Kathy
 Bartone for further information.

Alliance News

Everyone's favorite, Winnie Lou Rounds, will entertain us at the February Alliance Book Review. This will be held in the Fogg Parlor on Wednesday February 13th at 10 a.m. Hostesses for the day will be Joan Kenworthy, Jackie Magazu and Chris Travi. Come to hear what treat Winnie Lou has in store for us this year. Will it be wildflowers? Venice? Henry James? Baseball? Of course all members and friends of the Church are welcome to all Alliance meetings.

Easter Breakfast Coordinator Needed

This year, Easter will be on Sunday, March 23. Peg & Chris Kitchenham who have coordinated for the past few years will be leaving on vacation and may not be here. Coordination is fairly easy but does require your being available early (7:00 am) Easter morning to start the coffee and put one or two casserole's in the church ovens, cut coffee cake etc. The Activities Committee will help you with set-up on Saturday. You will need to talk to those who have brought casseroles and coffee cake in the past to see if they can again and perhaps recruit a few new people. From the lists of what has been purchased in the past, you need to buy the supplies (paper goods for the tables, juice, milk, cereal, casserole pans) from BJ's. (Marsha Babcock and Jackie Magazu have cards if you do not and could help you.) If you are willing to be a coordinator or to help, please call Peg Kitchenham, 781-447-5831.

Youth News

First Parish Norwell's youth group, AIR (Acceptance Is Required), meets on Sunday mornings at 10 AM in the Skylight Room. All those in grades 9 through 12 are welcome!

CALENDAR: WINTER/SPRING 2008

Sunday, February 10: Chocolate Auction

Sunday, March 30: Trip to Vedanta Center, Cohasset

Friday, April 11: Sunday, April 13: First Parish Duxbury Senior High Conference

Thursday, May 1: Fogg scholarship deadline for seniors

Sunday, May 4: Walk For Hunger, Boston

Sunday, May 18: Music Sunday

Sunday, June 7: Scholarship presentations

Your Environmental Committee encourages you to mark your calendar to give your **input to the South Shore Greenway study at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, January 29 in the Parish Hall.** The South Shore Greenway study is developing interconnected walking and bicycling paths from Hull and Hingham through Cohasset to Scituate and Norwell. The Greenway study covers Norwell, Scituate, Cohasset, Hingham and Hull. People from connecting communities might also be interested.

YOUTH CHOIR

Gingy Grimes and her assistants will continue to rehearse with the Youth Choir for the next two Sundays on Jan. 27 and Feb. 3. All children from second grade and older are invited to join the Youth Choir, who will be preparing musical selections for the upcoming service on February 10. The Youth Choir participants should report to the Skylight Room *immediately*, at the conclusion of Sunday School.

Report on the UU Principles and Purposes Adult Education Workshop

On Sunday evening, January 13, twelve parishioners attended the Principles and Purposes workshop sponsored by the Denominational Affairs Committee. The Commission on Appraisals asked member congregations to consider the Principles and Purposes and report the results of their discussions so that it can make a full report and recommendation to the delegates at GA 2008. This workshop was our congregation's opportunity to participate in this democratic and spiritual process. For this workshop, we concentrated only on the Principles and the sources that are listed in the same bylaw.

Able facilitated by Deanna Riley, we broke into three small groups. Each participant was asked to write answers to three questions and share them within our groups. The responses to a fourth question were shared with the entire group. All responses were written on index cards, and those cards have been sent to the Commission on Appraisals.

This was a wonderful opportunity to participate in the democratic process of our denomination and to examine our own lives and the life of our congregation through the lens of our Principles. This unusual, deliberate examination of our values is a way to become more mindful of how we interact with the world around us.

Thank you to all who participated and to those who baked the delicious desserts.

And an extra big thanks to Deanna Riley.

Take a few minutes to answer for yourself the questions to which we responded. It is a great opportunity to deepen your appreciation of the

Principles and how they affect the decisions you make in your life.

1. Tell of a time when the Principles impacted a decision you made.
2. What changes have you observed in the past 25 years in UUism and/or in society?
3. What are your hopes for our faith in the next 25 years?
4. What questions, suggestions or comments do you have regarding the Principles and Sources?

Hearts and Hands reach out to our Prison Ministry

The response to our January 13th service focusing on our Prison Ministry and the work of Partakers was truly inspiring. More than \$1200 was contributed in the open plate. The Service Committee will add to the collection and a donation of \$2000 will be given to Partakers, the organization that coordinates the mentors from First Parish who visit prisoners. If you would like to contribute, please forward your donation to the church office and indicate it is for Partakers.

Equally inspiring was the response for folks who have never been involve in this ministry to consider a visit to a prisoner, or consider creating a new team to begin supporting an additional prisoner. At least ten church members and friends asked to participate. Our current group of mentors, including Bev Gardner, Mary Mercier, Marcia Babcock, Jane and Stan Wilderoter, Deanna Riley, Dexter Robinson and Dorothy Montouri, will be setting up dates with these folks to visit one of our sponsored prisoners. In addition, we have the potential of a new team and have scheduled a training date for March 2nd with Partakers.

If you have interest in either a single visit or in becoming a team member (six to eight visits a year), please contact any of the mentors listed above. Your support in this life-changing ministry is very much appreciated.

Religious Education at First Parish

From the DRE:

One of my goals since becoming the Director of Religious Education here at First Parish has been to more fully integrate the RE program into the larger church family. Towards that end we have increased significantly our adult learning offerings (see below). During my first year, the Parish Committee made the DRE a member of the Parish Committee which was good indication of the importance our whole community places on Religious Education. Finally, through the efforts of some of our dedicated Sunday School Teachers, members of our congregation have made presentations on a wide range of topics to our children.

Most recently, Jim Pickel gave a talk on Islam to our 7th and 8th grade class and then brought one of his students to First Parish. Ibrahim Durrani, a junior at Thayer Academy, gave a talk to our 7th and 8th grades and Youth Group on what it is like to be a Muslim in America. His talk was of great benefit and very special experience for all. Many thanks to 7th and 8th grade teacher Cathy Phillips, Jim Pickel and, especially to Ibrahim Durrani!

Everyone in our congregation has gifts that would be of value to our children. If you would like to take part in this very important ministry, please contact me or sign up at the Religious Education table following worship. I will be happy to help you focus and prepare and you would never have to jump in solo. I look forward to talking with many of you about this exciting work!

Many Blessings, stuart

This week in Sunday School

Peaceville: We will work on Peaceville throughout the rest of this year so don't forget to help your children notice things about the towns in which we live that may or may not reflect our principles. These are good things to talk about in the car as we go to lessons, activities etc..

On Sunday the 27th, we will have a town meeting to talk about the laws that Peaceville will enact concerning the civil rights of all people.

Adult Learning: Join us for the following programs

Bible Study: We will continue Bible Study on **First and Third Sunday mornings** with the study of the book of James. Written by the brother of Jesus, this short but powerful letter makes for controversial and beneficial study. Join us in the Fogg Parlor at 9am.

The First Parish Book Club! Our book for February :

Team of Rivals, by Doris Kearns Goodwin

Wednesday, February the 6th, at 7:00pm in the Fogg Parlor. Refreshments are provided. Hope to see you there.

Sunday Evening Sitting Group

Join us each Sunday evening in the Skylight Room at 7:00pm for an hour of meditation. Each session will include a time of discussion and, occasionally, instruction in one or another form of this central practice, followed by group seated meditation. Perfect for beginners or seasoned meditators. **Please sign up each week or call if you wish to attend!**

Wear comfortable, loose fitting clothing and bring a mat or a bench if you desire (chairs are just fine as well).

Jesus For Unitarian Universalists: History, Tradition and Spirit

Vicki Weinstein and Stuart Twite

Our sessions will begin with a mini-lecture on an aspect of Unitarian or Universalist Christian theological tradition, then move into discussion and exploration of Jesus in the world and in our lives. Emphasis will be on reclaiming Jesus for our own spiritual lives and practices; this is not a academic study of the historical Jesus. Topics will include the question of trinity and divinity, Unitarian and Universalist perspectives on the gospels, Jesus as radical social justice advocate, Jesus as healer, and Jesus' God. We will begin and end every meeting with prayer in the Christian spirit. Bible readings will be assigned for each meeting.

Texts: *Meeting Jesus Again For the First Time*, *Christian Voices in Unitarian Universalism*, New Revised Standard Bible

Wednesdays Feb. 13, 20, 27, March 5
7:30 – 9:00 Skylight Room

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James Library & Center for the Arts

The Rev. Richard Fewkes will review the book “The Jesus Family Tomb” by Simcha Jacobovici at the James Library Bookworms Meeting. The review will take place on Monday, January 28, at 10:30 a.m. in the James Library. The public is most welcome.

Concert Cancelled.

Due to illness, the January 27th concert by pianist Jonathan Bass has been cancelled. The James hopes to reschedule his concert to next season. Please call the James for ticket exchange information.

Art Gallery

The Voyage of Discovery, black & white and sepia photographs by Sally Pollard-Fiore will on view through January 30. Free. All are welcome.

www.jameslibrary.org

Feb. 10! ANNUAL CHOCOLATE AUCTION Feb. 10!

Indulge your sweet tooth AND help the less-fortunate at the Youth Group's annual Chocolate Auction on Sunday, February 10, 2008!

Drop off your sweet donation (any chocolate candy or baked-good) before service, then bid and buy during Coffee Hour.

All proceeds benefit community outreach programs.

Questions? Call Youth Director Jen Anderson at 617-763-2799