

**First Church in Jamaica Plain, Unitarian Universalist**

**May 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**

This past Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, Chuck Collins mentioned in church that it was the first anniversary of the JP Forum. He told us how over 4,000 people have attended forum events at the church: speakers, films, potlucks, and workshops. What a tremendous job Chuck and Sarah Schwartz Sax have done with this program in one short year! We have heard from experts like Ross Gelbspan and Maud Barlow and local heroes such as Pastor Gloria White-Hammond. Recently, over 200 people came out to watch the documentary *King Corn* (with free popcorn, too).

The JP Forum allows us to share our Unitarian Universalist values with a much wider community. Forum attendees have already started coming to church services. Recently, our church school director Andree Zaleska helped organized a spin off from the forum, a Saturday "Global Warming Café" at the church to help people reduce their carbon footprints.

At that Global Warming Café, I was asked to give a brief (2 minute) spiritual message of hope. I followed a particularly bleak, realistic description of the current situation. I talked about how the event was taking place around the time of the traditional date of the Annunciation, when Luke's Gospel says that the angel Gabriel came to ask Mary if she would give birth to Jesus. Mary was not rich, famous, or particularly learned. She was a young woman living in a small town, in a culture that didn't particularly value women. Yet the angel asked her to help save the world, and Mary said, "Yes." I asked people to imagine, even though they were not rich, famous, or noted experts, that they were being asked by the angel to help save the world, and to imagine saying, "Yes."

We are all called to help save the world in our own ways, great and small. The wonderful programs of the JP Forum give us many ideas how to do that. However, we are all micro-forums, showing people our liberal values by our words and deeds in our day-to-day lives. Think of the great movies we're showing on our individual screens for all the world to see!

Yours in faith, Terry

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

### **May in RE:**

We know it's a struggle to get to church when the magnolias and tulips and azaleas are distracting us all, so we've created an extra-exciting end of the year program in RE. Here's what you have to look forward to:

**May 4: This Sunday**, don't miss Robert Amelio in his grand debut as NOAH, surrounded by our beautiful children playing the parts of THE ANIMALS! See Terry make a storm from the pulpit. Participate in an all-congregation rainbow creation! And hear the choir accompanied by a mandolin! It's our latest 5-Senses Sunday—intergenerational fun for all.

**May 11: Spirit Play II** All children 10 and under will be part of the trial of our new curriculum. The first Spirit Play class, 2 weeks ago, went unexpectedly well, considering we were all new at this. At coffee hour all congregational members are urged to come see a short (15 minutes) demonstration lesson in this new method—on the stage at 12:30.

**Also May 11: JP Family Songfest:** Come sing folk and family music with Ken and Ginger. All ages are welcome and this is an open event for the community. 12:30 pm in the Parish Hall \$3 donation requested to cover building use.

**May 18: Gardening Week:** We'll get those weeds out of the RE garden and plant some fresh flowers.

**May 25: A week off for Memorial Day!** No classes, but supervision and crafts on the stage for all children who come to church.

**Youth Events** in May include **Film Night May 16** and **Food Project farm day in Roxbury May 17**. More information will be sent out soon.

That's it for May. See you in church! Andree Zaleska (Zaleska@aczaleska.com)

## **Coming Up at First Church**

**Blue Jean's Sunday** It's spring and Sunday will be lovely! Come spend the afternoon -- or 30 minutes, if that's all you have -- sprucing up the church grounds! On this Blue Jeans Sunday, we'll be raking and gardening outside and addressing the nooks and crannies inside. Wear grungy clothes, bring appropriate tools if you can (we'll have yard waste bags), and spend some quality time with your co-UUs! Look for Laurie Corkum or Giulia Norton.

**The book group** will finish discussion of Howard Zinn's *The People's History of the United States* on May 6 (7:30 in the Morse Room, as usual). Staying on light, airy topics, we'll turn to *The Mind in the Cave: Consciousness and the Origins of Art* by David Lewis-Williams on June 3. We'll be choosing books, probably some fiction, for the next 3 or 4 months at the next meeting and are always glad to hear suggestions from new people.

**Here's your chance to do social justice work and get exercise at the same time!** On Saturday, May 17, we will work at The Food Project's farm in Roxbury from 10 am until 12:30 pm. Everyone 12 years old and older who can pull weeds, hoe, plant, etc. is welcome and should bring a bag lunch. See [www.thefoodproject.org](http://www.thefoodproject.org) to learn more; details to follow in future newsletters. Please contact Linda Olmstead at [lindaolmstead@hotmail.com](mailto:lindaolmstead@hotmail.com) if you want to participate. Hope to see you there! *The Social Justice Committee.*

**FIRST CHURCH CONNECTS WITH THE HOMELESS POOR:** On Sunday, 22 June 2008 the congregation of First Church will provide luncheon for 150 homeless women and men at the fountain adjacent to the Park Street T station in downtown Boston. The luncheon will follow an outdoor worship service, which begins at 1 PM at the same location. The worship-and-sustenance program, called Common Cathedral, is an inner city venture of Ecclesia Ministries, an ecumenical organization. The Social Justice Committee is organizing this effort. On June 22nd, a SJC team will gather at our church at 10 to make sandwiches and prepare other parts of the meal. We will carpool with the luncheon fixings to the Park Street location, arriving not later than 12:30 p.m. Note: Participation by First Church members is limited, because the Common Cathedral congregation tends to feel overwhelmed by too many visitors. Note also that, because of the schedule, First Church volunteers will not be able to attend the 11 a.m. service in Jamaica Plain. Interested? To volunteer, or to secure more information, contact Marshall Hawkins (mhawkins@gis.net), David Parke (davidparke1@aol.com), or any member of the Social Justice Committee.

## Canvass Update

You, and Only You can make the canvass a success – and thus permit a budget, which will allow growth, passion, something more than heat!

I'm guessing that most of the loyal readers of this document have turned in their pledge cards. You are the involved people who actually pick through this text. So, what can we do with the less involved people who love First Church, but haven't had a chance to deal with one more piece of paper? How can we spread our enthusiasm that makes us want to open this newsletter, to each other? We know how, by being the people we always are, the people come together whether pledges need to be brought in, soup needs to be stirred, or blenders need to be tested. Please do your part by getting your pledge in, and by following up with your canvasees. Here's where we stand today:

- ❑ 64 pledges have been received – adding up to \$99,477. This breaks out into the following distribution:
- ❑ The First Quartile, contributing almost 25% of the pledge, consists of three pledges above \$5,000.
- ❑ The second 25% of that comes from 7 people each contributing between \$2,500 and \$4,800.
- ❑ The third quartile contains 13 people contributing between \$1,500 and \$2,400
- ❑ And the fourth quartile has 40 people making up the rest.

We hope to see 35 more cards come in – you know who you are. Each of these is vital to us!  
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## **SAVE THE DAY! The Spring Fair is June 7<sup>th</sup>**

### **Spring Is Here And The Preparations For The Spring Fair Are Starting To Sprout!**

Hello! I'm Alice Phoenix and I'm your Yard Sale coordinator for this year's Spring Fair. I've not yet met many of you, but I'll be introducing myself to you in the very near future!

**We need your stuff!** Dive into those attics and closets and start gathering together your donations! We will begin accepting donations on May 18<sup>th</sup> after church. We'll continue to collect items after services or by appointment.

### **Welcomed Items: gently used items in good, clean repair:**

Books: fiction, non-fiction, biography, picture

Furniture

Collectables

Kitchen/Dining

### **Items we cannot accept:**

No clothing

Broken items or items with damaged or missing pieces

No broken electronics

No computers, monitors, or TVs (Hazardous waste! We have to pay to dispose of these!)

No mattresses

No textbooks, computer books, magazines, encyclopedias or travel guides

No cosmetics or toiletry items

Nothing edible

No used candles

No medical equipment

***Remember: If you wouldn't give it to a friend, kick it to the curb, because otherwise we'll have to!!!***

### **We need your body!**

The yard sale is a great big, fun, and exciting event and we need many folks to help in many areas!

**Collections:** Sorting, pricing, large item pick up. We will need lots of pre-sale help! Are you organized? Do you like sticky labels? Do you have secret dreams of opening an antique store? Do you love to work as part of a team? If so, we can help. Look for me to sign up to help in the extremely important area.

**Set up:** Are you a lover of a job well done? Then we offer instant gratification! The night before and the morning of the sale we'll need you to help make it all ready for our guests.

**Sales:** Customer service focused? Love to chat with folks? Eager to help that young couple purchase their first dining room table? Prior retail experience not required! We'll need several folks to help with sales during the day. If you can be there for some or all of the day, let me know!

**Clean up:** Making it tidy and leaving it as we found it is our mission! If you can help with the disposal of un-bought items and the cleaning of the church grounds and hall, we will praise your name for generations.

Let me know how you can help! Talk to me at church, email me at [alice.phoenix@fmr.com](mailto:alice.phoenix@fmr.com).

## Unitarian Universalist

### **Mass Bay District: *What has it done for us lately?***

The Mass Bay District recently had its annual meeting. Admittedly, this is not usually a highlight of my social calendar, but it was actually really interesting. The program noted that we are a Fair Share congregation, meaning that we give the requested minimum contribution to UUA. It's nice to be recognized, but more importantly, the number of Fair Share congregations affects how much the UUA gives the District, which affects how much the District can support us.

So: how do or can the District and UUA support us?

- \* Woburn Grants! I was able to thank some of the members of the Woburn Grants Panel for so consistently supporting First Church. Let's hope we maintain our streak of getting funded, and thanks to all the great grant writers (Anne Brown, Andr e Z alesk a, Chuck Collins, and Sarah Sax)!
- \* Investment! The UUA not only has a good return on its socially responsible investments, but Tim Brennan, the Treasurer, told us how the UUA collaborates with many other organizations to affect change in the groups it invests in.
- \* Advice on capital campaigns! That may come in handy some time soon.
- \* Building loans! Ditto.

If you're looking for social action events, maybe where you could meet some people with common interests, or would like advocacy training, check out the MBD website:

<http://www.mbdoua.org/programs-events/opportunities-to-serve/>

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**Think the tax law is confusing?** Here is the way the UUA decides how much MBD pays to the UUA:

Take the total salary for the District Executive and Program Consultant. Now total the payroll taxes and benefits paid to all DE's and PC's, calculate the percentage that represents of total salaries, and use that percentage to allocate taxes and benefits to each district staff person. Now add something called "other costs." Where does that number come from? It is a number that was negotiated 30 or 40 years ago and which is increased annually by a varying percentage vaguely related to inflation. It is unrelated to any actual costs. Adding these numbers together gives you "Total Recognized Costs." To this you apply a percentage that was negotiated in what are called "Treaties" back around the merger. (I believe that some of these were later renegotiated.) Select the applicable percentage from 50%, 47.74%, 40.16%, 34.8% or 25% depending on the category of employee and the terms of the particular District Treaty. Multiply that by the Total Recognized Costs, subtract that from the Total, and the remainder is the amount that the District pays to the UUA.

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## UU Statewide Forum on Immigrant Rights:

**Saturday, May 10th, 11am-3pm**

**Where:** Arlington Street Church (UU) 351 Boylston Street, Boston

(1 block from Arlington Street T stop-Green Line) Directions at <http://www.ascboston.org/contact/directions.html>

**Join:** Elena Letona, Exec Director, Centro Presente

Jeb Mays, Board Chair, MA Interfaith

Committee for Worker Justice

Susan Leslie, Director, UUA Congregational Advocacy & Witness

Wayne Smith, UUSC Program Manager for Civil Liberties

Peter Lowber Chair, ASC Santuario Task Force

Sharing of all our family immigration stories

Stories from people who came here from Central America

*Detained* – award-winning 20 minute documentary of the New Bedford ICE (Immigration & Custom Enforcement) raid in March 2007

What's happening today? What are the economic policies driving immigration?

What can we do? Learn about Welcoming Massachusetts initiative, the New Sanctuary Movement, moratorium on ICE raids, immigration reform and more!

**A Latino lunch will be provided!**

**Sponsors:** Unitarian Universalist Association, UU Service Committee, Arlington Street Church, Centro Presente, and MA Interfaith Committee on Worker Justice

**Greater Boston Interfaith Organization Event:** On Tuesday May 27 GBIO will be celebrating its 10-year anniversary with a huge gathering at Boston University. Deval Patrick, Tom Menino and a number of state legislators will be in attendance. This is a big opportunity for GBIO to show its power by the number of people it can turn out. First Church will be sending a delegation, carpooling over there from the church. If you'd like to join us, please sign up at the side table in the sanctuary or contact Marshall Hawkins: [mhawkins@gis.net](mailto:mhawkins@gis.net).

### **Happenings Outside Your Church**

~**Fundraiser for JP Open Studios** on Tuesday, May 20th from 6-9:00PM at the *Milky Way* at 405 Centre Street, Jamaica Plain. \$10 suggested donation of at the door.

It is a show and sale of small works - last year everything was about 5" x 7" or smaller. The artists have donated the work, and each piece will be for sale at very reasonable prices. Get there early - last year several of the pieces I wanted were gone before I had a chance to buy them!

As many of you know, this is my 3rd year as Treasurer for the Jamaica Plain Arts Council, which organizes JP Open Studios. I really love the event, and the connection to working artists and the community of Jamaica Plain. If you have any questions, let me know. Bring your friends - I'll be there early this year! *Love, Anne Brown* [www.jpopenstudios.org](http://www.jpopenstudios.org)

**THE JP GREEN HOUSE:** *To all church friends: I want to let you know about my latest adventure, creating a nonprofit called the JP Green House. A short description follows:*

The JP Green House will serve as a demonstration project for low carbon, residential building rehab and urban gardening. Project leaders Ken Ward and Andree Zaleska have purchased a large turn-of-the-century neighborhood store and home, prominently situated in the community. Located in the Bourne neighborhood of Boston, it straddles the Jamaica Plain/Roslindale border. Andree and Ken, both single parents with three young boys, will rehab the Green House, featuring solar and wind power, organic gardening, wastewater reuse, and creative use of recycled building materials. The JP Green House will be open to the community as a place for gatherings and music, community gardening, and education on sustainable building and living.

Website: <http://jpgreenhouse.blogspot.com/>

Email: [greenhousejp@gmail.com](mailto:greenhousejp@gmail.com)

As of now, the project is in its infancy—the house purchase is just about to be completed, and a lot of demolition/construction must follow. We are looking for all kinds of pro-bono contributions, from legal aid to construction, to donation of materials! Your interest on any level is appreciated. Please feel free to contact me directly with ideas or reactions. In June we will have an opening party and house blessing—you will all be invited.

And pray for us! Andree DRE [greenhousejp@gmail.com](mailto:greenhousejp@gmail.com)

**May 2008 Calendar follows:**

## May 2008 Calendar

1	Thursday	Choir Rehearsal 8:00 PM New Comer Mtg. w/George Wardle
2	Friday	JP Forum: Hilary Jordan 7:00PM** author of <i>Mudbound</i> reading 7:00PM
4	Sunday	Sermon/play: The Flood and the Rainbow 11:00AM Social Justice Committee Mtg. 12:30PM <b>Blue Jean's Sunday</b>
5	Monday	Building Committee Mtg. 7:30PM
6	Tuesday	Book Group 7:30PM
8	Thursday	Newcomer's Meeting w/Terry Burke
11	Sunday	Mother's Day Service 11:00AM Song Fest 1:00PM
15	Thursday	Choir Rehearsal 8:00PM
16	Friday	JP Forum: <i>Amy and David Goodman!</i> ** 7:00PM Youth Night
18	Sunday	RE Meeting 9:00AM Service 11:00AM Annual Meeting
20	Tuesday	Standing Committee Mtg. 7:00PM
25	Sunday	Service 11:00AM
26	Monday	Memorial Day
30	Friday	JP Forum: <i>New Year Baby: Documentary</i> ** 7:00PM

\*\*For more detailed information go to: <http://www.jamaicaplainforum.org>

### May Birthdays!

Roisin Foley 6      Amelia Burke 9  
Gillian Marren 9      Joshua Rand 11  
Amelia Galiga 26