

**First Church in Jamaica Plain, Unitarian Universalist**  
**February Newsletter, 2006**

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*Rev. Terry Burke*, Minister  
*Rev. Marshall Hawkins*, Affiliate Minister  
*Karl Haakonsen*, Standing Committee Chair  
*George Wardle*, Trustees Chair  
*Andrée Záleská*, Interim RE Director

*Ellen McGuire*, Music Director  
*Janna Frelich*, Soloist  
*Robin Teague*, Director of the Children's Choirs  
*Philomena O'Donnell*, Head Usher  
*Monroe Heyman*, Building Use

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### **Thoughts From Terry**

I made these remarks at our Semi-Annual Meeting on January 22<sup>nd</sup>:

Recently, I was talking to my Unitarian Universalist colleague Harry Hoehler, for many years co-minister with his wife Judy at the First Parish in Weston. Harry said, "What the JP congregation has done in the last twenty years is a miracle. It's simply a miracle." We have revived a tiny dying church and transformed it into a vibrant urban congregation.

Then I thought about our day-to-day church life. The man scheduled for clean-up following the worship service didn't show up last Sunday (the 15th). Our trash contractor claims that they have no responsibility to pick up our discarded Christmas trees (as they did last year). Our church bell's timer has been out of whack, ringing in the middle of the night and irritating the neighbors.

Between the long-term miracle and the day-to-day grind there is the middle range of this church year. Now, I'm dating myself, but do people remember the movie *Little Big Man*? The film has the line, "Sometimes the magic works, and sometimes it doesn't." Lots of people work very hard for this church - but the magic is working this year. I think of Abby Krueger's work on membership, and first Emily Lichtenstein and then Andree Zaleska's work on our religious education program. And Karl Haakonsen and Jom Michel and Carl Martland's service as Standing Committee Chair, Collector, and Treasurer. The body blow of our friend John Bianco's death reminds us how important it is to be part of a religious community.

This year our congregational foundations are strong. What's next for the JP miracle? My question for this Semi-Annual Meeting - how do we share what we are so fortunate to have? What do we want our next chapter to be?

Yours, Terry

### **Greetings from Andrée, Interim Director of Religious Education**

Five classes are now happily up and running. The new Preschool Class is working on Chalice Children with their teacher Alice Hawley. The Kindergarten-1st Grade Class is studying the natural world (Experiences with the Web of Life) with Kevin and Valerie Marren. The 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Graders are studying the 7 UU principles (We Believe) with Suzanne Demarco. And Robert

(RE cont.)

Amelio and Kip Keith are leading the Middlers through a unit on Islam. Brendan Halpin continues to teach OWL on Sunday afternoon. Many thanks to our vibrant and dedicated teachers.

Anne Brown is helping me to run a playgroup for toddlers, meeting in the parish hall each Tuesday from 11-12. Toys and games are provided for little ones in the company of their parents. Please inform any families with young children that this is free and open to the community.

Planning for the next church year has already begun, and one of the big ideas in the works involves renovations to the stage area to beautify it as our worship space. We also hope to get a youth group off the ground in the next few months, and increase its activity considerably next year.

The RE Program is grateful for donations of time and materials. Please let me know about any ideas you have for activities with the kids.

**A wish list of things we would welcome anytime:**

- Games (anything from Candy Land to Boggle)
- Toys in good condition for the nursery
- Picture books for all levels
- Art supplies

Find me after church or call me at home if you have time or resources to give.

Best wishes, Andree Zaleska, zaleska@aczaleska.com

## **Coming Up at First Church**

**Craving tomato aspic? Have a hankering for mac & cheese?** Need to belt out Good Night Irene with good friends? The annual **Fellowship Dinner** is Sunday, February 12 at 6pm in the Parish Hall. This free, catered dinner will have very entertaining skits and a sing-along, as well as information about the goals of the upcoming canvass. (No one will ask you for money at this dinner!) The Fellowship Dinner is a joyful event that builds community and group memories of the congregation. All adult members and friends are welcome to attend. Please RSVP by Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, by email to [RSVPFirstChurch@yahoo.com](mailto:RSVPFirstChurch@yahoo.com) or by calling (617) 524-1634, Mailbox 5. Childcare will not be provided. However, a sign-up sheet and information will be available at coffee hour for those interested in forming babysitting pools.

**The book group**, which is open to anyone who would like to attend, has two upcoming meetings, both on Tuesdays at 7:30. On February 28, the topic is *Atonement*, which is about a character author Ian McEwan calls "my fullest invention." Then we journey to Haiti, with Paul Farmer's *Mountains Beyond Mountains* on April 4.

**Memorial Service:** There will be a memorial service for Reverend Michael Boardman at Eliot Church on Sunday, March 12, at 3:00.

**Terry Burke will lead a series of Lenten Vespers** on Chris Hedges' book Losing Moses on the Freeway. These simple worship services, including a homily and a discussion, will begin Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00 pm and run for four weeks. See Terry for more information.



Hear ye, hear ye  
1350 is a very good year!

### **The Medieval Feast**

Will be celebrated on  
Saturday, March 4, 5-7 pm  
in the Parish Hall of  
First Church in Jamaica Plain

This special event includes music by the Quires and a goodly meal, presented by Margaret de la Suby and George the Wardle.

Ticket sales (\$25 for adults, \$10 for kids) will benefit First Church.  
Plan your medieval costume now, and join us!

**March Church Retreat:** Carl Scovel and Terry Burke will be leading a church retreat on the topic "Time for God". How do we find time in our busyness for a spiritual life? What do we do spiritually when we do find the time? Take a spiritual break with Carl and Terry at Glastonbury Abby in Hingham, on March 31<sup>st</sup> (after supper) to April 2<sup>nd</sup> (through lunch). Speak to Mary Brady (617-524-8918) to sign up.

## **Miscellaneous**

**First Baptist Church recently sent us a very generous check with the following note:**

*"Dear Friends at First Church, There is no way to adequately show the depth of our gratitude for your kind and generous hospitality during this last year. We treasure the long history of relations between our churches and give thanks that this tradition continues today. Please accept this small gift for your organ fund as a token of our thanks. Grace and Peace—Ashlee & First Baptist Church"*

**Sexton Needed:** Do you want to earn some extra money or know of anyone who does? We are looking for someone to do occasional sextoning at the church. Job requirements: ability to work independently and very dependable and responsible. \$15.00 per hour; weekends and evenings. Call Monroe Heyman for more details 617-796-8613

**La Leche League of Boston (LLLb)** continues to provide bimonthly breastfeeding/mothering support groups at 1st Church. Here is the schedule for February and March:

We will discuss "Breastfeeding and the Family" on Tuesday, February 14, at 7:30 pm, and Wednesday, February 15, at 10:00 a.m.

March's meetings are Tuesday, March 14 at 7:30 p.m. ("Combining Working and Breastfeeding") and Wednesday, March 15 at 10:00 a.m. ("From Infancy and Beyond: Different Stages of Breastfeeding"). All women (moms of new and older babies and those expecting) and babies welcome. For further info, click [www.llusa.org/MARIVT/BostonMA.html](http://www.llusa.org/MARIVT/BostonMA.html), or email (La Leche cont.)

[lllboston@hotmail.com](mailto:lllboston@hotmail.com), or call 617-323-3467, or 617-323-6885. Here's a quote from the proceedings of the 1994 UUA General Assembly:

1994 Nutrition for a Healthy Start in Life "Therefore be it resolved that the Unitarian Universalist Association encourages Unitarian Universalists to support efforts in the community to guarantee...nutritional counseling for all pregnant women, including education about breastfeeding; technical and moral support for women choosing to breastfeed..."

LLLBB would like to thank First Church in Jamaica Plain for its continued support of our efforts to help breastfeeding families in our community!

**The Social Justice Committee has recently received this letter from Sojourner House in response to our Christmas gifting:**

Dear Friends at J.P. Church,

On behalf of Ruby and Melissa, I would like to extend a warm thank you for all of the gifts you donated to them this holiday. Both of these mothers are young and single with a tremendous amount of responsibility. They are both dealing with the pressures of homelessness as they try to raise their small children alone. The generosity and love that you bestowed upon both of these mothers and their children was overwhelming. Both of these families experienced the joy of Christmas and your friendship has meant the world to them! Thanks for your continuing support of the homeless, and many blessings for the New Year!!

Sincerely, Bill Heaston, Sojourner House Child Advocate

**Volunteer with the Religious Coalition for the Freedom to Marry:** We are currently working with MassEquality to expose signature fraud and contact legislators, who will be voting on the anti-gay ballot initiative May 10, 2006. We serve as a powerful voice for social justice and religious liberty, and we need your help!

**Upcoming Volunteer Nights**

**Wednesday, February 8th, 5-9 PM**

**Wednesday, March 8th, 5-9 PM**

**Wednesday, March 22nd, 5-9 PM**

Tasks include internet research, preparing mailings, and data entry. Refreshments will be served, and interesting conversation will abound! RSVP [Maggie@RCFM.org](mailto:Maggie@RCFM.org). If you are not available for volunteer night, please contact me and I will find another time that works for you! We are located at 11 Beacon St, one block from the Statehouse and close to all subway lines.

**UU Offerings**

**Taylor Branch**, renowned national authority on America's civil rights movement, will be at First Church of Roxbury on Sunday, March 2006, at 2:00 pm. This event is sponsored by the UU Urban Ministry's Jack Mendelsohn Forum and the Mass Foundation for the Humanities. Taylor Branch will be introducing the third book in his three-volume history of the civil rights movement entitled *At Canaan's Edge: America in the King Years 1965-1968*. The first volume of the trilogy, *Parting the Waters—America in the King Years 1954-1963*, won a Pulitzer Prize for History. The event is free with a reception to follow. For directions go to [www.uuum.org](http://www.uuum.org).

## February 2006, Calendar

- 1 **Wednesday** 7:00 pm Prayer Group
- 2 **Thursday** 8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
- 5 **Sunday** 11:00 am Remembering Rosa Parks  
(Communion following service)
- 8 **Wednesday** 7:00 pm Prayer Group
- 12 **Sunday** 11:00 am Blooming Love  
(bring a flower to give)  
12:45 pm Social Justice Meeting  
6:00 pm Fellowship Dinner
- 15 **Wednesday** 7:00 pm Prayer Group
- 16 **Thursday** 8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
- 19 **Sunday** 11:00 am My Brother
- 20 **Monday** **President's Day-School Vacation Week**
- 22 **Wednesday** 7:00 pm Prayer Group
- 26 **Sunday** 11:00 am Alan Hunt

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### **First Church February Birthdays**

George Smith 2	Gryphon Layne 18
Kylie Nelson 5	Ellen McGuire 20
Gwyn Helie 9	George Wardle 27
Elizabeth Hawley 14	Bill Corey 27
Gloria Alexander 17	Willis Burke 28
Monroe Heyman 18	

*Church Administrator: Jean O'Leary is in the church office on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 3:30. You can reach her at the main number (617) 524-1634.*