

## First Church in Jamaica Plain, Unitarian Universalist

# October Newsletter, 2006

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Rev. Terry Burke, Minister  
Rev. Marshall Hawkins, Affiliate Minister  
Giulia Norton, Standing Committee Chair  
George Wardle, Trustees Chair  
Andrée Záleská, 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

Jean O'Leary, Church Administrator

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### Thoughts From Terry

In the best selling book *The Life of Pi*, the hero's family perishes when their Japanese ship sinks in the middle of the ocean. Pi then has spiritual adventures aboard a lifeboat shared with zoo animals. An alert church member pointed out the name of the sunken ship to me, the Tsim Tsum.

My friend and colleague Rabbi Victor Reinstein of Congregation Nehar Shalom in Jamaica Plain has spoken to me of *tsim tsum*. In Jewish mystical thought, God withdraws partially from the created world. Through *sefirot*, intermediaries, emanations, or to some the laws of physics, the created world interacts with God. God's partial withdrawing and letting go of control allows humans the space and freedom to act.

Most of us have a busy world of needs that we try to control as best we can, needs of family, friends, work, loved ones, neighborhood, church, city, state, nation, and planet. I'm reminded of the astronomer in Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas* who thought the universe would not survive unless he watched it every night! Drawing on the mystical model of *tsim tsum*, how do we withdraw a bit from the life we have created? What would that look like in our lives and in the life of the church? What would happen if we withdrew a bit into our inner woods, like Unitarian mystic Henry David Thoreau? With that space would we find silence, rest, spirit, surprise?

I hope to discuss topics like this in our *Grow a Souls* monthly spiritual exploration group, starting later in the fall. Would such a group interest you? What would be the best time for meeting – Wednesday evenings, Sunday evenings, or before church? Email the church at [firstchjp@aol.com](mailto:firstchjp@aol.com) and let me know. I also want to add a brief commercial message about my Koran study group, beginning on Sunday October 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM.

I recently saw a bumper sticker that said, "Making Connections With Other People is the Most Radical Thing You Can Do." Other people can help us practice *tsim tsum*. Or to paraphrase the Beatles, 'You get spiritual Pi with a little help from you friends.' - Hugs, Terry

### Greetings from Andrée, Director of Religious Education

Last week in the parish hall felt especially peaceful and productive. Attendance was good. Robert Amelio has taken on Children's Chapel for this year, bringing his characteristic warmth and spiritual presence to that ceremony. After Chapel, the new Preschool Class (taught this week by Laura McCord) headed upstairs to make clay chalices, and read stories. The 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> Graders, with Larry Zaborski, learned about Rosh Hashanah, and then later joined the Preschoolers outside in the tiny "RE Garden" (by the wayside pulpit) to weed and plant crocus bulbs for next spring. Meanwhile, the 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Graders were dressing up in sheets and robes for a skit on the life of Jesus, and then making "ancient scrolls" and writing their names in Greek with their teacher Suzanne Demarco. Kip Keith and Alice Hawley were discussing an upcoming visit to a synagogue with the Middlers, who are working through a curriculum called *Neighboring Faiths* that should take them all over Boston this year to learn how others worship. Then nursery too, is a happy place, with babysitters Emily Wright and Olivia Wardle and a solid group of toddlers and infants keeping them busy.

(RE cont.)

We're off to a good start. If you usually spend your time at church in the sanctuary, be sure to pop your head into the nursery and the stage area sometime soon: both have a new coat of paint, and are gradually being emptied of unnecessary items as we work toward a cleaner and less cluttered area, suitable for worship as well as class time. (What you should NOT do is look at my office in the basement—where much of that stuff has ended up!)

Many thanks to all of the above-mentioned teachers and volunteers, who enabled us to get the RE Program off the ground right away this year. I am also grateful to the Building Committee for supporting the work on the stage and the nursery—something I feel very strongly about.

As always, the RE Program can use your help, whether or not you are a parent. We will need a fresh group of teachers in January; we need occasionally subs; anyone is welcome to suggest a one-time project or social-justice activity for the kids; donations of storybooks, games and art materials are gratefully accepted; and the RE Committee would benefit from additional members. Please let me know how you would like to contribute.

**Save the Date:** The **First Church Halloween Party is Sunday, Oct. 29 from 4-6**. All church folk, their family and friends are welcome so come enjoy the crafts, costumes, pizza, a haunted house, and Terry in a carrot costume. Don't miss it! The Lantern Parade starts right afterwards, and we will be making lanterns.

Best wishes, Andree Zaleska [zaleska@aczaleska.com](mailto:zaleska@aczaleska.com)

## **Coming Up at First Church**

### **Nature for the Altar**

Please consider volunteering to bring flowers on Sundays for the Sanctuary Altar. This does not need to be a large bouquet from a florist. We would welcome wild flowers, or flowers from your garden, or branches of something that appeals to you. Starting October 1, there will be a sign-up sheet. Please see Alice Kociemba with questions or to pick a date.

### **Wayside Pulpit**

First Church is looking for someone who would be willing to maintain the Wayside Pulpit quotes out in front of the church. We have many sheets with quotes here at the church; they just need to be changed twice a month. Please see Terry Burke or Andrée Záleská if you are interested.

### **Let's make this year's Holiday Fair the best ever!**

It's once again shaping up to be great community event. How can you help?

**First**, tell your friends who might be crafty - we are not admitting any new jewelers, but we've got room for potters, painters, and printers, and possibly lots more! E-mail to [JPCRAFTSFAIR@Yahoo.com](mailto:JPCRAFTSFAIR@Yahoo.com) for an application.

**Second**, save the dates December 1 and 2 - the fair is on the second, we need your help on the night before.

**Third**, don't buy anything until then - ok, you can buy groceries, and maybe a book required for book group, but no jewelry, no hand bags, no note cards, no quilts - save your money for the fair!!

**Fourth**, think about what you could do to make it better - have a great publicity idea? Can you cook, bake, sing, or advertise? We need you!

## **Fair Trade Coffee Project**

The sale of Fair Trade Coffee products has is happening once again after services on Sundays. Please remember to buy your hot chocolate and coffee then, and if you'd like to help out with sales, please see Alice Kociemba.

## **Announcements**

### **Breastfeeding Meetings for the Boston Community:**

Meeting monthly in First Church's nursery, La Leche League of Boston provides mother-to-mother breastfeeding support. If you are pregnant or nursing, then please join us! Feel free to bring a friend. We meet every 2nd Thursday of the month and bi-monthly on a Saturday. Babies and toddlers always welcome. If you like, bring a snack to share. October meetings scheduled:

**Thursday, October 12, Topic:** "What It Means To Be A Breastfeeding Family"

**Saturday, October 14, Topic:** "Why Breastfeeding Is So Good For You And Your Baby"

Call Janna or Stephanie for further information. Or email [lllboston@hotmail.com](mailto:lllboston@hotmail.com). Web page: <http://www.lllusa.org/MARIVT/BostonMA.html>

## **UU Offerings**

### **The UU Urban Ministry presents: M.L. Carr**

"Moving Beyond Violence – We are all Role Models": Date: October 22 at 2pm. Location: The First Church in Roxbury, 10 Putnam St, Roxbury, MA. Increasing violence is an ever-present challenge for our neighbors and families in Boston. Please join the UU Urban Ministry, member church congregants, and representatives from our Boston community as we address issues of urban violence at our fall Forum with featured speaker, former Celtics star M. L. Carr. As founder of WARM2KIDS - an acronym for We're All Role Models - M. L. Carr brings the same leadership skills to preventing youth and domestic violence that he once brought to the basketball court and NBA Championships. A Rev Jack Mendelsohn Forum sponsored by the Action for Justice Project.

### **One in Eight Task Force Update from Cindy McKeown**

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a time when pink ribbons are seen everywhere, selling just about anything. But the One in Eight Task Force at First Church would like to remind everyone to Think Before You Pink.

Two years ago, the Fund For Unitarian Universalist Social Responsibility awarded First Church a grant to implement an education and outreach program to UU's across Massachusetts focusing on breast cancer awareness, education, advocacy and social justice. The program includes a screening of **One in Eight: Janice's Journey** (a film that follows one women's fight with breast cancer and her search to find possible causes of the disease) and a panel discussion with representatives from the breast cancer advocacy community including the Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition, Silent Spring Institute and Hurricane Voices Breast Cancer Foundation. Panelists provide information and activities focused on ways to Take Action Against Breast Cancer!

Please join us at our final screening and panel event on Sunday, October 29<sup>th</sup> at First Parish Brewster, UU on Cape Cod from 1:00 – 3:00 pm. The event is free and open to the public, but donations are appreciated. For more information, please visit [www.oneineight.net](http://www.oneineight.net)

We also need to raise a remaining \$700 of a \$5000 matching grant from the Fund For Unitarian Universalist Responsibility to cover our program expenses. Contributions are tax deductible and will be matched dollar for dollar (up to the \$700 amount that we need to raise). If you are interested in making a contribution or would like more information, please contact Cindy McKeown at [camworkz@aol.com](mailto:camworkz@aol.com).

## **Extras**

### **House Blessing!**

Please join neighbors, poets, friends and church members for the blessing of Alice Kociemba's new second home at 58 Orchard Street, #1, in Jamaica Plain. Rev. Terry Burke will be giving the blessing on October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 4-6:30 PM. Please bring something to share for a potluck!

### **Two Poetry Readings**

On Saturday, September 30, during JP Open Studios, Alice Kociemba will join other poets in reading their poems at the Loren Greenough house from 1-4 PM. Alice will be there at around 3:30 after the reconvenanting meeting.

Then on Friday, October 13, Alice Kociemba will read her poems at the Barnstable UU church from 7:30-9:00 PM.

### **This month's birthdays!**

Sophia Buzelle	6	Rachel Burger	17
Sam Oldshue	6	Susan Collins	19
Natalie Eldridge	9	Roy Mitchell-Brenc	25
Ezra Alexander	15		

*Scroll down for October Calendar!*

## October 2006, Calendar

1	Sunday	11:00 am	Sermon: <i>Jonah</i> World Communion Sunday <b>Open Studios</b>
2	Monday	7:00 pm	Ministry Committee Meeting
3	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Book Group
5	Thursday	8:00 pm	Choir Practice
8	Sunday	11:00 am 12:15 pm 12:30 pm	Sermon: <i>Taking Care</i> Blessing of animals Social Justice Committee
10	Tuesday	7:30 pm	Book Group
15	Sunday	11:00 am 12:15 pm	Sermon: <i>Taking back our time</i> All church Nextel meeting
19	Thursday	8:00 pm	Choir Practice
22	Sunday	11:00 am  12:30 pm	Sermon: UU Saints-Martha & Waitstill Sharpe (Ghanda DiFiglia) Blue Jeans Sunday (clean-up)
24	Tuesday	7:00 pm	Standing Committee Mtg.
29	Sunday *	9:30 am 11:00 am  7:30 pm 4-6:00 pm	Newcomers Breakfast Sermon: <i>All Souls are All Saints</i> (graveyard service) Koran Study Group w/Terry Church Halloween Party

\* 5th Sunday - If you wish, bring a photo of a loved one who has died to share.

