



NOVEMBER 18, 2009

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



Roberta Altamari  
Director of Religious Exploration  
and Youth Ministry

The holiday season is not far away with Thanksgiving coming next week. As we turn to another holiday time, I stop to think about how I want to celebrate the holidays and unplug all the commercial messages that keep telling me the only way to be happy this time of year is to spend lots of money. I will be doing a parenting workshop next week on this subject, but this subject is not just for parents. Everyone can take time before the season starts to consider what we want our holiday celebrations to be like.

Katie Lee and I have begun preparations for our annual Revels service coming up on December 6th and for our Christmas Eve services. A common theme in our exploration of Winter Solstice and Christmas is the wide variety of ways different people around the world celebrate these holidays. This diversity can encourage and inspire us to create our own unique traditions. We don't have to do what our families did. Nor do we have to do what our neighbors are doing or what our television is telling us to do. We need to do what we feel in our hearts is a most meaningful way to enjoy the holidays.

As Unitarian Universalists, we encourage each other to use our critical thinking and loving hearts in considering all our actions. And yet, it is so easy to forget in the daily grind of life. Working and parenting, it's easy to get distracted with cultural messages proclaiming the best of this and the best of that. I will never forget when my first daughter was born and my sister asked me why I chose to breastfeed. Instead of pulling out my list of intellectual justifications, I returned the question by asking, "Why did you chose bottle-feed?" She responded, "I didn't chose to bottle-feed. That's just what you do." I was enlightened. Many people in America don't think about their parenting choices. They just do whatever they were taught to do from their parents or from society. I was glad to know that I did think carefully about my big parenting choices when the time came. And yet, I know that it can be too easy to just go with the flow and not consider every choice before I make it. So I constantly try to remind myself to routinely stop and think about the way I'm living my life. And with the holiday season bringing an increase in the bombardment of messages from society and from my extended family about what I "should" be doing, it is now even more important to think about what I want and follow the holiday paths that I think are best for me.

Loving blessings that your holidays are celebrated just the way you want!

Roberta ♥

★ **Highlights in this Issue**

★ REVELS DEC 6...RE NEWS

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★ HOLLY FAIR DEC. 5...SECRET SANTA FOR AREA CHILDREN

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## Worship at the Meetinghouse

Sunday, November 22, 10 am

### **Be Who You Are; Want What You Have; Do What You Can**

Rev. Katie Lee Crane & Ms. Beverly Waring

Part of his journey “through the valley of the shadow,” says the Rev. Dr. Forrest Church, was a serious drinking problem. A Unitarian Universalist minister, author, and theologian, Forrest Church was Senior Minister of the Unitarian Church of All Souls in New York City, until late 2006, when he was appointed as Minister of Public Theology.

In the year 2000, when he decided to face his fears head-on and stop drinking, Rev. Church lived by the mantra that is the title of today’s sermon. Then, in 2008 when he learned that his life would “be measured in months, not years,” he found that his mantra served as well in sickness as in health. Forrest Church died of esophageal cancer on September 24<sup>th</sup>, one day after his 61<sup>st</sup> birthday.

Katie Lee and Bev will each reflect on their own interpretations of each phrase of this mantra and offer their respective insights on how it might serve us all in taking life “one day at a time.”

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



Sunday, November 29, 10 am

### **Prepare Ye the Way**

Rev. Katie Lee Crane

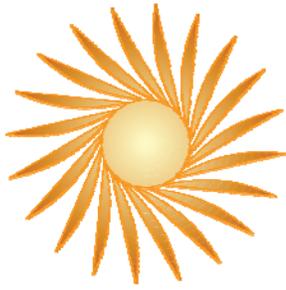
And so the season of holidays and holy days begins. Various faith traditions invite us to honor the season with deeply meaningful and ancient rituals. Our society invites us to buy more, do more, eat more, drink more and experience – more, or less? Katie Lee invites us to spend our worship time together examining how each of us might intentionally prepare to create a season that is deeply meaningful for ourselves, our families, and the world around us. For one family, it may mean paying attention to making this year a “green” Christmas by choosing ecologically friendly gifts, and, in so doing, giving their biggest gift of the season to the earth and our environment. Someone else may choose to cook and serve meals at a homeless shelter. A Jewish family, reflecting on Hanukkah’s message of freedom to worship, may seek ways to make that message come alive in today’s pluralistic world or, perhaps, discover some very personal ways to continue the centuries-long struggle of many Jews to worship freely. Someone else may elect to give what he would normally spend on gifts to charity; another may offer gifts of time and service to her family and friends. Let us join together and encourage each other to make the season merry and bright by choosing to make it meaningful for ourselves and all to whom we are connected in this intricate web of life.

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

### **First Parish of Sudbury’s Pastoral Associates**

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

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



## ***Festival of Revelry*** Sunday, December 6, 10 am

Join Tom K, the Hop Brook Morris Dancers, Candyrapper Sword Dancers, and many more revelers. Winter is upon us. It is that time of year when darkness triumphs, the time when we stay awake at night, dancing, singing, reveling to bring back the light, to call the sun from the womb of night. There will be the traditions – the Mummer’s Play, the Morris and Sword dancers, and the Lord of the Dance leading us *all* in the dance. In fact, after so many years, this whole service has become a First Parish tradition. But there is always the promise of something new and different. Bring the family. Bring the neighbors. Help us bring back the sun!

There will be a New U gathering in the Brackett Room at 11:45 for newcomers and long-timers alike



## **Coming up in Religious Exploration**

### **Faith in Action projects for kids and families**

On November 29th, we will host another Social Justice Sunday. Among several projects we will be doing that day, we will be kicking off a collection of books to help “More Than Words”. More Than Words is a program that empowers youth who are in the foster care system, court involved, homeless, or out of school to take charge of their lives by taking charge of a business. Bring your gently used books in to benefit this great work!!

### **Parenting Workshops**

Please join us on Tuesday, November 24th at 7pm for our first in a three part parenting series. This workshop will focus on unplugging the holidays and celebrating in your own unique and special way. Kick off the season by exploring how you want to spend the holiday and what you want the season to focus on so that you can plan accordingly to celebrate in the ways that match your interests.

### **Christmas is Coming!**

Christmas is just over a month away and preparations are already beginning to plan a wonderful and magical Family Christmas Eve service. If you would like to help (yes, you, folks of any age) by being a part of a multi-generational choir of carolers or by doing a reading (maybe in costume), please let Roberta know by November 29.

### **TempoTime:**

Tempo Time is a fun movement and music program for young children ages 1 to 5/6 is happening. Our next meeting is on Friday, November 27th at 10am (the day after Thanksgiving). If you know of any families with kids this age, please pass the word that everyone is invited to join us for this free and fabulous program.

### **Divorce Support Group**

Do you know someone who might like to join an interfaith support group for people who are divorced or divorcing? Invite them to come at 7:30 pm on Friday, Dec. 11

**Find out how you can help** in our Religious Exploration program. Talk with Roberta or go to [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=o8xmhnbfntldjvMsTX97g\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=o8xmhnbfntldjvMsTX97g_3d_3d)



## Holly Fair – Saturday, December 5 from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

The Holly Fair always promises to be a joyous introduction to the holiday season and just the place to find the unique decoration or gift. Holiday shopping opportunities also include fresh table arrangements, wreaths and roping, homemade goodies and holiday treats, a gifts again table, a lunch of homemade soups and breads, and children's activities.

This year we are inviting members and friends of First Parish to sell their own crafts and artwork at the Fair by renting table space. Spaces are available at the rate of \$20 for a 4 foot space and \$35 for an 8 foot space. You can also consider sharing space with someone else!

We also know that whether you are new to First Parish or you've been around for awhile, that participating in helping to make the Holly Fair (and of course other fundraisers as well) a success is a wonderful opportunity to be in community with others. There are so many ways to participate...whether donating items, cooking, baking, crafting, creating, serving or working.

And of course we'd simply love to see you and a friend perusing the greens arrangements, handmade crafts and arts...and don't forget the smells and tastes of the soup lunch!

Do you hear what we hear? The call to "Come one, come all to the joy of the Holly Fair." So...whether you are a shopper, a crafter/artisan, worker or a donator, we need to hear from you!

[Click here to tell us how you will be participating on the Holly Fair Support Team](#)

We look forward to hearing from you!  
Holly Fair Coordinators and Supporters



### Your Chance to Give Where It Helps

Starting Nov. 22, you can find out about the Annual First Parish **Secret**

**Santa (formerly known as "Undecorate the Christmas Tree")**. Here's how it works. The Department of Children and Family Services in Framingham gives First Parish the names of children who need a little help from us to make their holiday season more joyful. This year, for the second year, we will also have the names of children attending Sudbury Public Schools. In addition to their names, there is information such as their favorite colors, sports, hobbies, their sizes, their needs, and their hopes.

You take this information and buy them an appropriate gift. All gifts must be new and may be brought to the church on Sundays, the last Sunday being December 13<sup>th</sup>. Santa's helpers arrange to have the gifts delivered.

A full set of instructions will be available in the parish hall starting November 22<sup>nd</sup>. Also, you may call Sherri or the office with any questions.

### Interfaith Thanksgiving Worship Nov. 22 at 4:00



St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church, 1 Morse Road, Sudbury will host this year's annual Interfaith Community Thanksgiving worship service on Sunday, Nov. 22 at 4:00, followed by a festive reception. This year's service is designed to be especially inviting to people of all ages, from little ones to great grandmas and grandpas. It will include music by both youth and adults from all the congregations.

Lifting up the rich mix of religions in our midst, we will offer prayers of thanksgiving and healing in the voices and traditions of each of the represented faiths including Judaism, Islam, Unitarian Universalism, and Christianity - a festive and meaningful community service.

## Invite a Guest for the Holidays



This year the UUSC (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee) is once again nudging us to imagine hosting **Jacinta from Kenya** for a day. She is a tailor and mother of two who makes and sells school uniforms in a busy open-air market. She's also organized disabled street vendors who are now working together to advocate for safe working conditions and sustainable incomes.

Perhaps the **girl from a tiny village in Myanmar** will stop by, too. She and her mother raise pigs, but after last year's cyclone they (and 800,000 others) lost their homes. Now they're struggling to get back on their feet. Imagine the conversations you'd have together!

You'd need a really big table to host some of the **woman and girls in Afghanistan** who want nothing more than to teach and learn. Not being able to read keeps them from having the tools they need to be aware of their rights – and claim them. It would be exciting to meet **Laurel Firestone** and **Susana De Anda from California**; they're working for water justice in their state. It's hard to imagine that, even here in the United States, some people do not have access to safe, clean drinking water. "We work on the principle that water is a basic human right," say these amazing women, "not a privilege."

You can "meet" all of these people and learn more about how the UUSC and their partners are able to help them all – when we help the UUSC with our financial contributions. Check out their website: [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org), take home a Guest At Your Table Box on Sunday, Nov. 22, then, on Dec. 20, bring us a check (made out to First Parish of Sudbury) for the UUSC. It'll be one of the best holiday gifts you give!

## Free Shipping 'til Nov. 24

The Bookstore at the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association) is offering free shipping on orders placed by Nov. 24. Of particular interest this season is the new [chalice jewelry](#), gift wrapping and new titles from Skinner House Books. Visit [www.uuabookstore.org](http://www.uuabookstore.org) for details.

## People We Care About

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### Women: Relax with the Alliance Dec. 13



All women are warmly invited – no previous attendance at any Alliance event necessary. Come to the Women's Alliance Holiday Drop-In Open House Get Together Sunday, Dec. 13 from 4-7 at the home of Amy P, Sudbury. More details to follow or call the office.



### Check the Bulletin Board

in the Parish Hall for events and opportunities for spiritual growth, education, and entertainment...and updates from the Unitarian Universalist Association and Mass Bay District.

### Contacts:

Minister: Rev. Katie Lee Crane- [minister@fpsudbury.org](mailto:minister@fpsudbury.org)  
 Ministerial Candidate in Residence: Beverly Waring – [office@fpsudbury.org](mailto:office@fpsudbury.org)  
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**FPS Calendar Nov 18, 2009 to Dec 12, 2009**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Nov 15	Nov 16	Nov 17	Nov 18 7:00p Rental 7:00p Quilters 7:00p Rental: Sudbury Dems	Nov 19 1:00a Mindfulness Meditation 7:30p Choir	Nov 20	Nov 21
Nov 22 10:00a Worship Service 11:45a Hearthside Chat 11:45a Rental: Morris Dancers 11:45a CHC mtg 4:45p Rental: Morris Dancers 6:30p Rental 7:00p Youth grp	Nov 23 6:00p Rental: Yoga 7:00p SPTF 7:00p Spiritual Book Discussion Group	Nov 24 12:00p 4th Tuesday BYO Lunch & Discussion 6:45p Tuesday Night Meditation 7:00p Rental 7:30p Pastoral Associates	Nov 25 7:00p Rental 7:00p Quilters  Connector Deadline for Dec 2 edition	Nov 26	Nov 27 10:00a TempoTime	Nov 28
Nov 29 10:00a Worship Service 11:45a Hearthside Chat 11:45a Rental: Morris Dancers 4:45p Rental: Morris Dancers 6:30p Rental 7:00p Youth grp	Nov 30 6:00p Rental: Yoga	Dec 1 6:45p Tuesday Night Meditation 7:00p Rental 7:00p COA Workshop 7:30p Committee on Ministry	Dec 2 7:00p Rental 7:00p Quilters	Dec 3 10:00a Prep for Greens Workshop 1:00p Mindfulness Meditation 7:30p Choir	Dec 4 8:00a Greens Workshop & Set up for Holly Fair	Dec 5 9:00a Set up/break down <b>HOLLY FAIR</b> 10:00a Holly Fair
Dec 6 10:00a Worship <b>REVELS</b> 11:45a Faith in Action 11:45a Rental: Morris Dnrs 11:45a The New U: discussion for newcomers and longer-timers too 11:45a Open Information session on F P Finances 4:45p Rental: Morris Dnrs	Dec 7 12:00p Rental: SED 6:00p Rental: Yoga 7:00p Board of Trustees	Dec 8 6:45p Tuesday Night Meditation 7:00p Rental	Dec 9 7:00p Rental 7:00p Quilters	Dec 10 1:00p Mindfulness Meditation 7:30p Choir	Dec 11 10:00a TempoTime 7:00p Chalice Circle 7:30p Support group for people who are divorced/divorcing	Dec 12

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6:30p Rental 7:00p Youth						
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