

FIRST PARISH OF SUDBURY CONNECTOR

Issue: January 18, 2009

Connector Deadline: each Wednesday at 5:00pm for the next week's issue

Editor: Fran Sharp
connect@fpsudbury.org

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MAKING MEANINGS

Friends, it was quite a celebration we had, wasn't it? Two First Parish milestones: Debra marking twenty years as Music Director and Katie Lee, ten years as Minister. Our mascot, Piglet, came back for an encore and the three "Piglet Sisters" joined him. We sang our theme song: *We are all in this together* and we spent some time remembering our *exposition* together, not to mention all the good things to eat. (See below! Yummy.)



Katie Lee mentioned some WOW moments:

WOW. We celebrated the first legal marriage between two women (longtime First Parish members) in this historic meetinghouse on June 12, 2004.

WOW. A dedicated group of lay volunteers brought Spirit Play to First Parish for our children.

WOW. We've made our shared ministry more explicit and intentional with programs like Worship Associates and Pastoral Associates and Chalice Circles. We've added things like Village Worship and conversations about God and Jesus, our UU Principles and Purposes and, now, the Bible.

WOW. Summer services. WOW. Our ministry beyond the meetinghouse.

WOW. The Memorial Garden.

Debra and the Choir. WOW. WOW. WOW.



Debra wants you to know that she is grateful for the opportunity to make music with us. She loves the setting and the musical freedom she has in contributing to our worship services. "I cannot imagine being any place else," she says, "being here is such a good fit."

She is so grateful for the congregation's support. "Every week someone comes up to express appreciation." And, of course, neither can say enough about our amazing choir. Can you imagine our worship without their many contributions?

Katie Lee said "My own memories of these ten years are legion: Collaborative worship services; private pastoral exchanges; Maypole dancing; Revels; singing "Silent Night" with all the candles on Christmas Eve." The list goes on and on.

Now we are beginning a new chapter in our history together. Katie Lee suggests a shared challenge: let's take the next steps and transform First Parish of Sudbury into the congregation we want it to be in 2019.

We *can* (and do) empower each other. We *can* create change (we already have). We *will* be the change we want to see in the world. And we'll do it together.

And, because no words can adequately say it, we both say "thank you" for the privilege of serving you and serving *with* you. *We are all in this together.*

- Katie Lee & Debra



R.E.FLECTIONS BY A CHALICED.R.E.AMER

Roberta Altamari, Director of Religious Exploration
and Youth Ministry

Last month, the characters in our Christmas Eve pageant shared with us a variety of ways our Unitarian and Universalist ancestors have made a difference during the Christmas holiday. We called them "UU peace angels" because of their commitment towards working for peace, compassion, and love.

We can be "UU peace angels" all year long and our youth at First Parish are already serving as wonderful examples. Our Youth Group started 2009 by going to the Sudbury Food Pantry to do some much appreciated cleaning. Next time, our youth went shopping to purchase supplies for Transitions Baskets for families moving out of homeless shelters and into low-income housing.

Our Religious Exploration children and youth are working too. In addition to packaging and making nice greeting cards for the aforementioned Transition Baskets, they are gathering gifts for a care-package to send to a soldier overseas who used to attend First Parish. They are also doing an intergenerational project of decorating ceramic bowls to benefit the Food Pantry in the next few weeks. In addition, Evan S and the Breakfast Club have been sharing news about a project called "Pennies for Peace". They are all doing a really great work!

There are just so many ways to put our faith in action. Three of our youth and I attended a District Youth Conference that focused on Social Justice. We began the day Saturday with a three hour workshop on anti-racism. It reminded me of S.T.O.P. (Students Together Opposing Prejudice), the 7-week interfaith program in Sudbury that a few of our middle schoolers are participating in. With Barack Obama's inauguration this week, we are moving forward as a country to end racism, but much work still needs to be done for true equality to exist for all. I can not overstate the importance of carefully evaluating all of the societal messages we hear with a lens of anti-oppression and taking time to sincerely get to know people who seem different. Doing so can really change our beliefs and actions!

So as we kick-off a new year and a new era, may it be with hope and energy. And a continued commitment to follow in the footsteps of our UU ancestors to be "UU Peace Angels"!

Loving blessings, Roberta ♥

PEOPLE WE CARE ABOUT



This column seeks to share news (happy, sad, exciting events) of our lives so that we may support each other as we travel this road together. May it be so.

This column is not available on our website version. Sorry for the inconvenience. If you need help, please contact Donna in the office.

If you have news for this column, please send it to our Community Life & Communications Coordinator, Fran Sharp, at connect@fpsudbury.org

FIRST PARISH OF SUDBURY'S PASTORAL ASSOCIATES

Annmarie A	Fred P
Audrey K	Paul R
Polly M	Dawn S
Bruce P	

In the event of a pastoral need, please call our minister or any of these Pastoral Associates.



**WORSHIP AT THE
MEETING HOUSE**

Sunday, January 25, 10 am
A Future Still to Be Imagined
Rev. Katie Lee Crane

We have an African-American president of the United States. We have an African-American president of our Unitarian Universalist Association. Surely this is a sign that racism is waning among us. Or is it? Today, Katie Lee will explore these questions. First, what is our Universalist, Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist historical record with regard to what some have called “the race issue?” Certainly some of our forebears took the lead on abolition and many of us remember – some of us were there – when people responded to Martin Luther King’s call to Selma. Some UUs were killed. But less well known is how we have treated (and are treating) people of color who join our congregations and serve our denomination “then” and now. Less well known is the event known as “the walkout” in 1969 at the UUA General Assembly being held at Arlington Street Church, a struggle that nearly destroyed our Association. At this historic time, how are we called to live our faith?

*There will be a Hearthside Chat at 11:45
to have a conversation about the day’s topic
and the issues it raises.*

Sunday, February 1, 10 am
Who Are We, REALLY?
An Intergenerational Worship Service
for People of All Ages
Rev. Katie Lee Crane & Ms. Roberta Altamari

Has someone ever asked you this question: “what is Unitarian Universalism?” Or, have they wondered what we do here at First Parish of Sudbury. Roberta and Katie Lee hear these questions often and, as enthusiastic as they are about who we are and what we do, they’ll admit it’s not always easy to put into words – especially words that make it clear what makes us US. How is First Parish of Sudbury unique among its UU neighbors? What characteristics make us attractive, appealing, worthy of choosing for one’s community of faith? Why would someone *want* to choose First Parish of Sudbury as their spiritual home? We want to explore with each other how each of us communicates the essential “First Parish of Sudbury-ness” to ourselves, to family, friends and neighbors, and to visitors, guests, newcomers and others in the larger community.

Sunday, February 8, 10 am
We Live in Evolutionary Times
Rev. Katie Lee Crane

This week, people around the world will be celebrating the bicentennial of Darwin’s birth. Every year, Katie Lee receives a birthday notice from those who use Darwin’s birthday as an occasion to celebrate science and humanity. Since many contemporary Unitarian Universalists call themselves “religious humanists,” we will take this opportunity to celebrate and to find out just what it means to be a *religious* humanist. Katie Lee will draw on resources provided by multiple sources including two Unitarian Universalists, Michael Dowd and Connie Barlow, who call theirs a “mobile ministry.” It is the Dowds, she says, who inspired today’s title. For six years they have been crisscrossing the continent to, in their words: “evangelize an inspiring, deeply meaningful view of evolution. They count themselves among millions who see science and religion as two sides of the same coin of human existence.

*There will be a Hearthside Chat at 11:45
to have a conversation about the day’s topic
and the issues it raises.*

Sunday, February 15, 10 am
Rev. Anna Levy Lyons

We welcome Rev. Levy-Lyons to our pulpit while our settled minister is on medical leave. Watch for an upcoming Connector for a description of this service.

MISSED SUNDAY’S WORSHIP? IT’S ON THE WEB!

Almost every worship service is now on the password-protected part of the First Parish website in two forms: as a complete podcast, and in print. It’s still also in print in the foyer and available in print or on CD by request from the First Parish office.

What is this password-protected part of our website, you ask? All members and friends of First Parish have access to additional information on this part of our website. It is a work-in-progress and it provides new opportunities for sharing information.

A growing body of selected worship services will also be available on the public part of our website. We no longer make ALL services available publicly because, to do so, would violate copyright law and we want to honor the intellectual property rights of those whose work we choose to read or sing during the worship. However, copyright law allows us to share this information with our members.

Tom Y has sent you a user name and password. If you’ve lost it (or forgotten it), he will gladly send it again. Sign on to (and bookmark) www.fpsudbury.org. It’s a truly valuable resource for all of us.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

"The Strangers in Our Midst"



Who are these strangers, and are they actually in our midst? Don't we at First Parish of Sudbury do a good job of reaching out to help strangers—those in need in our communities and in the larger world? (I think we do a pretty good job of this.) And, aren't we welcoming to people who come through our meetinghouse doors seeking a religious community? (I think we do a pretty good job of this, too.)

*"A stranger is just a friend
I haven't met yet."*

~ Will Rogers

Did you know that studies conducted in the past few years show that **for every one member or friend active in a UU congregation, there are three people who identify as Unitarian Universalists** who have not crossed the threshold? They claim to agree with our principles and believe in our mission, and many of them are open to being part of a congregation.

Some of these people may be true strangers, friends we haven't met yet. We are working to get the word out to people, through a variety of media, that First Parish is here and that we welcome them.

But, some of these 675,000⁽¹⁾ adults in the U.S. who identify broadly as UUs aren't really strangers to us at all. They are our friends, family members, and acquaintances. They are the good folks with whom we roll up our sleeves to help those in need in our communities. They are people who are passionate about some of the same causes that many of us are—the environment, education, and civil rights, for example. And, many are seeking a religious community in which to learn and explore.

As your Community Life staffer, I urge you to invite your friends and family (of all ages) to come along with you to experience our community life. Invite them to a Sunday morning service, or to a workshop, or coffeehouse, or TempoTime, or to build with us at the Habitat for Humanity house on March 14. Invite them to the Auction, or 4th of July grill. We look forward to meeting them!

Although sometimes it's a stretch for us to verbally express why We ♥ FPS, it's important for us to communicate this, one way or another, with the thousands of people who are looking for a spiritual home, who share many of our values and dreams, and who need to have us meet them—at least halfway.

Peace to you all, Fran

2009 SERVICE AUCTION

Save the date, Saturday, March 28 for a fun filled evening. Invite friends and family.

Please begin planning what you can offer as a service or an item to be auctioned. We also need your support and talent as a worker in many areas to make the Auction a success again this year.

Call Ted J for information or to volunteer, and Thank You!

IN-HOME DINNERS COMING SOON!

Have you decided about hosting or attending an In-Home Dinner in February? Have you let Sue C know, by email or phone?

In-Home Dinners are a wonderful opportunity for longtime and newer members and friends to become better acquainted. They are fun, informal potluck dinners that take place in the homes of First Parish hosts.

The dates for this year are: Saturday, February 7 evening, Sunday February 8 with a 1:00 brunch option and a dinner option, and Friday February 13 evening. Check your calendars, contact Sue to let her know that you would like to participate, and let her know if you would like to host.

BOWLS TO BENEFIT

The Religious Exploration Committee and the Community and Hospitality Committee are teaming up to offer everyone the chance to decorate beautiful ceramics, **and** to make a difference by helping the Sudbury Area Food Pantry.



This Sunday, Jan. 25 at 11:30 come to the Multipurpose Room on the ground floor to paint a ceramic bowl, plate, or mug. All ages are welcome, and there will be helpers. **Each person who decorates a ceramic piece will also pay for it on that day.** The pieces will be fired, and brought back before the next Sunday.

On Sun., Feb. 1, people who painted and paid the week before can pick up their bowl, plate, or mug, and we will treat you to a scoop of ice cream to say thanks. Extra pieces will also be available on Feb. 1 for purchase (and ice cream) for those who weren't able to come on Jan. 25.

The mugs, plates, and bowls will cost between \$15 and \$20 which will cover the cost of the ceramics and provide a donation to the Sudbury Area Food Pantry. For more information, contact Roberta Altamari.

⁽¹⁾ source: American Religious Identification Survey (ARIS), 2001

KATIE LEE ON MEDICAL LEAVE STARTING FEBRUARY 9

Katie Lee will be on medical leave from Monday, February 9 until April 1. She is having bi-lateral knee-replacement surgeries in February. During that time, our pulpit will be filled with a mix of lay leaders and guest ministers; the Worship Associates, coordinated by Fran Sharp, will host each guest. Our Pastoral Associates, coordinated by Dawn S, will respond to pastoral needs with the help of several local UU ministers on call and available to help in the event of a pastoral emergency. Other questions and concerns may be directed to Annmarie A, chair of the Board of Trustees, and Donna Scalcione, Administrator. Each of these people will know whom to call and, should it be necessary, how to reach Katie Lee.

Katie Lee writes: February 8 will be my last Sunday in the pulpit before surgery. On that day I will ask for your blessings so that I may carry them with me into this medical adventure. Many of you have expressed a willingness to help with casseroles and rides and in so many other ways. I am so grateful for your generosity. Thankfully my friends have all stepped up to the plate (aren't friends great?!) and I believe we have people in place to help with everything we can anticipate. Of course I know exactly who to call if something more is needed.

I will rely on you to carry on the ministry of First Parish; I am going to step away and devote all of my attention to the procedures, the rehabilitation, and the healing needed to come back as quickly as possible. I would be delighted to receive notes or cards but I ask that you refrain from phoning or emailing me during my leave. If there is something that you feel needs my attention, please see one of the coordinators listed above: Fran, Dawn, Annmarie and/or Donna. Thanks, everyone for your support. I'm already planning a roller-skating party for late spring!

SATURDAY'S RETREAT—LAST CHANCE TO REGISTER

JANUARY 24, 2009, 1:00-4:30PM

Come get a taste of two intuitive processes - InterPlay and SoulCollage. Leaders C.C. King and Pam Swing suggest that the retreat will help us ask: "When there is a deep quietness in nature, what does our spirit/body/soul crave? Can we get a peek at what be already incubating within, waiting for the return of the light to grow?"

Advanced registration is required and the fee for the retreat is \$45; scholarship money is available. To learn more about InterPlay and SoulCollage, call or email Rev. Katie Lee Crane. To register, call or email the First Parish Office.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT by Ginny S, Clerk

First Parish of Sudbury's good financial news

Have our investments lost value? Yes, but they have lost much less than the market in general. At the recent Trustees meeting we got the good news that our Finance Committee's conservative investment strategy, frustrating to some in boom times, had saved most of our nest egg during the recent market downturn.

Have people continued to pay their pledges? YES! Pledge payments during the second quarter (ending Dec. 31, 2008) were as good as ever. Thanks to the commitment of so many members and friends of the congregation, promises were kept and payments continued to come in. Our financial officers have not had to tear their hair, and our staff and programs have the support they need. Of course, it does help that utility costs are lower than projected, and that we are all good about turning out the lights.

The stewardship campaign for the coming fiscal year will start on March 1, when each of us will be asked to pledge as we are able, to sustain this beloved community. And on March 28 we'll have the Auction, with its combination of fun, fellowship and fundraising. Do plan to take part!

EMERGENCY CLOSING INFORMATION

If worship services and other events at First Parish need to be cancelled due to severe weather or other emergency situations, here's how you can find out:

By phone—check the recorded message at the First Parish number, 978/443-2043. If events for Sunday have been cancelled, the message will state that.

First Parish website—go to www.fpsudbury.org. The front page will show information about the emergency closing.

WBZ Radio website—If for any reason you can't access our First Parish website, you can go to www.wbz.com, click on "School Closings from the WBZ Storm Center" button, click on "Religious" and scroll down to look for "First Parish of Sudbury."

By radio—listen to the WBZ Storm Center (news radio 1030-AM) for the cancellation of our Sunday worship service only. Other events cannot be listed. If the weather is bad enough that you think a meeting or event might be cancelled, please contact the meeting leader.

FAITH IN ACTION NEWS**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
SUDBURY PROJECT**

A family-friendly fundraiser for the Sudbury Habitat for Humanity house will be held at a Lowell Devils hockey game on Saturday, February 28th at 1:30 at the Tsongas Arena in Lowell. Tickets are \$15. The Lowell Devils are an AHL team (one step below the NHL) and games are fun for all ages, especially children. The Tsongas Arena is easy to get to with parking located directly across the street. Please contact Matt Murphy at mattmurphy27@verizon.net for more information or to purchase tickets.

And, don't forget to hold the First Parish "build date" on the H4H site in Sudbury: March 14. Contact Beth R for more information, and to sign up.



Guest at Your Table Boxes—don't delay, make out your check today! Checks, made out to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, reflecting the amount you collected in your Guest At the Table boxes will be collected in the office up to January 25.

Draft Statement of Conscience on Peacemaking

Several discussions took place on this topic last year, and we need to make recommendations about the draft statement to the Commission on Social Witness at the UUA by February 1.

Here's how you can be involved now:

1. Come to the discussion this Sunday, January 25 in the library at 11:45am.
2. In advance, read the document sent to you in early January--the draft statement of conscience. It can also be found at:
http://www.uua.org/documents/csw/pm_soc_0811_draft.pdf
3. If it's not possible to attend the meeting on January 25, feel free to contact Judy D before January 24, or by phone.

WOMEN'S ALLIANCE RETREAT: APRIL 3-5, 2009

All women are warmly invited to a weekend of solitude and companionship, fun and laughter, while building community with other women of the parish. Are you in need of introspection, reflection, and spiritual renewal? Then come to the Women's Alliance 22nd Annual Retreat April 3-5, 2009. No previous participation in any Women's Alliance event required. For more details, contact Donna Scalcione at office@fpsudbury.org or speak with Susan C, Annmarie A or Dusty R at coffee hour and watch for the Alliance Retreat flyer in the entrance lobby this month.

First Parish of Sudbury Unitarian Universalist
327 Concord Road, Sudbury, MA 01776
978 443-2043, fax: 978 443-4391
Website: www.fpsudbury.org
Office hours: Monday - Friday 9:00-11:30am

We embrace diversity and, as a Welcoming Congregation, are intentional about welcoming the presence and participation of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons in all aspects of congregational life.

Minister: *Rev. Katie Lee Crane* email: minister@fpsudbury.org
Director of Music: *Debra Morris-Bennett* email: musicdir@fpsudbury.org
Director of Rel. Exploration & Youth Advisor: *Roberta Altamari* email: dre@fpsudbury.org
Community Life & Communications Coordinator: *Fran Sharp* email: connect@fpsudbury.org
Administrator: *Donna Scalcione* email: office@fpsudbury.org
Chair, Board of Trustees: *Annmarie A*

**First Parish of Sudbury Calendar of Events
January 18 – February 21, 2009**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<u>Jan 18</u> 10:00a Sunday Service 11:45a Hearthside Chat 11:45a Landscape Comm 4:00p Our Whole Lives	<u>Jan 19</u> 7:30p Finance Comm	<u>Jan 20</u> 12:00p Tuesday BYO Lunch 7:30p Worship Associates	<u>Jan 21</u> 7:00p Quilters	<u>Jan 22</u> 1:00p Meditation 2:00p HRC meeting 7:30p Choir	<u>Jan 23</u>	<u>Jan 24</u> 10:00a TempoTime 1:00p "Fruitful Darkness" Workshop
<u>Jan 25</u> 10:00a Sunday Service 11:45a Hearthside Chat 11:45a Statement of Conscience on Peacemaking Disc. 4:00p Our Whole Lives 5:00p Women's Alliance Potluck & Meeting	<u>Jan 26</u> 7:00p Spirit Play Task Force 7:00p RE Comm 7:30p FIA	<u>Jan 27</u> 12:00p Tuesday BYO Lunch Discussion 7:30p Pastoral Associates Group	<u>Jan 28</u> 7:00p Quilters	<u>Jan 29</u> 1:00p Meditation 7:30p Choir	<u>Jan 30</u> 7:00p Youth and Parent Movie Night	<u>Jan 31</u>
<u>Feb 1</u> 10:00a Sunday Service 11:45a Hearthside Chat 4:00p Our Whole Lives	<u>Feb 2</u> 7:30p Board of Trustees	<u>Feb 3</u> 12:00p Tuesday BYO Lunch 7:30p Committee on Ministry	<u>Feb 4</u> 7:00p Quilters	<u>Feb 5</u> 1:00p Meditation 7:30p Choir	<u>Feb 6</u>	<u>Feb 7</u> 11:00a Chalice Circle Convs 6:00p In-Home Dinner
<u>Feb 8</u> 10:00a Sunday Service 11:45a Hearthside Chat 1:00p In-Home Brunch 2:30p Coming of Age Workshop 4:00p Our Whole Lives 6:00p In-Home Dinner	<u>Feb 9</u>	<u>Feb 10</u> 12:00p Tuesday BYO Lunch	<u>Feb 11</u> 7:00p Quilters	<u>Feb 12</u> 1:00p Meditation 7:30p Choir	<u>Feb 13</u> 6:00p In-Home Dinner 7:00p Our Whole Lives Parent meeting	<u>Feb 14</u> 10:00a TempoTime
<u>Feb 15</u> 10:00a Sunday Service 11:45a Landscape Committee 11:45a Hearthside Chat 11:45a Community and Hosp. Comm.	<u>Feb 16</u> President's Day	<u>Feb 17</u> (school vacation week) 12:00p Tuesday BYO Lunch 7:30p Worship Associates Group	<u>Feb 18</u> (school vacation week) 7:00p Quilters 7:30p Bible Conversations	<u>Feb 19</u> (school vacation wk) 1:00p Meditation 7:30p Choir	<u>Feb 20</u> (school vacation week)	<u>Feb 21</u>

The up-to-date First Parish calendar can be seen online at: www.fpsudbury.org.

Please remember that all events and meetings must be scheduled by the Administrator, Donna Scalcione