



OCTOBER 7, 2009

Making Meanings

REV. KATIE LEE CRANE

When I was listening to *Prairie Home Companion* the other night, Garrison Keillor told one of his Unitarian jokes. I don't laugh out loud. They *are* funny – and often right on the money – if you're an insider, but they offer up a stereotype of our religion that, to anyone but an insider, is quite misleading. Every time he tells one, we have a lively conversation at our dinner table.

"What about the Lutherans," Jonas asks, "he does the same to them." Well, some Lutherans may feel about Keillor's Lutheran jokes as I do about the Unitarian ones. What bothers me is the shadow side of insider jokes – they leave others out. Like my next door neighbor who is curious about Unitarian Universalism, though he is a practicing Catholic. And my Jewish friend who wants to know why it makes my heart sing. Or my cousin who wants to know where she can find a nearby UU congregation.

Think about it. If all they know about my religion are the jokes that have us sitting in a circle in heaven, drinking coffee, and arguing about where we are – what does that tell the world about who we are? I want them to know why I came... and why I stay.

Which brings me to my point: tell the world who we are! I am not trying to evangelize my neighbor or pressure my cousin; I just want them to know why I love being a Unitarian Universalist. I want them to know that it isn't easy, but I find it exhilarating and challenging to forge my own spiritual path. That's when a friend will note, "sure, but I can do that walking the beach." She's right. But I like doing my spiritual exploring in the company of others. Nobody told me I HAD to be a Unitarian Universalist; I chose to be one. I joined voluntarily and, like other kinds of intentional communities, when I joined, I agreed to affirm certain principals and I commit to a way of being in community together. I like that about Unitarian Universalism. I like it a lot!

Imagine telling your favorite things to someone who asks, or to someone who is curious. (Remember: if you're just telling them about something that matters to you, they won't perceive you as pushy; they'll feel your energy.) Invite them to join you for worship. Reach out to some folks who've lost loved one and invite them to our service of healing and comfort on November 1st. Bring the families in your play group to a Village Worship or a gaggle of children to TempoTime.

Tell about some of your peak experiences. Tell them how we help our children grow into this faith of ours, how we see ourselves as explorers. There are guides everywhere – some have titles, some sit next to us in the pews. Even our littlest explorers begin to learn from stories rooted in many of the worlds' religions. From a very young age, we help children find their place in our community. We encourage them to make meanings for themselves – and, believe me, we have some very young theologians around here! And the rest of us are no slouches either. Give it try. Tell people what it means to you to be part of this UU congregation. They'll be honored. And they'll have more than just Unitarian jokes to understand who we are and what we care about.

Katie Lee

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Worship at the Meetinghouse

Sunday, October 11, 10 am

Hearing Voices

Rev. Katie Lee Crane

In a year when we are exploring spiritual and religious odysseys, our minister, the Rev. Katie Lee Crane, tells something of the milestones her own journey to Unitarian Universalism and ministry. "It's not a linear story," she confesses, "and I find that each milestone is marked by something I heard – in high school Latin class, in a survey of American Literature in college, in the Vermont countryside, in poetry, and theatre, and song.

As we prepare to explore the odysseys of others – both well known and little known – Katie Lee hopes her personal sharing will encourage others to reflect on their own journeys and, later in the year, consider joining her and others for a time of sharing our own odysseys with one another in a small group setting.

There will be a Hearthside Chat at 11:45 to engage in conversation about the day's topic and what it means to us.

Sunday, October 18, 10 am

Walking Barefoot

Rev. Katie Lee Crane

Katie Lee delves into a personal journey that led an infant named Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, born October 2, 1869, to become known as *bapu*, the father of his nation. What happened along the way that led him to commit himself to *ahimsa*, non-violence? Who or what helped him formulate *satyagraha*, a way of resisting injustice through mass civil disobedience? Was there a moment when he realized "my life is my message?" What motivated him to be/become who he was? What sustained him? How he has served as a source of inspiration for others like the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.?

Katie Lee reminds us that Unitarian Universalists find sources of inspiration in many ways; one is through the words and deeds of prophetic women and men, like *Mahātmā* ("Great Soul") Gandhi, who challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love. Then she challenges us to name the prophetic ones who have influenced our own life journeys.

There will be no Hearthside Chat today so that we may prepare to celebrate the life of Carol White in a memorial service at 2 pm.

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.

Coming up in Religious Exploration:

TempoTime, a music and movement program for parents and their children ages 1 to 5 on Friday mornings at 10am. Please tell your friends and neighbors about this wonderful opportunity.

Second Fridays – Second Chances: an interfaith support group for people who are divorced or divorcing. See flyer on page 8.

Your help is always needed in our Religious Exploration program. Explore your options and sign-up at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=o8xmhnbfntldjvMsTX97g_3d_3d



After 108 Years, First Parish of Sudbury Knows Craft Fairs – Sign Up to Help and Come to Shop Oct. 17

Over 50 professional crafters and artisans will display their hand crafted beautiful jewelry, pottery, paintings, home made soaps, unique baskets, photography, and many one-of-a-kind items fashioned in wood, glass and fiber at the 108th Annual Harvest Craft Fair on Saturday, Oct. 17 from 10-4. Admission is \$3.00; free for children under 12.

Says Sherri, one of the organizers, “Because this is a juried show, we can assure you of the quality and diversity of the handcrafted products. In addition, we’ll offer a delicious lunch with a great selection of home made soups and breads, a bake table featuring a variety of pies and goodies, home made jams and jellies and Historic Sudbury sweatshirts, t-shirts and mugs. After 108 years of practice, our congregation knows how to put on a great Craft Fair!”

To further the fun, raffle winners of items generously donated by the crafters will be called every hour on the half hour from 10:30 to 3:30. You must be present to win. There will also be a magic show for children at 11:00 am and 2:00 pm.

For more information, visit www.fpsudbury.org.

NOTE: If you can lend a card table for the lunch at the Fair, please bring it Friday, Oct 16 and be sure it has your name on it. Thanks.

□ △ Quilters Seek Squares, Triangles and People of All Shapes and Sizes

The Quilters of First Parish of Sudbury are looking for a few good sowers.

No that is not a typo, because whether we are quilting, or ironing, sewing or searching through pattern books, we are also busy sowing the seeds of friendship, spreading the laughter of companionship and scattering the joy that comes from serving those less fortunate than us. A few years ago we quilted and donated over a dozen children’s quilts to Renewal House, a Unitarian Universalist supported shelter for battered women and their children. So whether you are already a quilter, or would like to learn how to quilt, we would love to have you join us.

People of all levels of skill, confidence and willingness to learn are welcome to join a small but dedicated group of quilters. Or maybe you are a seamstress, a knitter, or a crafter. Even if quilting is not your thing but you have unfinished projects of any type, you are warmly invited to join is for encouragement, camaraderie and a cup of tea while you tackle that project you hope to finish by the holidays.

We meet in The Commons every Wednesday evening starting at 7:00. This year, we are working as a group on quilts to donate to Hospice patients but also schedule evenings to work on our own projects from time to time. For more information, contact Fran or Bev or speak to any one of us: Fran, Bev, Dusty, Margherita, Cilla, Dawn or Sarah Jun or better yet, just drop by and check us out.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Join the Sudbury-Wayland-Lincoln Domestic Roundtable on Oct. 13 at 3 pm at the Goodnow Library, Sudbury to hear the poignant and difficult stories of William Kellibrew, who will recount some of his experiences as a child witness of domestic violence. For more details, see the flyer on the bulletin board.

Report from the Trustees

By Ginny S., Clerk

The Trustees would like to share with the whole congregation what they learned as Treasurer Saul gave his report on the past fiscal year. Like so many other organizations these days, First Parish is facing serious financial challenges. However, the situation is not dire. There is much to be pleased about. During the past fiscal year we spent less than was budgeted (\$14,000 less!). But, because of losses on the income side, we are currently spending more than we are taking in, and the current year deficit could be as large as \$18,000.

Inevitably, our investments, including the Equity Fund, suffered a major loss along with everything else on Wall Street, but will undoubtedly recover gradually as market conditions improve. We were able to achieve a significant saving on the expenditure from the Equity Fund for this summer's restoration work to the meetinghouse, thanks to Bruce L.'s negotiations with the contractor, and some quick decisions to go ahead while the price was right.

Saul expressed concern about three trends: decreasing membership, increasing staff, and significant loss of rental income. In their discussion the Trustees pointed out that the decrease in membership is largely due to the change in status of many inactive people, who are now "friends" rather than members. It is true, however, that the congregation has not gained new members in similar numbers. Let's spread the word! Let's bring in all those people who are UU's but don't know it.

Compared with other UU congregations we do have a higher than average ratio of staff to members. We made those choices, preparing for growth in our programs for children and youth, and expecting that having a Community Life Coordinator would bring more people into our community. Will these decisions prove sustainable?

Continued. Sudbury Extended Day (SED) has been a major tenant for many years, and has provided by far the majority of our rental income. But with the Sudbury schools going to full day kindergarten their need for our space is drastically reduced, along with our income from that source. First Parish is now actively seeking (and beginning to find) other sources of rental income.

The congregation can use its "stability fund" to tide it over a lean period, but must be prepared for a new reality in the future. The Finance Committee will be offering opportunities for congregants to ask questions and to offer suggestions for improving our future prospects. In the meantime, you can help by getting involved in fund-raisers, paying your pledge on time, giving any ideas you have to the Trustees or the FinCom, and asking for details if you'd like to include First Parish of Sudbury in your estate planning.



Still Time to Participate on 3 Monday Evenings, Spiritual Book Discussion Group

Wow! What a positive response to the new Spiritual Discussion Book Group on Mondays, Oct. 26, Nov. 9 and Nov. 23 from 7-9 pm.

Don't let the book's title put you off: [Dear Heart, Come Home - The Path of Midlife Spirituality](#) by Joyce Rupp. While it might imply that it's for those going through midlife, the book certainly expands beyond that and is a great guide for those wishing to explore more deeply where they are on their Spiritual journey and to connect with their true Self. It is a book that leads us, through stories, poetry, guided visualization and more, to find those "...inner treasures that wait to be discovered as we enter unknown, inner territory and reflect upon our life."

If this sounds good to you, contact Bev. If you are unable to participate in this particular group, don't worry. Annmarie A. and Bev hope to offer more book discussion groups (with different books) later in the year.

Continued top of next column

Chalice Circles – New Member sign up until Oct. 23

It's time again to invite you to join or rejoin a Chalice Circle. If this is new to you, you can find out a lot about these small, committed circles of 5-10 people who meet monthly for spiritual reflection. Just go to our First Parish website – <http://fpsudbury.org/wiki/Public/ChaliceCircles/> - or pick up a brochure in the rack at the entrance to the Parish Hall or in the First Parish office. There are already two, active circles meeting: one on the 3rd Monday evening each month and another on the 2nd Friday evening. There is also a waiting list for those who would enjoy gathering early on one Sunday evening each month. If none of these times good for you, don't worry. Whenever there is enough interest another group can form a new Chalice Circle with just five people. Curious? Interested?

Go to the website, find out more, and then complete the (re)registration form. It's due in the office no later than Oct. 23 at noon.



Thanks from the Kids at Sandra's Lodge!

First Parish folks collected 28 backpacks filled with school supplies and \$198⁰⁰ from our Share the Plate collection to support the programs and kids at Sandra's Lodge, a Waltham family shelter. Thanks so much for helping these vulnerable kids get a strong start to the school year!

Bulletin Board Sampler

Check out the Parish Hall bulletin boards for more details on these and other events:

The program from the party and the songs in honor of Rev. Dr. Doris Hunter

On October 17-18 Harvard Divinity School and the Unitarian Universalist Association will cosponsor a conference on "The Future of Unitarian Universalist Scholarship." This event is free and open to the public, but an RSVP is encouraged.



Count us in for [350.org](http://www.350.org)

On the weekend of Oct. 24 and 25, First Parish will participate in the International Day of Climate Change. There will be a sign on our lawn indicating our support of this major international push that is building for strong action on climate change.

Why 350? Scientists generally agree that if we continue to allow the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to exceed 350 ppm, we can't sustain a planet similar to the one we know and to which life on Earth is adapted. Currently, the CO₂ in the atmosphere is around 390 ppm and increasing at the rate of 2 to 3 ppm each year. 350 ppm represents more than just a benchmark for a safe climate - there are deep moral, social justice and spiritual reasons for getting back below 350 ppm.

As part of a major environmental justice initiative between various Unitarian Universalist groups, the UU Ministry for Earth, UUA Green Sanctuary Program, UU United Nations Office, UU State Action Network, and others are collaborating with 350.org on Oct. 24 Day of Climate Action.

One action we at First Parish will take is tolling our bell around 10 am on the 24th for the opening of the 350.org Energy Rally to take place on the Sudbury Town Green. During this rally arrangements will be made for car pooling to the Concord North Bridge National Park for a much larger Rally where persons from many surrounding towns gather together. The tolling of our church bells 350 times represents 350.org and the need to get back down to 350ppm of CO₂.

For more details speak with Bruce L., check the bulletin board in the Parish Hall and visit the 350.org website at: <http://www.350.org/people/faith> and Global Warming Education Network at www.gwenet.org



Alliance Invites All Women Oct. 25

Women - If you participate in the life of this congregation in some way, then YOU are a member of the Women's Alliance. Come to the next Potluck supper and brief meeting Sun., Oct. 25 in the Brackett Room from 5-8 for a relaxing, casual evening of food, conversation and community. To learn more about the Alliance, contact Donna Scalcione at office@fpsudbury.org

Seeking Oral Historians

So many among us have (in our heads or somewhere in those file cabinets) a treasure trove of history about this wonderful congregation of ours! Ask Lee Swanson for a tour of the building and it's like time-travel. Ask some of our longtime members what it was like when they joined in the 1950s, the 1960s, the '70s. What were the issues of the day? What was it like then compared to now?

A bunch of us got it into our heads that it would be wonderful to invite people to tell these stories as part of a First Parish oral history project. Would you like to be an "interviewer?" Do you have some stories to tell? Let us know, we'll match you up. Just leave word with Donna in the office and someone will be back in touch.

Take My Hand – A Service of Healing and Comfort – Nov. 1 at 3 pm

Our congregation has lost three beloved members this year and at least 15 other people who are special to our community: spouses, mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers; a son, a cousin, a brother-in-law, an aunt. We all are grieving these losses. The Pastoral Associates are sponsoring a service of healing and comfort on Sunday, Nov. 1, at 3 pm. Join us for a time of reaching out, of naming our grief, of starting to heal by re-connecting to our stories of love. Please bring a photo or memento to help us honor someone you've loved and lost.



Playground equipment belongs to SED (Sudbury Extended Day).

First Parish children may use it if we leave every-thing where we find it.

The big beech tree in the play yard is a memorial tree in honor of Jonathan Langmuir, and no climbing is allowed. Thanks.

Katie Lee in Ottawa in November 11-16 For UU Ministers' Convocation

Friends, I am joining my minister colleagues in Ottawa from Nov. 11-16 (Actually, that includes our time together on the bus we New Englanders have chartered.) Once every eight years we Unitarian Universalist ministers gather for a convocation. Traditionally, we also meet just before our General Assembly for a half-day program of professional development and a half-day of business. But the Convocation gives us more time to learn, explore, exchange ideas, and revitalize ourselves. This is a time for intellectual exploration and spiritual nourishment. Many of us will choose intensive group work. The highlight is that we will have as our guest for the entire time, Dr. Thomas Moore, author of *Care of the Soul*.

I am grateful to our special guest Craig Lentz who will fill the pulpit with his energy and, maybe, with a few Ferry Beach groupies from First Parish. Craig is the Executive Director of Ferry Beach, a Unitarian Universalist Camp and Conference center near Saco, Maine.

– Katie Lee



What Should the UUA Commission on Appraisal Study Next?

To answer this question, take the online survey at: www.uua.org/coa The UUA Commission on Appraisal (COA) is charged to "review any function or activity of the Association which in its judgment will benefit from an independent review and report its conclusions to a regular General Assembly." To see what the COA has studied in previous years, check out the website.

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CALENDAR

for complete listing visit
www.fpsudbury.org...news/events...calendar

October

- 7 Quilters at 7:00
- 8 Mindfulness Meditation at 1:00
- 8 Choir Rehearsal at 7:30
- 9 Support Group at 7:30
- 11 Landscape Committee at 11:45
- 11 Youth Group at 7:00
- 12 RE Committee at 7:30
- 13 Tuesday Night Meditation at 6:45
- 13 Program Council at 7:00
- 13 Sudbury Democrats at 7:00
- 14* Quilters at 7:00
- 15 Mindfulness Meditation at 1:00
- 15 Choir Rehearsal at 7:30
- 17 Harvest Craft Fair 10-4**
- 18 White Memorial Service at 2:00
- 18 Youth Group at 7:00
- 19 Finance Committee at 7:30
- 20 Tuesday Night Meditation at 6:45
- 20 COA Activity at 7:00
- 20 Worship Associates at 7:30

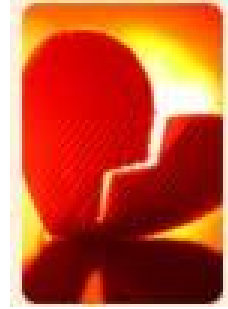
*Next Connector deadline Oct. 14 at 5:00
for Oct 21 edition

One of Our Own to Walk for Literacy

Will you help sponsor Carolyn L. in the 5 mile Barakat World Walk for Literacy in Cambridge on Oct. 24? A partner organization of the UU Service Committee, Barakat is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit that build schools, trains teachers and funds the education of women and girls in remote villages in Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. They will be featured on this year's Guest At Your Tables boxes. To learn more, contact Carolyn or give directly at her fundraising site. Education is a proven method of improving a society and promoting peace. Visit <http://barakatworld.org/> and please consider donating.



Second Fridays ~ Second Chances



*an **interfaith** support group for people
who are divorced or divorcing*

- support one another through the challenges of divorce and life after divorce
 - inspire each other to stay positive and keep positive energy flowing into our lives



Meets at 7:30pm on the 2nd Friday of every month at:
(October 9th, November 13th, and December 11th)

First Parish of Sudbury, a Unitarian Universalist Congregation
327 Concord Road, Sudbury MA

For more information: contact Roberta Altamari at
DRE@fpsudbury.org or 617-872-5145