



The Parish Record

The First Church and Parish in Dedham

www.dedhamuu.org

Volume CXXIX, No. 3

November, 2008

Sundays in the Meeting House

Calendar

Harvest Dinner: October 25, 6:30

Holly Fair: December 6, 9:00

Also in November...

Parish Committee: 1st Tuesday, 7:00

CAKES: 3rd Friday, 6:30

Youth Group: Sundays: 6:00

Aerobics: Mondays/Wednesdays: 6:30

Meditation: Thursdays: 7:30

**Please see our website
for the complete and
up-to-date calendar**

November 2, 10:00 AM: "Reconciliation"

The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.

Children will start in the Meeting House and be sung to their classes.

The First Church and Parish in Dedham was founded on November 8, 1638. On this Sunday before our Anniversary we will explore our long history. We will explore both the unanimous and conflicted decisions that have formed us, and work to reconcile our history with what we are striving to become.

November 9, 10:00: "Dancing With All Of The Aspects Of The Self"

The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.

Children will start in the Meeting House and be sung to their classes.

This second Sunday in November we consider all the various philosophies regarding the "self" as well as all of the unique aspects that make up our individuality and how it might be possible to integrate them all into one authentic personality.

*The Intergenerational Choir will sing this Sunday. All are invited to participate. Practice will commence at 9:30 am (sharp).

November 16, 10:00 AM: "Simplify! Simplify!"

The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach. Children will start in the Meeting House and be sung to their Cool Deed

In 1854, Henry David Thoreau published Walden Pond and articulated the concepts of the enlightenment period with ideals of simplicity and self-reliance which still speak to us today. In worship this Sunday we will explore ways we might follow Thoreau's example and how simplifying our lives can help us to live more fully.

*There will be an opportunity to discuss this subject following worship in the Sanctuary.

November 23, 10:00 AM: "Harvesting A Passion For Life"

The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach. This is Thanksgiving Sunday and is an Intergenerational Service.

Children are invited to bring their parents to Church.

In these troubled times, when finances are tight, it is difficult not to get caught up in a "just scraping by" mentality. This Sunday we will explore ways to harvest a passion for life in the midst of a climate of scarcity.

*You are invited to bring bread of any kind that represents a tradition in your family. We will use the bread in a Bread and Cider Communion as part of worship and then enjoy the remainder of the bread during coffee hour.

November 30, 10:00 AM: "Advent"

The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.

Children will start in the Meeting House and be sung to their Advent Craft Activities.

November 30th is the first Sunday of Advent. This Sunday we will explore the Christian Season of Advent and all the many ways we might prepare our hearts for this gift-giving season.

*There will be an opportunity to express your joys and concerns as part of worship this Sunday.

From Our Minister:

In October we reflected upon what it might mean to be a Welcoming Congregation.

If the vote at the Fall Meeting passes then we will be setting up a series of discussions and conversations to explore issues examining how our ideology affects our ability to connect to others. In this world where there seems to be more lines dividing us than those that connect us, I hope whatever our decision as a parish that you will consider spending some of your precious time always engaged in these conversations with yourself and others. As I see it, part of what makes us Unitarian Universalists is our willingness to always seek to go deeper, to understand more and to push past our preconceptions to a deeper understanding. The Welcoming Congregation Process is one way that we could begin to do this as a community but there are countless other ways that each of us individually and collectively can do this.

As your minister I will always strive to encourage you to explore your own mind because I believe that in order to become enlightened individuals (and an enlightened institution) we must always strive to stretch past our own understanding to fully see another's point of view even (and perhaps most especially) when we do not agree with it. I hope you will join with me in this journey. If the vote does not support the Welcoming Congregation Process this year or you don't feel comfortable talking about the subject of sexuality in community, I hope you will still explore the matter on your own and I encourage you to get a copy of The Welcoming Congregation Handbook from Beacon Press and complete the exercises in a self-study. We all have our own pace with change and there is no reason you should have to follow any one else's agenda. I am also always available for discussions of any kind.

It is my hope that the Month of November and this entire church year will offer times and places for us to examine our beliefs in order to move us communally forward to create the most welcoming atmosphere for all those who went enter our doors.

May it be so

Rali

From The Choir Loft

Greetings!

Our Inter-generational (Family) Choir is off to a great start. Thanks to all the joyous voices, young and old, that have raised the rafters with some rousing introits.

We'll sing again on November 9th (rehearsal at 9:30 sharp). Come join us!

On November 23rd, Thanksgiving Sunday, the choir will once again sing Aaron Copland's "The Promise of Living" for choir and piano duet. You may remember this stunning piece from our Music Sunday last May. Guest pianist Timothy McFarland will join us.

Linnea Bardarson

Focus on Religious Education

Church school is going well. Thank you to all our teachers and volunteers. The *Preschool class* is a busy, happy place. The children have had fun with stuffed animal friends, new toys and new friends. Generous donations from many made this room possible. Even our youngest children made donations, a special thank you goes out to Harper Todaro who donated her play kitchen to the preschool room and to Cookie Duncan who donated a wonderful wooden puzzle. We still need one more teacher to join the fun in the preschool class. Please let me or Rali know if you could help one or two Sundays a month.

The Kindergarten, First and Second grade class has just finished learning about the Jewish High Holidays. Their curriculum is called *Special Times*. This curriculum acquaints children with the Jewish and Christian heritages out of which our Unitarian Universalist faith has grown. The curriculum focuses and engages the children in Jewish and Christian holidays and other special times.

The third, fourth, and fifth grade class has just started learning about Bible stories from the Old Testament. Their curriculum is called *Timeless Themes*. This curriculum introduces children to religious literature which is central to our culture and to our heritage as Unitarian Universalists.

Two weeks ago the *Neighboring Faiths* class, grades 6, 7, and 8, visited the Buddhist Center in Cambridge. They were able to talk to a Buddhist priest and some teachers at the Center. They were also able to see observe some of the chanting and praying that was part of their service. Also they were served a vegetarian lunch (comments from the kids – it was very good!)

Focus on Religious Education

Our first “*Cool Deed*” Sunday will be on **Sunday, October 19th**. Our focus will be on “*Helping other children in the world through UNICEF*”. We will have a little “experiential snack” to get a sense of what children in other parts of the world get to eat. We will see what our UNICEF contributions can buy. Then we will make a plan as to what your child could do at home to earn money for their UNICEF box or do without, so the money could go into the UNICEF box. Everybody will be encouraged to bring their UNICEF box in the next week, October 26th. Returning the UNICEF boxes will be worked into Rali’s story for all ages. I will need three volunteers to help with this “*Cool Deed*”. I have to be out of town on the 19th to attend a memorial service. Sharon Lane has graciously volunteered to lead this “*Cool Deed*”. ***We need 3 other volunteers for the 19th, please let me know if you can help.***

Help Needed:

- Sign up at coffee hour to be a nursery volunteer. Help our nursery director, Adeline Farrell with our littlest First Church friends.
- One more teacher is needed for the Preschool. Have fun playing with three and four year olds. For more information contact: Judy Barrington, Rali Weaver or Carol Dixon
- Three volunteers needed to help with October 19th, “Cool Deed”.

Wish List:

- Gently used crib sheets and gently used crib bumpers

We continue to search for a Religious Education Director. In the meantime, thanks to Rali for putting considerable time into helping with Religious Education, along with all her other responsibilities. If you know anyone who may be interested in this position please let us know.

Looking Ahead:

October 19 th	“Cool Deeds”	
October 26 th	Curriculum	
November 2 nd	Curriculum	
November 9 th	Curriculum	Family Choir
November 16 th	“Cool Deeds”	
November 23 rd	Thanksgiving Family Service – No church school	
November 30 th	Advent Crafts Day	

Carol Dixon
Chair, Religious Education Committee

All Around the Church Community

Meditation Group

I would like to offer a Meditation Group beginning in November. I am available on Monday or Thursday nights. Perhaps we could see who is interested and try to find a common meeting time. This year I would like to focus the group with a book written by Pema Chodron, called *When Things Fall Apart*. The book has short chapters, 5 to 6 pages, which could be the focus of each meditation session. The book can be purchased through Amazon or through Shambala Press. Please let me know if you are interested or call the church office.

Carol Dixon

Amnesty International

Our September letters were written on behalf of Palestinians who were not being allowed to leave Gaza to receive medical treatment. The following church members wrote letters:

Tom Donaghey, Julia Gecha, Andrea Gilmore, Deb Harrison, Betsy Hetsler, Virginia Hickey-Ferentinos, Jeff Hutton, Peter McDonagh, Grace Pena, Lynn Rogal, Allison Staton, Eileen Sullivan, Rali Weaver, and Joan Wislocki

Peter Elefterakis

Community Harvest Dinner on October 25th!

This delicious meal is prepared with locally grown ingredients. The menu will be similar to last year's: roast turkey, stuffing, roasted root vegetables, salad, local cheeses and of course apple pie. We will have a short presentation by people who are involved in the local "foodshed". This year we will hear from the organizers of the Dedham Farmer's Market, Kate Canney of the Neighborhood Farm in Needham, and Kate Howell from Red Tomato, a non-profit that supports Massachusetts small-scale farmers. This is a great event for anyone interested in local food or environmental issues, or who just enjoys a good meal!

Tickets are now available! Call the church office or sign up in the Dining Room. Tickets are \$15, \$8 for kids 5-12, or \$100 for a table of 8. Kids under 5 are free. Childcare will be available, please note if you will need it when you make your reservation.

We also welcome volunteers to help with food preparation, set up and clean up on the day of the dinner. Contact Natalie Jensen or sign up in the dining room.

All Around the Church Community -- Good and Welfare

Please note that Marge Wiren recently moved to:

The Ellis Center
Room 231
135 Ellis Avenue
Norwood, MA 02062

She would be happy to receive cards and visits.

Membership News

From the Music and Worship Committee

As we get into the swing of a new church year you may notice some changes in the Sunday services at First Church. While we continue the recent tradition of Sharing the Plate once a month, we will be trying some new additions to our services on a monthly basis, and we look forward to hearing your thoughts as the year progresses.

On the second Sunday of each month we invite singers of all ages to join the choir in the Meetinghouse at 9:30 to form an intergenerational choir, known as “Family Choir” for short. We will learn a simple piece to sing during the service. We had a good turnout for our first session on the 14th, and we hope to welcome even more singers in the future. No experience required!

On the third Sunday of the month there will be an opportunity to share your thoughts on the sermon topic at the end of the service. Many UU churches incorporate this practice, known as a “talk-back”, into one or more services during the year.

On the fourth Sunday of each month we will have a time in the service for Sharing Joys and Concerns, another common UU practice and one that First Church has sometimes followed in the past. Please see the note below for the format we will use for next Sunday’s service.

We welcome your feedback about any aspect of worship at First Church. Please speak to anyone on the Music and Worship Committee if you have comments or suggestions.

Judy Butler, Natalie Jensen (Chair), Sam King, Diane Winchester, Margaret Winchester, Rev. Rali Weaver, Linnea Bardarson (Music Director)

Minutes of the Parish Committee Meeting September 9, 2008

Present: Judy Barrington, Audrey Cecil, Carol Dixon, Dan Ewing, Sam King, Claudia Leone, Jeff Hutton, Kerry Matthews, Alison Staton, Eileen Sullivan, Rev. Rali Weaver

Meeting called to order at 7:07pm

Opening words by Sam King

Minutes of July 29, 2008 – Motion made to approve the minutes of our last meeting.
Second, motion carried.

Ministers Report

Rali Weaver submitted the minister's report orally and in writing. She shared information about workshops she attended during the summer. She reported on work she did on the church web site and the fact that pod casts will now be available of her sermons. She hopes that we can soon turn over the website to Yahoo to make it more accessible to more users. She also provided an outline of the 2008 -2009 church calendar.

Role and Function of the Parish Committee

Alison Staton and Sam King introduced the idea of scheduling a retreat for the Parish Committee to define what the Parish Committee is and does. The outcomes will be shared with the congregation to inform everyone about the Committee and make the workings of the church more inclusive.

Treasurers Report

Dan Ewing presented a reconciliation of last year's budget as well as the 2008-2009 projected budget. He also informed us that we are now using Fox Payroll Service for church employees.

Religious Education

The search for an RE Director continues. The nursery is now all set up and ready for the church year. The church school classrooms are getting set up. Almost all of the church school teachers have been recruited for this year. We are coordinating with the Needham church for the OWL program. Church school registration forms are now available on-line. One change in RE programming is that this year, the children will begin each Sunday in the Meeting House with the larger church community.

****There is still a need for volunteers to help each Sunday in the nursery ****

****Volunteers are still needed for Cool Deeds Activities ****

Building Use Committee

- Buildings & Grounds Committee will meet in the coming weeks. Their agenda will include a discussion of the enhancement of the Meeting House for concert readiness.
- A motion was made to authorize Rali Weaver to approve building use requests. Second – motion carried.

Fund Raising

- The Yard Sale on 9/6/08 was successful. Perhaps another Yard Sale will be held in the spring.
- Now is the time to start forming a committee for the Service Auction.
- The Stewardship Committee needs to be formed sooner this year to promote a successful effort. Discussions will begin following the Fall Fair

New Business

- Tentative date for Congregational Meeting was set for October 19th. The Deacons Report, the Treasurer's Report and the Auditors Report will be presented. The auditors are: Doug Howell and Natalie Jenson.
- The Alliance made a one time financial contribution to the Parish Committee to go toward the work of the various committees.
- The church office maintains the web site on a regular basis. **Any Committee Chair who would like to learn how to update their committee work on the church website may contact the Church Office.**

Next meeting will be October 7, 2008

Meeting was adjourned at 8:49pm

**Respectfully submitted,
Audrey H. Cecil**

Family Fun – Work Days

Join in the fun as we share the tasks of keeping our First Church buildings and grounds clean and beautiful. On **November 8 and 16, from 9 :00 am – Noon**, you are welcome to bring supplies and enthusiasm to tackle several projects. The next meeting of the Building and Grounds Committee is November 6 at 7:30 pm.

Dedham Food Pantry Fund Raising Event

Our own Lynn Rogal is always on the go on behalf of the Dedham Food Pantry. She would like us to know that **Sunday, November 2nd, from 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm**, there will be a very special event at FINZ Seafood & Grill, 910 Washington Street, Dedham. A full Buffet and Raw Bar will be served for \$24.99 per person, all profits to benefit the Dedham Food Pantry. Also on hand, author Gary Braver, will be selling autographed copies , of *Flashback, Gray Matter, and Skin Deep* to benefit the food pantry.

Save the date!

On November 22nd at 7 pm First Church will present a semi-staged performance of "Amahl and the Night Visitors". The story of a shepherd boy who meets three kings on the eve of the nativity, this delightful opera runs about an hour and is suitable for all ages. Our production will feature Diane Winchester as the Mother and William McBrian as Amahl. Admission is free, but donations will be accepted for the instrument maintenance fund. Please join us for this wonderful prelude to the holiday season!

Green and Silver

The silver lining to the dark clouds of economic doom and gloom currently gathering overhead is the falling price of oil. Gasoline is now back down to the range of \$3 a gallon, which seems reasonable in comparison to the summer's high of \$4. Heating oil prices are expected to follow suit, ie to be less than predicted just a few months ago, and it seems like a relief. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, however, gas in the Boston area costs \$0.16 more per gallon now than it did a year ago, and the average bill for heating your home with oil is expected to increase 23%. If you heat with oil, as First Church does and as many of us do in our homes, the recent "drop" in oil prices could still leave us with a bigger bill at the end of the winter. Even the cost of heating with natural gas is estimated to rise by 18%.

Another silver lining I thought about this summer was the unexpected benefit brought by high gas prices. Many of us suddenly got serious about conserving energy. People started taking public transportation more frequently, car pooling, walking or just being more mindful of how they used their cars. The decrease in gas prices began before the decrease in stock prices, and

was partially attributed to this change in consumer behavior. The balance of supply and demand worked just the way it was explained in economics class! The trouble with the system, however, is that it only takes certain things into account. The cost of finding oil, extracting it and distributing it are factored into the price, but the costs of global warming, health impacts and other environmental consequences are “externalized”, a nice way of saying “billed to everyone else”, or in the words of Garrett Hardin “Private profits, public costs”. Since we are the ones who pay these hidden costs, it would be worth our while to reduce our use of fossil fuels even if the bill from the oil company is less than we had feared.

The silver lining to the way we have been wasting oil for years is that for many people there is lots of gain to be made fairly easily by simple conservation measures. There are many sources for this information. Those of us who turn to the internet can start with the website for the Town of Dedham (www.dedham-ma.gov). Did you know that Dedham has a Renewable Energy Committee, and an Environmental Coordinator? You can find energy saving suggestions and links to organizations that can help you. For example, Mass Save (www.masssave.com, 1-800-632-8300) offers free energy audits, and rebates of up to 75% of the cost of certain energy efficiency improvements. You can probably find much of this information at your local library as well, and there will be brochures available at the Harvest Dinner and at church after Saturday, courtesy of Virginia LeClair, Dedham’s Environmental Coordinator, who summed up the key ideas this way:

“Really the best advice though is to be prepared and start early. You can conserve energy, reduce your carbon footprint and energy bill by changing from incandescent lights to CFLs, seal and insulate your home, power-down computers when they're not in use, program your thermostat to save energy when no one is home, and choose Energy Star qualified products. That's the quick and short list of how to save.”

Natalie Jensen