



JANUARY 20, 2010

R.E.flections by a chaliceD.R.E.amer



Roberta Altamari
Director of Religious Exploration
and Youth Ministry

As my column is due, I am also preparing to leave for Atlanta, Georgia with Robyn to participate in the Interfaith Training we were selected to be a part of. This is fabulous and I'm so thrilled for this wonderful opportunity. But at the same time, work duties call and my column is due. And so, my Coming-of-Age group agreed to help me write it. It all started when they were so intriguing with their responses to their "what do I believe" surveys that I became totally mesmerized by their words. When one of them said, "What you believe affects what you say when you are losing at cards." It sounded funny at first and then I realized how deep it runs. I couldn't stop thinking about the different dimensions of this one statement. I then just had to ask if I could share their comments for my next column. To which they happily agreed – well, in exchange for me bringing ice cream to their next meeting.

That's what our youth often do to me. Get me thinking outside the box and beyond my usual realities. They challenge me to open my mind and heart. Check out this response one youth wrote after surveying some friends and family about what they believe. "While interviewing four people who have been very influential to me (from three different religions), I realized that I did not know as much about them as I thought ... Through the interview process, I came to realize that despite that religion people lend their name to, everyone is an individual with their own personal set of beliefs. I didn't get the cookie cutter responses I thought I'd get." Another youth wrote, "Both UUs (I interviewed) don't believe in God, but they don't believe in God in different ways."

Or how about this one to get you thinking? "When asked what they believe happens when they die, the people I interviewed paused to think in depth about what I had asked. All people believe something different - which was great, but puzzling. Can different things happen to different people when they die? Something else to think about. I found it interesting that my dad is still undecided about his beliefs on the subject, knowing that he was alive when dinosaurs roamed the earth."

Wow! And there were countless more I'd love to share but I'm already running out of space and I still have to share a few highlights from after they watched a movie about what different teenagers believe. Consider these perceptions:

- "There are different variations of God – it is kind of personalized. And the teens have more creative versions of God."
- "It is cool to see people our age so dedicated."
- "I thought it was interesting that the Catholic boy, who I think I stereotype in my head as being one of the most religious types of Christians, said that when praying, even in chapel sometimes, he felt like Jesus was there, but other times he didn't feel Jesus and he felt nothing."

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Worship at the Meetinghouse

Sunday, January 24, 10 am

The Journey of a Ministry: from 1640 to 2010

Rev. Katie Lee Crane & Ms. Beverly Waring

What does it mean to be stewards of a ministry that began 370 years ago? While it may seem young in comparison to religious communities in other parts of the world, in the United States this is quite a statistic! Rev. Crane is captivated by the history of a congregation that began with a covenant made among a small group of west-country farmers from England who had immigrated to a place called Sudbury Plantation. The story of First Parish of Sudbury is punctuated by multiple changes in religious philosophies, several firsts – such as the first settled female minister, the Rev. Ida Hultin, who served from 1904 -1915 – and an unwavering commitment to a living tradition that has evolved and continues to evolve into the Unitarian Universalist religious community that thrives today. “We stand on the shoulders of those who went before,” Crane often says, “it is up to us to continue the tradition, building on what we inherited; it our responsibility and it will be our legacy to those who follow.”

There will be no Hearthside Chat this morning; instead, we encourage all members and friends of First Parish to return to the Sanctuary at 11:45 to attend the **Congregational Meeting today** to cover our current and projected financial situation, the upcoming Stewardship (Canvass) Campaign, and to **vote** if we should *investigate* hosting a cell phone antenna in the steeple.

Sunday, January 31, 10 am

Memories & Lessons from Eleanor Roosevelt’s “Kitchen Cabinet”

Dr. Susan C with Rev. Katie Lee Crane

First Parish member, Susan C, reflects on her memories as “the littlest C” at Eleanor Roosevelt’s Val-Kill estate in the 1950s and ‘60s. Because her father served three generations of the Roosevelt family for nearly 40 years, from tending gardens to superintendant of the estate, the C family lived on the estate. One might say that Susan’s memories and lessons come not only from Eleanor Roosevelt but, just as important, from her father, Charlie C. Now a professor of Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University and Director of the Heller School’s Center for Youth and Communities, Dr. C also relishes the ER-Brandeis connection; Eleanor Roosevelt once served on the Board of Trustees and as a part-time faculty member at the university. Dr. C will, among other things, speak of how, at the feet of this great woman, she learned about the commitment to public service as well as the importance of bridge-building.

There will be no Hearthside Chat this morning; registered participants in the First Parish Collegium, “Sharing Our Odysseys,” will continue their series in the Brackett Room at 11:45 am.

Share the Plate donations on Jan 31 will go to the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, founded in 1981 and committed to ensuring that everyone has a place to call home.

First Parish of Sudbury’s Pastoral Associates

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

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

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continued from front page

- “Religion seems like a comfort zone for some people – a reassurance that there is order in the world. People seem to be afraid to discover that there isn’t a God because they want to have something to depend on.”
- “I wondered about the fact that although many of the people believed in God, almost all had at least some doubts or reservations about total belief.”
- “How is it that even a movie about different types of religion doesn’t seem to know about Unitarians or Universalist or Unitarian-Universalists?”

Wow! Lots to think about! I am so impressed to see that this is what they are already coming up with halfway through the program. And then they inspired their middle school friends who started their own survey last Sunday and enthusiastically rushed around Social Hour asking some very unique “what do you believe” questions. Will have to save their results and reactions for another day...

I’m happily glowing because of the blessings and gifts of our youth community! Hope you are too!!

Roberta ♥



DON'T MISS THE CONGREGATIONAL MEETING JANUARY 24

Everyone is invited on Sunday, January 24 at 11:45 in the Sanctuary. While only members may vote, all interested friends and members are urged to take part in this important meeting, to hear reports, ask questions and/or offer suggestions. Child care will be provided.

See [page 4](#) Finance Committee article for more about our financial picture and the importance of this meeting.

Coming up in Religious Exploration:

Faith In Action Projects for Kids, Families, and Everyone!

Thanks to everyone who donated books for the More Than Words bookstore that teaches troubled teens how to succeed in business. I look forward to delivering three big bags of books.

This month, we will be collecting supplies for the women at Renewal House, a shelter supported by the UU Urban Ministry. They are in eager need of feminine products (sanitary napkins and tampons) and body/hand lotion (regular size, not hotel samples). If you have any to spare, please bring some in to donate! The kids will be doing a special project for Renewal House sometime in February and some members of our Youth Group will be leading a sing-a-long at a party there in March. Please help us support them!!

Save the Date to Bring a Friend to First Parish Sunday, Feb. 14

While all members and friends of our community are welcome to invite friends to visit First Parish any Sunday, the children and youth will be especially encouraged to invite a friend on Sunday, February 14th when we will host a very special celebration of friendship and connection.

Help Wanted

We need more people to help in RE. In addition to more volunteers for our regular classes (which are always most welcome), we need people willing to do an occasional overnight with our youth (no talent necessary except a willingness to sleep on an air mattress on the floor at First Parish or another UU meetinghouse) and people who can help out on “all kids together” Sundays (no talent necessary except a genuine caring about our children as you’ll be assisting with the group activity.) Please let Roberta know if you can help!

TempoTime:

A free music and movement program for parents and their children ages 1 to 5. Please tell your friends and neighbors about this wonderful opportunity. Saturday mornings in the Commons at 10:30 am on Jan. 30, Feb. 13, Feb. 27, and March 13.

An Important Message from FinCom (the Finance Committee)

As in many years, we enter the start of our annual budget process with the traditional mix of thinking of our ministry potential while trying to quantify that in dollars and cents.

This year brings heightened dimensions to those discussions, with uncertainties regarding the annual financial outlook for next year built on a budget that already falls short of what is considered to be the full potential of our First Parish community.

We start with a budget which is already a 7% reduction in expenses from the year before. Our starting budget also included an \$18k deficit, and there was a deficit of \$10,000 the year before. This means that we planned to spend \$18k more than we planned to take in. I won't be specific about the details – that is the subject of the Special Congregational Meeting this Sunday on January 24.

Another consideration is that there is the potential reduction in the rent that SED pays us. It might be attributable to the economy, the Town's new offering of a full-day kindergarten, or something else, we do not know. What we DO know is that SED has reported that their enrollment is less than it once was, and they may reduce their use of our facilities.

So the bottom line today is that we have a potential loss of income from SED, we are starting with a deficit to make up, and we are starting with a ministry that has already 'rolled up its sleeves' and cut back.

And we are ready. The Finance Committee is committed to working closely with this year's stewardship team to not only develop the next year's budget, but to create a longer term, three year view. And the process starts with this Congregational Meeting.

Throughout this process, there will be opportunities for everyone to hear more, keep up-to-date with progress, and to provide input on some of the important questions. And the process starts with the **Congregational Meeting on Jan. 24**— see you there!

People We Care About

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4th Tuesday Lunch Jan. 26



Join us at Noon on Jan. 26 for the 4th Tuesday bring-your-own lunch in The Commons when Rev. Judy Deutsch will lead the discussion on healthcare.

Of Note:

You can help First Parish by bringing in your used toner and printer ink cartridges to the office. We can recycle them for discounts on office supplies.

The current newsletter of the Sudbury Senior Center is posted on the Parish Hall main bulletin board to the right of the kitchen.

The Halalisa Singers in Concert, Sat., Jan. 23 at 8:00 pm. at First Parish in Lexington, Unitarian Universalist, 7 Harrington Rd. and Sun., Jan 24, at 3:00 pm, First Church Unitarian in Littleton, 19 Foster St. (info@halalisa.org or 781-862-6253)



Free Parenting Workshops and Discussion Groups Jan. 26 & March 23

Tuesday, January 26 at 7pm: Sharing Our Successful Parenting Strategies

Come hear some favorite parenting success stories. What works for us? What helps us during our busiest and most stressful moments? What empowers and enables us to have more positive family time together? Come and share!

Tuesday, March 23 at 7pm: Budgeting and Stretching Our Dollars Creatively

During these hard economic times made only more challenging with the high costs of raising a family, come hear and share tips for resourceful budgeting. Discover how your limited funds can stretch to create a wonderful life for your family!

Free and open to all parents or soon-to-be parents from First Parish and local communities. If you have any questions, contact Roberta at DRE@fpsudbury.org

First Parish Directory Now Available

The newly updated Directory of Members and Friends is now available in the office and on Sundays at the Welcome Table (with the yellow tablecloth) in the Parish Hall.



Still Time to Sign Up For In-Home Dinners

In-Home Dinners are a wonderful opportunity for longtime and newer members and friends to become better acquainted. They are fun, informal, small-group dinners that take place in the homes of First Parish hosts. Choose the traditional dinner, a Sunday brunch or a family meal option. To sign up as a guest or host, let the office know of your interest.



Watch for This Sale Jan. 31

Fair Trade premium coffees, teas and chocolate bars will be for sale at social hour by Faith in Action on selected Sundays starting Jan. 31.

What is Fair Trade? It is the practice of pushing more of the revenues from sales of these products back to the farmers who produce the base ingredients. For example, a coffee cooperative in Costa Rica receives about a dollar per pound more through Fair Trade channels than they would get from the commercial market. This extra income is used to improve production processes, convert to organic farming, invest in lower energy consuming equipment. It is also used to improve village infrastructure like fresh water supplies, better sewage treatment and school maintenance. Farmers around the world are joining the Fair Trade movement to the benefit of their villages, the environment and us, the consumers.

How does this work? The Fair Trade system is built on the cooperative model, where groups of individuals join together to gain the critical mass required to influence the market. The producers are generally organized into coops, driven not by profits for shareholders but by wages for workers.

So are the distributors. A flat distribution chain, with fewer middlemen allows more of the revenues to flow back to the producers. This gives them the funds to improve their products.

As consumers, we can enjoy very high quality products at prices which are competitive with the soulless mass-produced corporate goods.

So starting on Jan. 31, come by and pick up something to take home and try. You'll be happy you did.

Help Wanted



If you know of a job opening, please email details to office@fpsudbury.org for publication in the next *Connector*

Save These Dates... Fundraisers for First Parish

Saturday, March 6
Taste of the North End
Pasta Festival

Saturday, March 27
Coffeehouse
Featuring Ergo Canto and
The Dawn Kenney Band

Saturday, April 10
Annual Service Auction.
Plan your donations. Plan
to come and invite a friend.

Faith in Action Sponsors Forum on Homelessness Feb. 28

First Parish Faith in Action is pleased to be a co-sponsor, along with UU Mass Action Network and Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries, of the Sixth Annual Homelessness Forum: How Faith Communities can help End Homelessness: A New Vision on Sunday, Feb. 28 from 3 to 5 pm at the First Parish in Concord, 20 Lexington Rd., Concord. Keynote speaker is Rev. Liz Walker, formerly of WBZ-TV. For more information feel free to contact Carolyn L. and see the full description on the Parish Hall bulletin board

Deadline is Feb. 1 for UU Study Action

At this summer's General Assembly of Unitarian Universalist congregations only one proposal only will be chosen by GA delegates to be our Study Action for 2010-2014. Our congregation may vote for five out of the six proposed Study Actions (Ending Slavery; Revitalizing American Democracy; Nuclear Disarmament; National Economic Reform; Immigration as a Moral Issue; Energy, Peace, and Justice) but the deadline is Feb. 1. To see a summary of each proposal and the rules for voting, go to <http://www.uua.org/socialjustice/issuesprocess/currentissues/152637.shtml> More information is posted on the Parish Hall Bulletin board.



Need Help with Before-School or After School Childcare?

Check out Sudbury Extended Day, right here at First Parish. SED offers nurturing and enriching programs for children in grades K-8, including special programs on Early Release Days, some school holidays and vacations during the school year. Call 978-443-5829 and speak with one of their knowledgeable and experienced staff. You won't be disappointed...and you'll be helping First Parish maintain income from leased space as we provide a home for a valuable community service.

EMERGENCY CLOSING INFORMATION

To find out if worship and other events at First Parish are cancelled:

By phone—check the recorded message at the First Parish number, 978/443-2043.

First Parish website -- Go to www.fpsudbury.org. The front page will show any emergency closing.

WBZ Radio website -- 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 1030 AM *WBZ Storm Center* at :05 and :35 past the hour for cancellation of our Sunday worship service only. Other events cannot be listed. If you think a meeting or event might be cancelled, please contact the meeting leader.

Contacts:

Minister: Rev. Katie Lee Crane - minister@fpsudbury.org

Ministerial Candidate in Residence: Beverly Waring – office@fpsudbury.org

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Office: 978-443-2043 **Web address:** www.fpsudbury.org

FPS Calendar Jan 20, 2010 to Feb. 6, 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jan 17	Jan 18	Jan 19	Jan 20 5:30p Rental: SED 7:00p Rental 7:00p Quilters	Jan 21 1:00p Meditation 7:30p Choir	Jan 22	Jan 23
Jan 24 10:00a Worship Service 11:45a Rental: Morris Dancers 11:45a Special Congregational Meeting 3:00p Rental 4:45p Rental: Morris Dancers 6:30p Rental 7:00p Youth group	Jan 25 6:00p Rental: Yoga 7:00p SPTF	Jan 26 12:00p 4th Tuesday BYO Lunch & Discussion 7:00p Rental 7:00p Parenting Workshop: Sharing our Strategies 7:30p Pastoral Associates	Jan 27 11:30a Peacemaking Workshop 5:00p Connector deadline for Feb. 3 edition 7:00p Rental 7:00p Quilters 7:00p Coffee House Task Force	Jan 28 1:00p Meditation 7:00p Carbon Consciousness Group 7:30p Choir	Jan 29	Jan 30 9:30a SED Open House In-Home Dinners
Jan 31 10:00a Worship Service 11:30a Community & Hospitality Committee 11:45a Rental: Morris Dancers 11:45a Faith in Action Committee 3:00p Rental 4:45p Rental: Morris Dancers 6:30p Rental 7:00p Youth Group 11:45p Sharing Our Own Odysseys: Sharing Our Stories In-Home Dinners	Feb 1 12:00p Rental: SED 6:00p Rental: Yoga 7:00p Board of Trustees	Feb 2 7:00p Rental 7:00p COA meeting 7:30p Committee on Ministry	Feb 3 6:30p FPS hosts "STOP" 7:00p Quilters 7:00p Rental	Feb 4 1:00p Meditation 7:25p Choir In-Home Dinners	Feb 5	Feb 6 2:00p Rental: Girl Scouts