



MAY 4, 2011



Worship at the Meetinghouse

Sunday, May 8, 10 am

New Member Sunday: What Binds Us Together

Rev. Katie Lee Crane

In early April, Rev. Katie Lee Crane preached on the topic “What’s Religion For?” In that sermon, she posed many questions, one of which she plans to take up again today: What binds us together in the 21st century? Crane observes that times have changed since our parents and grandparents era. Today’s families face pressures that make it challenging to be present for every worship service and to commit hours of volunteer service both in the congregation and in the community. What hasn’t changed is the natural human desire for meaning, the hunger for community and for opportunities to explore and live values that matter, values we want to teach to our children. As we welcome new members to our faith community, it prompts us to ask: How can we re-imagine religious community to meet the diverse needs of today... and tomorrow?

Today we will honor our newest First Parish members at Social Hour.

We will share the plate with the Helena Kaushik Women’s College in India.
See page 10 for details.

Sunday, May 15, 10 am

Surprise Topic

Rev. Katie Lee Crane

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★ HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE ★

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Sunday, May 22, 10 am Coming-of-Age Sunday

Join us as our four 9th graders (Keith P, Rick R, Rose R, and Dominique A) and their mentors (Dave A, Jan H, Ginny D, and Judy H) celebrate the end of their yearlong program and share their credos with us. Coming-of-Age is a program and ceremony that honors our growing teens and recognizes them as blossoming young adults in our community. How will this year's youth express their unique individuality and beliefs? With strong family identities (one youth is part of a popular three-generation family attending First Parish, two youth are twin children of a highly regarded social justice advocate in town, and one youth is the daughter of a professional religious educator), how will they each let their own identity shine. Come find out, and be inspired to explore and discover your own beliefs! We will also recognize Richard and Elise as they receive their First Chalices.

May 22 Special Congregational Meeting after Worship
to vote in members of the Search Committee
charged with recommending a candidate
for our new settled minister
for 2012-2013 and beyond

First Parish of Sudbury's Pastoral Associates

Audrey K, Polly M, Fred P, Paul R, Dawn S

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

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



Roberta Altamari
Director of Religious Exploration
and Youth Ministry

I have preached and written many times about the virtue of giving. Not only is it important to be grateful for what we have in life, but it can be moments of wonderful human connection when we are part of that circle of giving created when unconditionally sharing help with someone else. Often, the rewards for giving are far greater than the help we have shared.

During the past few months, the proverbial tables have turned and I have been learning about the virtue of receiving. I know I am not good at asking for help. I will freely admit that. I wonder why that is? So many of us freely give our compassion and time to others, and yet rarely ask for it in return. Is it that we are afraid of feeling incompetent for not being able to handle a task on our own? Is it (as Adam said during the Youth service in February) that we are afraid to lean on someone? Are we afraid to trust someone that much? Is it that we don't want to bother a friend or loved one with our troubles?

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Whatever the reasons are for why I resist asking for help, my friends encouraged me to accept help recently when I had to cope with my first scary medical situation. Now that I can happily report that I am healthy, I can share some of the story with you. Having turned 40 a few years ago, I was told to get a baseline mammogram. Like happened to a few of my friends, the radiologist found something he felt warranted being checked out with a biopsy. I was told by many people that it was unlikely to be anything serious, but getting your first medical procedure can be anxiety producing - not knowing what to expect and knowing that you will be suffering some pain and discomfort in the process. That in addition to knowing that there is a slight chance that the results will force you down a path you never imagined for yourself.

My friends were wonderful and listened when I need to talk. Several of my friends offered to help, such as taking me to the hospital. I just couldn't visualize me taking any one of them up on it knowing I could drive myself. As it got closer and more friends insisted I go with someone, I decided to take the help. My mom came and watched my daughters, and a friend took me to the hospital. Even though I was reluctant to let this friend give up a day of work to spend at the hospital with me, it proved to make my day so much easier to cope with. From easing my tension by telling a few jokes in the waiting room to making sure I had everything I could possible need before I went home, I was well taken care of in different ways. Not only did I feel grateful to this friend and all my friends for the support of getting through the biopsy, but I felt strong and confident with all this support that I could easily survive if the findings turned out that I had to get a tumor removed.

As with most of my friends who have had biopsies, the news was good. Nothing dangerous was found and life would be normal again after a few weeks of healing. And an inspiring lesson was learned by me about the value of being on the receiving end of the circle of giving. Feeling grateful, I reached out to this same friend who came to the hospital with me, offering to help with getting financial records ready to do taxes. At first, this friend didn't want to accept my help. Ah, the proverbial tables had turned, and this friend was just as reluctant to receive help as I had been. In the end, I helped, and both of us got to experience both sides of the circle of giving and receiving. We agreed that we both had a much easier time in the situation in which we were the giver, but that it was really nice to have something stressful in our lives made easier to cope with by having a friend at our side.

As we processed the experience, my friend mentioned that it was a bit strange that I was so resistant to taking help considering I had preached back in January about the benefits of being in giving relationships. Yeah, I know, I can be a hypocrite. Telling everyone how to live a healthy and fulfilling life while not always practicing what I preach. Hey, I'm on the path with you all - walking day by day, doing my best to live my values and sharing compassion with myself hopefully as much as others.

After experiencing stories like this, I appreciate even more the benefits of being a part of a loving community like First Parish where there are plenty of people who will reach out to each other in times of challenge. Giving and receiving compassion sure does make our stressful days more bearable. What's that old saying, "A happiness shared is a joy made double. A sadness shared is but half the trouble." As my friend and I realized, just because you can do something alone doesn't mean you should. Let a friend hold your hand next time. You could be pleasantly surprised how nice it feels ...

Blessed be.

Roberta

Coming Up in Religious Exploration

Living Our Faith projects for Kids, Families, and Adults!

This Sunday (May 8) will be the final weekend collecting supplies for our special Easter **Basket for the animals at Buddy Dog**. Check out the Faith in Action page in the RE section of our website for more details: <http://www.fpsudbury.org>

Bridging Sunday

On Sunday, **June 5**, we are pleased to host our annual Bridging Ceremony in which we honor all teens graduating high school. If you know of a teen graduating high school this year who would like to be recognized, please let Roberta know today.



Finance Update

With the pledge drive almost complete, we are able now to make more certain projections for next year. While we thank everyone who contributed with their FY12 pledge, the pledge drive missed its target significantly. With an additional reduction in projected rent income, and increased expenses for the compensation packages for both the interim and settled ministers, **we are facing the prospect of a large deficit budget. Now we must join together to make some hard decisions.**

First Parish has approved deficit budgets for the last few years. These deficits are funded from the stability fund. This fund grows and contracts from our annual operations. In any given year, if actual income exceeds actual expenses, i.e. we have a better than budget year, that's where the surplus goes. Also with the deficit. Sometimes we have unexpected gifts, or other budget-positive events during the year, which turns a deficit-budget year into a surplus year. But this is not the norm. Our policy is to reserve 4-months of expenses in the stability fund as a cushion, and use the rest as needed. Without any changes, the stability funds will be reduced to the amount of the 4-month reserve minimum.

So, we have choices. Continue with a larger-than-desired deficit budget in hope for unplanned positive changes next year, generate additional income through fundraisers/pledges/other, reduce expenses – such as our contributions to obligations (UUA, Equity Fund, etc.), staffing, or programs? None are attractive, but one or more are likely to happen.

The Finance Committee and Trustees are interested in your thoughts before they vote on a budget to be presented to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting on June 5. They have planned an after-service discussion on this topic on May 15, and please feel free to contact Beth R or Dan S for any comments or questions.

First Parish Sudbury Unitarian Universalist
The Coffee House on the Rocky Plain

presents

Linda, Bob and Friends
Cooper and Kenneally

Saturday May 7, 2011



Linda Abrams, Bob Phillipps



Rick Cooper, Pat Kenneally

Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School's
Acafellas open at 7:30pm

Doors open 7pm tickets and refreshments

\$12 general admission, \$8 students, \$4 under 12

Coffeeshouse.fpsudbury.org

327 Concord Rd, Sudbury, MA

Intersection of Concord & Hudson Rd.

The Coffee House on the Rocky Plain is dedicated to
showcasing emerging local musical talent



2011 Lay-led Summer Services Sign-Up Is Underway

“Everyone has at least one sermon in them. We want to hear from YOU!”
Share with us what moves you. There are roles for everyone.

Sign up to lead the service/give a sermon, host the service, and/or provide music, food, or childcare.

Sign up individually, sign up as a family or group of friends, sign up as a FPS committee or a special interest group such as meditation or quilters, the men’s group, women’s alliance, youth group, etc. Let others know that you’d like to hear from them.

Sign up on the large white sign-up board in the Parish Hall on Sunday mornings at coffee hour. Or sign up by sending an email to the Worship Associates at office@fpsudbury.org, with subject line 2011 Summer Services. Later this month the 2011 Summer Services calendar will be visible online.

Need training? There are two upcoming summer worship service training opportunities:

- Katie Lee will be leading “Spring Training” on Monday May 23 from 7:30-9:00.
- The UUA is offering a training, “Creating and Leading Dynamic Lay-led Worship” on June 11 (9-2). Visit <http://www.cbd-mbd-uaa.org/content/creating-and-leading-dynamic-lay-led-worship>



Ministerial Survey Results Available

The Committee on Ministry has completed the on-line survey portion of the ministerial assessment and it is available on-line at <http://fpsudbury.org/wiki/CommitteeOnMinistry/>.

If you do not have access to the internet at home or at a library, you may stop by the office to see a paper copy. Upon request, we will mail a copy, if necessary, but to keep the costs of color-copying and postage down, we hope you'll stop by and read it here. The office is open 9-Noon Monday through Friday, but it's best to call ahead in case of unforeseen circumstances.

Final Phase of Our Assessment of Ministry – *Facilitated Conversations Sunday May 8 and May 15*

As part of our once-every-three year practice and to fulfill the benchmark the congregation set for itself, the Committee on Ministry has been conducting a year-long comprehensive assessment of its ministry:

1. We began with in October with the *Retreat at Ferry Beach* in Maine and a mini-retreat the same weekend at First Parish.
2. In the winter, there was the *assessment survey* which many of you completed; an Executive Summary is now available on our website and in the office.
3. The third and final phase consists of *facilitated conversations* Sunday May 8 and 15 – beginning at 11:45 in am the Brackett Room.

We set out to offer multiple ways for your voice to be heard. This third phase is especially designed for those who prefer to have a face-to-face conversation about our ministry. Of course we welcome and encourage all who wish to participate. Each conversation will be facilitated by a member or members of the Committee on Ministry and will invite your continuing participation in this important assessment.

From the outset, our goal has been to create an assessment that is fair, objective and comprehensive, covering all aspects of our ministry. We appreciate your active participation in the process thus far and the valuable feedback we've received. Please join us in May for one of these important conversations.



**Faith
in Action
News**

Thank you for Supporting Project Bread

The First Parish team of twelve intrepid adults and youth did the Walk for Hunger on May 1. The team, captained by Beth Rust, raised over \$5,000 to support Project Bread, which provides low cost food to over 400 food banks, food pantries and soup kitchens in the metro Boston area. Donations can still be made on behalf of the team by logging onto the Project Bread website and searching for the First Parish team. The team thanks everyone who supported their effort.



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What's Happening at First Parish



Saturday, **May 7** at 7 pm for the next **Coffee House on the Rocky Plain**
Great music and refreshments to raise funds for FPS. See flyer on page 5

A Gathering of Men, Saturday, May 14 from 9:00-11:00 in the Library'
For details see Tom A or just drop in and check it out for yourself.



The Finance Committee and Trustees are interested in your thoughts before they vote on a budget to be presented to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting on June 5. They have planned an after-service discussion on this topic on May 15 at 11:45 in the Commons. See page 4 for details.



Still time to sign up for the **Women's Alliance 24th Annual Weekend Retreat May 13-15** for spiritual growth, community connection, peace and quiet in a beautiful natural setting only 45 minutes away. For details, see Carolyn L or the office (978-443-2043) and pick up a brochure in the lobby.



Women's Alliance Annual Meeting May 22 at 530 pm in the Commons.
Potluck supper and brief business meeting to elect next year's officers.



Sunday, **May 22** at 11:30 am – **Special Congregational Meeting**
to elect the members of the Search Committee who will recommend to the congregation a new settled minister for First Parish for the 2012-2013 church year and beyond.

Remember to **SAVE June 12 to celebrate Katie Lee's ministry** with First Parish!
Contact Fran Sharp at quilter@gmail.com or 978-443-3094 with suggestions or questions.



See the Bulletin Board in the Parish Hall to the right of the Kitchen for opportunities for spiritual growth, education, entertainment and updates from the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association) and our Mass Bay/Clara Barton District, as well as from the wider community.

To reduce space, with rare exceptions, they will no longer be listed in this newsletter.

Did you see the article about **Katie Lee** in the MetroWest Daily News? Check out the Local section in the Tuesday, May 2 edition. Our own shining star!



Why do Melody and Annmarie look so worried (and yet Colin looks so confident)?

They're wondering if YOU are saving **Saturday, June 11** to represent First Parish in Boston's **Pride Parade**. Come join the fun and walk for *Equality...no more...no less* with the Welcoming Congregation Committee, the Youth and other allies. It's about a 45 minute march followed by a festival of music and food and fun things to look at or buy.

Having fulfilled the requirements of our denomination to be a Welcoming Congregation, First Parish is intentional about celebrating the presence and full participation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons in all aspects of congregational life. One of the ways we show our support and affirmation is by carrying the FPS banner in the Pride Parade. Many other UU congregations march as well. It's the right thing to do and very affirming to hear the crown cheer for UU's and the justice-work we do towards equality.

Won't you march with us this year? All ages welcome. Save Sat., June 11 and call the office for details.



The First Parish Auction for 2011 - Thank YOU!

Saturday, March 26, was a fun evening. The auction drew a good crowd, for an evening of fun, good food, great music, and some fantastic bargains. **The auction grossed over \$13,300 for First Parish of Sudbury's continuing ministry.**

Guests were welcomed by doorkeepers Ginny P and Ginny S, and entered the Parish Hall, beautifully decorated thanks to Sue W and Liz L, with colored lights set up by Marc K, and a stage for the musicians and auctioneers thanks to Reed S and Suzanne W. The evening began with the silent auction, where people enjoyed the music of Maria v B, Dylan M, and Sammy H. Throughout the evening, the crowd enjoyed delicious food, much of it donated by the Wayside Inn, served by the kitchen volunteers organized by Leslie L: Sarah H, Sue C, Beth R, Nina P, Judith C, Polly M, Karen N, Tom Y, Gary H with Dave A tending the bar.

Once again Steve Z and Rob K served as auctioneers, working the crowd to push bids higher and entertaining the whole while.

Many volunteers contributed to this successful event. Thanks to Tom Y for setting up the FPS website page for donation entry and Carolyn L for organizing the booklet. Thanks to Nina P and Elaine J for calling donors. Thank you to Rich and Shelia D and Dan S for arranging for donations and delivery of the food from Wayside Inn.

During the verbal auction, Peg E, Elaine J, and Sherry C tallied the totals, while Roger C worked tirelessly to enter all of the auction data so that auction bidders could check out right after the bidding was over.

Thanks also go to the setup and breakdown crew, Jan H, Dawn S, Reed S, Sue W, Scott P, and Terry L for the audio setup.

A special thanks to Ted and Elaine J. Although they stepped down as auction organizers this year,

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their immense contribution of time contacting past donors, collecting donations, setting up the auction tables, and mentoring Liz and Erin is well appreciated. Without their support the auction wouldn't have happened.

We hope everyone who attended had a great time. There are still some items available for bids, including the Spirit Play Task Force Costume Dance Party Oct. 22, and some vacation homes. Contact Liz or Erin if you are interested in these items.

We apologize for the delay in reporting on the auction. Thanks to all who donated, volunteered, or attended.

Best Regards, Liz and Erin L

The Banner Has Moved to the Parish Hall



Have you noticed that the “Standing on the Side of Love” banner has moved from the front of the Meetinghouse to the Parish Hall? And it will likely move again (and again). Several parishioners asked the Trustees about the long-term plans for the banner. At the March meeting, the Trustees deliberated and concluded the best strategy was to move the banner from place to place at intervals – each time with “appropriate ceremony and publicity to recapture the banner’s purpose.” The Trustees designated Trustee Eliza K and Minister Katie Lee Crane to convene a task force and charged the group with choosing each new location and to use every move as an opportunity for educating the First Parish community as well as the larger community about the national advocacy campaign.

Originally, the expectation was that the banner would be moved to a different outdoor location from May 1 through July 4 then moved indoors for the summer. However, plans to paint the Atkinson Wing and the connector between the historic Meetinghouse and the Atkinson Wing made it prudent to bring the banner indoors at this time. The Task Force will convene in May. If you would like to be part of the task force, please indicate your interest to Eliza or Katie Lee.

Share the Plate May 8 with The Helena Kaushik Women’s College in India

On May 8, Mothers’ Day, we will share the plate with the Helena Kaushik Women’s College in India. Dr. Surendra Kaushik, who founded this college in 1999 in honor of his wife Helena, became part of Ginny and Colin’s family in 1970, when he first came to Boston University from India. In 1996, Ginny spent five weeks touring India with “Suren,” becoming acutely aware of the needs of the have-nots in that quickly-developing country. Dr. Kaushik had grown up in a remote and impoverished area west of Delhi, where he observed the disparity in opportunities for boys and for girls – his own sisters and cousins among them. Getting a grant of land from the state for a campus, hiring a faculty and an administration, Dr. Kaushik proceeded to build buildings and a curriculum, to secure accreditation and to enroll students from many rural towns and “hamlets” surrounding Suren’s home village of Malsisar. It wasn’t until the founding of the college that Malsisar’s high school for girls added the final two grades, making their students eligible for college entrance.

Dr. Kaushik is well aware that educating women helps prevent domestic abuse, leads to smaller families, promotes the educational aspirations of the next generation, and is the most significant factor in alleviating poverty.

Ginny and Colin feel that the creation and continued progress of this college is one of the most amazing accomplishments of any one person, and hope that this congregation will contribute generously to its future.

What's Coming Up in our UUA District and Denomination



Details on the bulletin board to the right of the kitchen or ask the Administrator or visit <http://www.cbd-mdb-programs@uua.org>

Renewing Our Commitment to Multicultural Ministries, Saturday, May 14 in Littleton

Creating and Leading Dynamic Lay-Led Worship Saturday, June 11 in Littleton.

The UUA Board is now accepting applications for the Moderator Nominating Committee, to consist of five members, including not more than two trustees, **through May 13**.. For more information and to apply, visit <http://www.uua.org/aboutus/governance/committees/index.shtml>.

Why not Rent Space at First Parish?!

Contact the office for details.

- Reasonable rates
- Wine and Beer approved
- Comfortable clean rooms
- Great sound & video systems
- Convenient parking
- **And you won't have to get your house ready for company!**



Warm Clothing Drive a Success

Our Own **Coffee House on the Rocky Plain** was one of 12 coffee houses that participated in this past winter's "Share the Warmth" warm clothing drive and was recognized and thanked at a ceremony at UMass Boston recently. In all, more than 2,400 pounds of warm clothing were collected, an amount equal to the weight of a giant elephant or 99,000 cups of coffee! Clothing was donated to: Morgan Memorial Goodwill Industries, the New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans, Friends of Boston's Homeless, St. Vincent de Paul, and the Salvation Army. A representative from the Shelter for Homeless Veterans said that without this contribution, there would have been so many homeless veterans who would not have had protection from this harsh winter we have all endured just endured. So look for a collection bin in the First Parish Lobby in the Fall when we will participate again in this worthy cause.

First Parish of Sudbury Unitarian Universalist

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The Connector is a publication of First Parish of Sudbury Unitarian Universalist, 327 Concord Rd., Sudbury, MA 01776 **We are a diverse and welcoming community of spiritual seekers; we strive to learn together and support one another as we celebrate life's important moments and serve the larger community.**

Submissions to *The Connector* **deadline is 5 pm Wed., May 11 for the Connector coming out Wed., May 18**

Send to administrator office@fpsudbury.org or phone 978-443-2043

FPS Calendar May 4-28, 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May 1	May 2	May 3	May 4 7:00p Rental	May 5 1:00p Meditation 5:00p Rental:SAT 7:30p Choir	May 6 4:00p Landscape Committee	May 7 7:00p Coffee House on the Rocky Plain – all welcome. Great music and refreshments
May 8 10:00a Worship/New Member Sunday 11:45a Morris Dancing 11:45a Committee on Ministry OPEN Conversation 6:30p Rental	May 9 7:00p SPTF	May 10 5:00p Rental: SAT prep 7:00p Program Council 7:00p Quilting 7:00p Rental 7:00p Finance Com.	May 11 1:00p Rental: Girl Scouts 7:00p Rental	May 12 9:00a Rental: SED 1:00p Meditation 5:00p Rental: SAT Prep 7:30p Choir	May 13 4:00p Women's Alliance Retreat Weekend 5:00p Garden Club borrows tables 7:00p Chalice Circle	May 14 12:00a Women's Alliance Retreat Weekend 9:00a A Gathering of Men 6:00p Coming-of-Age retreat
May 15 12:00a Alliance Retreat Wknd 10:00a Worship Service 11:45a Committee on Ministry OPEN Conversation 11:45 Finance Informational Meeting – all welcome 4:45p Morris Dancing 5:00p Jr. High OWL class 6:00p Rental 7:00p Sr. High OWL class	May 16 7:00p Our Whole Lives PARENT meeting	May 17 5:00p Rental: SAT prep 7:00p Rental 7:00p Quilting 7:00p Board and CBD-MBD Rep meet	May 18 7:00p Rental	May 19 1:00p Mindfulness Meditation 5:00p Rental: SAT prep 7:30p Choir	May 20	May 21 9:00a Coming of Age rehearsal and breakfast
May 22 10:00a Worship Service/Coming of Age 11:00 Special Congregational Meeting 12:00p Board meeting 4:45p Morris Dancing 5:00p Jr. High OWL offsite 5:30p Alliance Annual Meeting & potluck supper	May 23 7:00p RE Committee 7:30p WAG	May 24 12:00p 4th Tues. BYO Lunch & Discussion 5:00p Rental: SAT 7:00p Quilting 7:00p Rental 7:30p PAG	May 25 1:00p Rental: Girl Scouts 7:00p Rental	May 26 1:00p Mindfulness Meditation 5:00p Rental: SAT Prep 7:00p Carbon Consciousness 7:30p Choir	May 27	May 28