

First Church in Jamaica Plain, Unitarian Universalist

February Newsletter, 2008

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Rev. Terry Burke, Minister
Rev. Marshall Hawkins, Affiliate Minister
Rev. Patricia Brennan, Affiliate Minister
George Wardle, Trustees Chair
Andrée Záleská, RE Director
Jean O'Leary, Church Administrator

Ellen McGuire, Music Director
Janna Frelich, Soloist
Giulia Norton, Standing Committee Chair
Philomena O'Donnell, Head Usher
Monroe Heyman, Building Use

Thoughts From Rev. Terry Burke

Easter comes early this year, on March 23rd. That means that Lent starts early too, on Wednesday February 6th. There are lots of Lent jokes around ('giving up lentils for Lent'). There is a value in having a set time as a reminder to focus on one's spiritual life. So Lent functions as a sort of spiritual alarm clock.

Lent can be a time to work on reconciling with others, or to learn more about our world and its needs (as through the programs of our JP Forum). Lent can also be a time to seek to go deeper spiritually, to ask once more those basic questions, 'Who am I?' 'Who is God?' and 'What is the meaning of my life?' Sometimes people "give up" or fast from something for Lent. Usually, the idea is to cut back on something like alcohol that probably isn't good for you in the first place. Traditionally, one gave the money saved from the fast to the poor. Sometimes people ADD something more whole to their life for Lent, like regular exercise.

This Ash Wednesday, February 6th, I will be in Jerusalem. I don't know what that will be like! Perhaps a double alarm clock. When I return, I will lead a Lenten group at the church on prayer. The group starts on Wednesday, February 27th at 7:30PM and runs for three sessions. We will read excerpts from Carol and Philip Zaleski's *Prayer: a History*. This excellent book is a scholarly study of prayer by people who think that prayer is important. Usually, such books are either by scholars who don't pray, or people who pray and don't write in a scholarly manner. In the sessions, we'll discuss some chapters of the book, and then we'll pray. Beginners welcome! Some of you remember the wonderful prayer group that Emerson Stamps and Abby Krueger lead at the church. This Lent, come join me to talk about prayer, and stay to pray.

Hear the alarm clock and spend some time on your spiritual life!

Yours, Terry

~Membership Corner

Membership in a Unitarian Universalist congregation is a rich and fulfilling experience. Congregations who are able to embrace all that it means to be a member are in the best position to ensure that members remain active and contributing parts of the community. What brought you to Unitarian Universalism and to First Church in Jamaica Plain? Please send your submissions, and any questions, to Cherisse Haakonsen, chair of the membership committee at cherprieve@yahoo.com.

Greetings from Andrée, Director of Religious Education

A few weeks ago, the RE class of 1st-3rd Graders had a lesson on the Buddha. I brought in my brass statue of the Buddha in meditation so that they could create a traditional shrine to honor him, making flowers out of tissue paper and pipe cleaners. When the Buddha returned to me at the end of the lesson, he had a makeshift halo over his head, made from a sparkly gold pipe cleaner. It was an interesting meshing of disparate theologies! Then it got even more interesting, as my sons removed the halo when we got home, and used it to hang a Power Ranger figurine by the neck from a doorknob.

It takes a good long while for UU kids to develop a clear sense of our faith, and how it relates to and differs from other traditions. We honor many sources of wisdom as UUs, and so we throw a lot at them in Sunday School: one week it's the Buddha's birthday, then on to Valentines Day, Chinese New Year and Easter. It's no wonder that it seems right to just give everyone a halo!

This week a new RE sub-committee will meet for the first time, to begin the process of launching the innovative Spirit Play curriculum. More than any other materials I've seen, Spirit Play celebrates the stories and parables of religion, by presenting them to children concretely, with materials such as figurines and wooden blocks, and reverently, in a meditative environment. In the coming months, the Spirit Play team will present a few short demonstration lessons on this new method at coffee hour. I invite you all to come and contemplate these stories for yourselves.

In other RE news: Keep your eyes peeled for the energetic 4th-6th Graders, working with Chuck Collins and Suzanne Demarco, whose latest work includes a service project for Angell Memorial Animal Hospital, and a survey of the religious histories of congregational members. And the **JP Family Songfest** continues, on the second Sunday of each month (the next one is Feb 10) at 1:00 after coffee hour—pizza provided; stay and sing!

The nursery will happily take your donations of newer toys for toddlers. And basic materials such as art supplies are always gratefully accepted by the RE program. I will need two teachers for the younger classes after Easter—please contact me directly if you'd like to teach.

Best wishes, Andree Zaleska, Zaleska@aczaleska.com

~UU Event

The Spiritual Life and Faith Development of Unitarian Universalists Parents

The Arts and Crafts of Congregational Leadership series

February 12, 2008, 7:00 to 9:00 pm in Arlington, MA.

The Rev. Dr. Elizabeth M. Strong, Mass Bay RE Program Consultant Parents want to know how to talk with their children about their beliefs, their faith development and their spiritual life as Unitarian Universalists. This workshop will provide you with the opportunity to articulate your beliefs and share what you choose with other parents who are looking for the same help. You will learn how to carry this experience back to your congregation to help more parents engage with their own journey faith and with that of their children. Parents, DRE's, ministers, and lay leaders are encouraged to attend. Dessert and coffee will be served.

Register through Mass Bay District Office (mbd@mbduua.org) 617-498-0396. Fee \$5

Planned Giving for First Church: Drafting your will? Doing your estate planning? Make a gift to assure the future of First Church. For specific information speak to any of the Trustees or directly contact Vauntina Franklin, 617-434-4627, the Trust Administrator at Bank of America. The Trustees are: George Wardle, Penny Wells, Theo Colburn, Gerry Culver, and Judith Garfunkel.

~Coming Up at First Church

Adult RE Class: Rev. Terry Burke will lead a three-session group on prayer starting on Wednesday, February 27th at 7:30pm at the church. The group will read excerpts from Philip and Carol Zaleski's, Prayer: A History, and spend part of the sessions praying together. Beginners Welcome!

Next Book Group: On *March 4*, we continue on the themes of “ how fate can debase youthful expectations” (according to one review) and of the power of the oral tradition with Truman Capote's first novel, *Other Voices, Other Rooms*. Come to one session or all; anyone can bring books to suggest.

ANNUAL FIRST CHURCH FELLOWSHIP DINNER

March 1st we'll gather once more for food, song, skits, an introduction to the 2008 canvass, but most of all, for Fellowship. Many of us look forward to this year after year – not just for tomato aspic, but also for the gooseflesh we get when singing

“May these sheltering walls be strong
to keep hate out and hold love in”

We're trying to make this an event for all of us. We've heard that families with young children find the child care issues challenging, but we've also heard that this is our one grown up event of the year, and many people treasure that. The compromise, which the Canvass Committee has agreed upon, is that babies, and lap toddlers are cordially invited, as are teenagers. For the other children, we are working on arranging for them to have their own fellowship experience with host families. The plan (which Janet Chumley devised) is for a team of teenaged babysitters from our church fan out across the community in nanny capes to selected homes where little clumps of church kids would be fellowshiping on their own.

Each team would get a kit of popcorn, supplies for a craft activity, a DVD, a few books (I Spy or Where's Waldo) or puzzles, a contact sheet with phone numbers and so forth. If you'd like to be part of this plan, please let Janet Chumley know or janet.chumley@simmons.edu

It's a challenging solution – it will be a lot of work to implement, and it won't be free – we will need to ask for contributions to fund the costs of babysitters (we'd like to do it as contributions, not a cost to the parents, so no one feels financially excluded), but we hope that it will permit many who have felt the dinner wasn't for them to know that we value you and want you.

Please plan to come. If you don't get an invitation by February 8th, (and you want one!) please let Abby Krueger know: dear_abby@comcast.net

The Big Show is coming! On Sunday, April 13, at 4, we will repeat our (very successful) Amateur Variety Show. Last year, we enjoyed singing, skits, poetry & drama, and a live haiku contest. Free admission! Afterwards, we all ate lasagna together. Would you like to join the fun? If you would like to sign up, or find out more, email Ellen McGuire at Etut53@aol.com

Just a few MAKE ME ONE's left - you know you want one - why, just last week you must have been thinking - I wish I had a nice vat of chili someone else had made for me...or maybe a chocolate cake to take for a birthday event....and don't you wish you didn't have to wait to the Fellowship Dinner to get your Tomato Aspic? Place your order now - you can e-mail dear_abby@comcast.net to work out the arrangements! **SEE NEXT PAGE!!**

“MAKE ME ONE” CHOICES

Nancy Ahmadifar's Butternut Squash Improv	Wonderful herb flavored savory roasted squash serves 4 for \$7
Bill Corey's Scones of Your Choice	A dozen medium sized scones from a recipe handed down by my Mom. Perfect for breakfast or tea. Choose dried cranberry, raisin or currant serves 12 for \$12
Karl Haakonsen's Brownies	A deeply religious brownie experience. serves 12 for \$12
Gwyn Helie's Special French Toast	From a B & B in Iowa, to Gwyn's boss, to Gwyn, to you - Gwyn will prepare the dish to sit in your fridge overnight, then you just stumble out of bed in time to do final baking. Soon your friends will ask you to "Make Me One" serves 8 for \$15
Monroe Heyman's Chili	Good holiday/winter entrée for hearty meal. Warms the soul. Your choice Beef or Turkey. serves 8 for \$20
Abby Krueger's EMCQ	Ed's Mom's Crustless Quiche - it's an easily re-heated dish great for breakfast or brunch when you find yourself hosting over the holidays - prepare your freezer for an onslaught by asking Abby to "Make Me One" serves 6 for \$12
Giulia Norton's Chocolate Bundt Cake	Mary's moist chocolate bundt cake for chocolate lovers. Enjoy! serves 12 for \$15
Lyra O'Brien's Eggy Muffins	For egg lovers. Crustless quiche muffins with cheese and veggies. A good breakfast treat. serves 16 for \$15
Emerson Stamps's Garlic Hummus	Emerson's infamous garlic hummus. When the occasion comes along ask Emerson to "Make Me One" serves 12 for \$10
Margaret Suby's Pain Mediterranee	Hearty French Baguette serves 4 to 6 for \$7
George Wardle's Tomato aspic	A light accompaniment to any meal. Great if you have a cold and in the winter - lots of vitamin C! serves 4 for \$7
Tim Williamson's Pumpkin Gingerbread Cake	Ring cake with pecans and candied ginger. Take a deep breath as you read this - can you smell those spices? You need Tim to "Make Me One" serves 10 for \$20

~Jamaica Plain Forum Presents:

"Defending Kids from Corporate Marketers" with Susan Linn

Friday, February 8th, 7:00pm, Free

In a world where we increasingly see marketing in every nook and cranny, it is not surprising that there are advertisements targeted to children. However, what is surprising is the extent and reach of that marketing. For example, current statistics show us that children see more than 40,000 commercials on television, contributing to a \$15 billion dollar industry. Susan Linn, child psychotherapist and author, is leading the pack in reducing the harmful effects of exploitative marketing on children.

Join Susan at the Jamaica Plain Forum as she reveals the impact that over-marketing has on the development and creativity of our children. By interweaving real-life stories of marketing to children, child development theory, the latest research, and what marketing experts themselves say about their work, Susan reveals the magnitude of this problem and shows what can be done about it.

"Iron Ladies Of Liberia" documentary screening and discussion

Friday, February 22nd, 7:00pm, Free

She's already overcome tremendous obstacles to become the first woman ever elected president in Africa—now all she has to do is turn around Liberia -- a country devastated by unemployment, debt, corruption, and the legacy of civil war. Follow Ellen Sirleaf Johnson through her first year in office as she faces angry mobs, ambitious political rivals, and high-ranking members of the international community. Her story is inspiring a new generation of leaders in Africa and around the world.

www.jamaicainforum.org

Happy Birthday February Babies!

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

February Calendar Follows!.....

February 2008 Calendar

3	Sunday	Sermon: How to Win & Influence Friends 11:00AM Communion 12:00PM Organ Planning Committee Mtg. 12:15pm O.W.L. 4-6:00PM
4	Monday	Building Committee Mtg. 7:30 Adult RE: Exodus 7:30PM
5	Tuesday	Book Group 7:30pm
6	Wednesday	Lent begins
8	Friday	<u>JP Forum</u> : Defending Kids from Corp. Markets. 7:00PM
10	Sunday	RE Committee Mtg. 9:00am Service: Chris Walton preaching 11:00AM Social Justice Committee Mtg. 12:30pm O.W.L. 4-6:00PM
11	Monday	Adult RE: Exodus 7:30PM
12	Tuesday	Standing Committee Mtg. 7:00PM UU Parent talk (see description on page) 7-9:00PM
14	Thursday	St. Valentine's Day Choir Rehearsal 8:00PM
17	Sunday	Service: One Family Scholars 11:00AM
18	Monday	President's Day/School Vacation Week Adult RE: Exodus 7:30PM
22	Friday	<u>JP Forum</u> : Iron Ladies of Liberia 7:00PM
24	Sunday	Newcomers' Breakfast 9:30AM Sermon: Dreams of Our Fathers
26	Tuesday	Ministry Committee Mtg. 7:30PM
27	Wednesday	Adult RE: Prayer Class 7:30PM
28	Thursday	Choir Rehearsal 8:00PM
29	Friday	Youth Night
3/1	Saturday	Annual Fellowship Dinner 6:00PM