



The Parish Record

The First Church and Parish in Dedham

www.dedhamuu.org

Volume CXXX, No. 9

May, 2010

Sundays in the Meeting House

May 2, 10:00 AM: "Learning on the Journey"
Seth Carrier our Ministerial Student will preach.
Children will begin in worship and be sung to their classes.

On his final day with us, our Ministerial Student Seth Carrier will explore the idea of life as a journey, and identify a few of the many lessons he has learned during his time with us this year. Key themes will include relationship, risk-taking, and hellos and goodbyes.

At 11:00 we'll have a goodbye party for Seth.

May 9, 10:00 AM: "Mothers and Others: The importance of Family"
The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.
Children will begin in worship and be sung to their classes.

This Mother's Day we will explore the origins of our modern Mother's Day and the importance of celebrating both our biological and chosen families.

May 16, 10:00 AM: "Margaret Fuller"
The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.
Children will begin in worship and be sung to their classes.

Born in Cambridge, Massachusetts on May 23, 1810 Margaret Fuller became one of the most prominent advocates of Women's Rights. This Sunday before her 200th birthday we will celebrate the changes in the lives of Women since her birth and how important voices such as hers have improved the quality of life for us all.

May 23, 10:00 AM: "Coming of Age"
Our Coming of Age Students will lead the service.
Children will start in the Dining Room and be sung to a Cool Deed.

Our Coming of Age Youth have been working for months to deepen their understanding of Unitarian Universalism and their own faith. On this Sunday Morning we will hear the Personal Credo Statements of our UU Youth and celebrate their coming of age.

May 30, 10:00 AM: "Remembering"
The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.
Children will begin in worship and be sung to their classes.

This Memorial Day we will celebrate the contributions of all those who have died to make our lives special and important. Everyone is invited to bring remembrances of those they have loved and lost to share as part of this remembrance.

Calendar

Dedham Crossroads Coffeehouse:
May 1, 7:00
May 22, 7:00

Parish Committee: May 4, 7:00

Dedham Food Pantry Volunteering: May
15, 10:00 am

Cakes: May 21, 6:30

RE Committee: May 20, 7:00

Game Day: June 5, 3:00

Youth Group: Sundays at 6:00

Aerobics: Mondays & Wednesdays, 6:30

Meditation: Thursdays, 7:30

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

From the Minister

We welcomed several new members in April. As the church continues to grow you might be noticing as I do how much harder it is to get to know everyone. There is of course no short cut to building a relationship but to help facilitate those the Membership Committee (Kathy Widger, Sam Bitar, Pam Aist, Doug Howell and Myself) will try to give you some background for each of the new faces in our midst. Here are three short bios watch the June newsletter for more.

And as for our new members: **Sam Bitar, Simone Carpenter, Maria & Stephen Davey, Doug Elliot, Stephanie & Christopher Harrison, Caleb Hellegers, Kiersten Hellegers, Pat McMahon, Karly Moore, Stephen & Abby King, Lisa Seibert, and Stu Skinner** we sure are glad to have you join us. - Rali

Issam C. Bitar (Sam)

Born in Safita, Syria. Attended the American University of Beirut, in Lebanon and graduated from Kent State University, in Kent, OH. with a B.A. degree in economics. He has a certificate in finance from the New York Institute of Finance. Worked for Merrill Lynch in Beirut, Lebanon and Houston, TX. as a stockbroker. While with ML in Beirut wrote an oil report warning of the coming energy crisis and gave it to the manager at the time- a man by the name Fred Sears from Boston who forwarded it to ML headquarters in New York City which congratulated him on this "thought provocative" report. This energy crisis as we now know caused four recessions, three wars and counting, thousands of lives lost and hundreds of billions of dollars and we still have this "energy crisis". He is now a Registered Investment Advisor (RIA) and has his own business BitarAdvisor here in Dedham-bitaradvisor.com. He deals through Charles Schwab and executes his transactions on line. He is married to Elaine Web formerly from Weymouth, MA. and works as a cardiac nurse at MGH. They have three children Rebekah, Andrew and Rachel.

Lisa Seibert

Lisa is very pleased to have recently our Church which she describes as a most welcoming and pleasant congregation. Lisa spent her childhood on Northport Long Island in New York. She is a graduate of Antioch College in Ohio where she received a bachelor's degree in chemistry. She received a second degree from SUNY Stony Brook this time majoring in medical technology. Her masters degree in Training and Development was received from Leslie College in Cambridge, MA. Lisa moved to the Boston area in 1979 and has been a Dedham resident since 1984. After a few professional jobs working in clinical labs, Lisa switched to working for medical device manufacturers. She is now employed in financial services which she has been doing for the past eleven years. Lisa is also the proud Mom of 13 year old Chloe who is an 8th. grader at the Dedham Middle School. Other passions of Lisa's include cooking, gardening, reading, travel and singing. We are very happy to have Lisa's lovely alto voice as part of our choir!

Stuart Skinner (Stu)

Born in St. Louis , MO. Now lives in Norwood , MA . Graduated from Princeton University with a degree in chemical engineering. Now works in information technology and sells environmental friendly synthetics lubricant oil. Has one daughter, Jena , attending college in MD. Served in the U.S. airforce during the Viet Nam war. He sails, plays golf and tennis.

If you have joined the church in the past few years and are willing to have your bio printed in the Parish Record please contact Rev. Rali Weaver raliweaver@dedhamuu.org.

Rev. Rali Weaver is the Senior Minister at First Church and Parish in Dedham.
She can be reached at raliweaver@yahoo.com

Focus on Religious Education

“Careful the things you say... Children will listen!” Stephen Sondheim

I recently saw the movie “The Invention of Lying,” a comedy starring and co-written by British actor Ricky Gervais, but filmed in the familiar New England vistas of Lowell, Massachusetts. The world of the film, however, is one in which human nature has never developed the ability to lie, or even hold back unpleasant truths.

The main character, Mark, suddenly evolves the ability to lie when, desperate for rent money, he asks the bank teller for more money than he has in his account. The teller, of course, believes him; without the existence of lies, she would have no reason to doubt his words.

A little white lie becomes something more when Mark’s mother faces death and is terrified by the thought of eternal nothingness. He tells her that’s not true, that she’ll get to go to the best place she could ever think of, and she’ll have her own mansion and be with her late husband again. Her fear instantly abated by this new “truth,” his mum passes away in a state of bliss and peace. (I cried)

Word of this new information quickly spreads, and Gervais’ character becomes an unwitting prophet, tackling the frustrating task of explaining to the masses the complicated rules of heaven and hell and the “big man in the sky who controls everything.” Only one person ever thinks to ask him how he knows all this, to which he replies (lies) “The Man in the Sky told me.”. he results are interesting. Churches are built, or as they’re called, “A Quiet Place to think about the Man in the Sky.” Crazy people now have something to rant about. Some people stop caring about their lives because they eventually get their own mansion when they die.

Amid the tongue-in-cheek humor of this film there are certain messages which stood out for me:

The people in this film’s universe are much like young children who take what they are told to heart, sometimes without question. When we discuss religion with a child who has not yet developed the ability to discern fiction from truth and to think abstractly, we must choose our words carefully. Those first messages a child receives (usually from parents) can be taken quite literally. Perhaps this is why Sophia Lyon Fahs, the pioneer of modern liberal religious education, believed we should let a child begin to develop his or her own ideas about God before introducing preexisting ideas.

On the flip side, the film cautions against swallowing the words of a self-proclaimed prophet without even pausing to question the validity or origin of the message (or the motivations of the messenger). Something I think most of us free-thinkers can get behind!

Perhaps, though, the movie carries a deeper message about the importance of faith, of believing in what cannot be proven or disproven. In times of great crisis or sadness one could truly benefit by putting knowledge aside and simply believing wholeheartedly, in other words, having faith, that things will get better.

Focus on Religious Education

RE Happenings

It's May! It's May! Only a month left before we finish up our program year with Children's Sunday on June 6th. On this special day we celebrate and honor the important work of our kids and adults in the RE program. This year's theme will be stories and music from Afro-Caribbean traditions. This is a festive occasion not to be missed!

Also this month:

May 2nd: Teacher recruitment day. Our current teachers will be wearing a rainbow fish name-tag and can share their joys of teaching and answer questions. Look for the sign-up sheet outside on the lawn while we rake (weather permitting)

May 16th: Cool Deed, collecting for Haiti, and preparations begin for Children's Sunday

May 23rd: Coming of Age Service: The middle school youth present their credos, or statements of personal belief, which they have been working on with their adult mentors. Please attend and support our young people as they mark this transition from the children in our RE program to the youth of our congregation.

Classes will meet on May 2nd, 9th, 23rd, and 30th.

Announcing the RE Curricula for 2010/11!

- Ages 3-5 Spirit Play, Montessori-based UU faith development
- Grades 1-2 Wonderful Welcome, from the UUA's Tapestry of Faith
- Grades 3-4 Fall: Honoring our Mother Earth; Native American Spirituality
Winter/Spring: Toolbox of Faith, from Tapestry of Faith
- Grades 5-7 Fall: In Our Hands, a Social Justice curriculum
Winter/Spring: Neighboring Faiths

Aoife

Aoife Barrington-Haber is our Religious Education Director. She can be reached at faeriecool@hotmail.com

All Around the Church Community

Dedham Crossroads Coffee House

In conjunction with Dedham Community House, we've scheduled Dedham Crossroads coffee houses on Saturday evenings, **May 1st**, and **May 22nd** from 7 to 10pm. First Church will sell refreshments at these events. Contact the Church office at firstchurch@dedhamuu.org or sign up in the Dining Room to assist with selling or baking for these events.

This May 1st, Lloyd Thayer (www.lloydthayer.com) will host the Joy of Blues concert. Admission is \$8, and we'll sell refreshments during the concert.

Welcoming Congregation

The final Welcoming Congregation Event will take place on **April 11th and ay 2nd**.

Since last spring's Annual Meeting Our Congregation has been undergoing a process to examine our bias and open our hearts wider to all people. The Welcoming Congregation process is a fully volunteer process, and yet our commitment will be a congregational one, voted at our Annual meeting in May. If you are a member or friend of First church we hope you can attend one or both of these sessions to discuss your thoughts and ideas upon these important topics. For more information about these events watch our calendar at http://www.dedhamuu.org/welcoming_congregation_events or the weekly emails that come from firstchurch@dedhamuu.org.

Game Day

June 5th from 3-6 we will be having a FUNdraising event at First Church. This is Game Day and open to the public. Come one come all to an afternoon of fun. If you can help with this event please sign up in the dining room or speak to Steve Davey or Jennifer Carlson-Pietraszek.

Amnesty International

We wrote letters on behalf of individuals in Iran, Colombia and Rwanda during coffee hour in the months of January, February and March. Thanks to the following for writing letters: Kia Davey, Steve Davey, Joan Giblin, Doug Howell, Eileen Sullivan, Sam Bitar, Stu Skinner, Virginia Hickey-Ferentinos, Seth Carrier, Tyler Carpenter, Geoff Tegnell, Eric Meyer, Nora Sotomayer, Pat McMahon, Aoife Barrington-Haber, Jenny Carlson-Pietraszek, Tomoko Graham, Diane Winchester, Bob Estes and Carole Hutton.

Peter Elefterakis

Stewardship 2010

The Stewardship Campaign for FY11 continues to move forward as members and friends of the First Church make their pledges for the upcoming budget. Our goal is \$100,000 for the year. So far nearly 30 of you have pledged over \$43,000. We have spoken with many of you and you are just about to send in your pledge card. If you don't have one, please contact either campaign co-chairs Allison Staton (amitchells@yahoo.com or 781-686-1021) or Kerrie Gallagher (kgallagher at masmutual.com or 617-645-9973) and we can get one to you either via email or in the US Post. We hope to have as many pledges as possible in time for the annual meeting to approve the FY11 Budget in May.

We also want to thank everyone who joined us for our first ever Stewardship Campaign Disco Dance in April. This 70's-themed FUN-raiser found over 30 dancers of all ages and abilities grooving to the beat showing that First Church is indeed a place of solid gold.

Allison Staton and Kerrie Gallagher
Stewardship Campaign 2010 Co-Chairs.

**Minutes of the Parish Committee Meeting
February 2, 2010**

Present: Judy Barrington, Audrey Cecil, Carol Dixon, Jeff Hutton, Claudia Leone, Grace Pena, Michael Roberts, Eileen Sullivan, Jeff Tegnell, Rev. Rali Weaver

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm

Unison Affirmation. Opening words by Judy Barrington.

Minutes of 1/05/10– Motion made to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Second, motion carried.

Ministers Report- Rali reported on the passing of Francis Brooks and her memorial service on January 20th.

The Meeting House had an issue with condensation so the heat had to be left on for a few days, which may be reflected, in the next heating bill. A second AA group will use the auditorium with arrangements being made so as not to conflict with other building usage. Winter services in the Parish House have been well attended.

Some issues have arisen regarding all church emails since we switched web servers. This will need to be discussed by the Parish Committee. Also needing discussion is the idea of having a carefully monitored church credit card for use in emergencies such as a recent plumbing crisis at the Parsonage.

Rali will be away March 12th. Our student minister, Seth Carrier will preach.

Work of the Parish Committee –

Finance Committee- needs to meet

Stewardship - Alison Staton and Kerry Gallagher will co-chair.

Membership - Doug Howell and Kathy Widger will join the committee.

Personnel – will meet.

Ministry – hasn't met yet.

Nominating – Liz Ames was added as RE rep on the committee.

Church organizational booklet was reviewed. Copies will be made and kept:

1 in church office

1 in dining hall

2 for PC co-chairs

2 for new members joining PC

Committee Chairs will be asked to provide a summary of the work of their committee to be added to the booklet in the spring

Treasurer's Report – Michael Roberts provided both a written and an oral report about the finances of the church. He formatted the items in chronological order according to date, which made it easy to track the business of the church. Sharing the Place raised over \$500 for Haiti relief. The Treasurer's Report was approved. Seconded, and passed.

Building and Grounds – Jeff Hutton reported that B&G did not meet this month. A plumbing issue was dealt with in the Parsonage. The Book Bin is ready to go. Placement of the bin needs to be determined.

Fund Raising –

No January fund raising events.

A Comfort Food Church Supper will take place this month.

UNO Pizza event will take place this month.

A church wide meeting was held last month to solicit ideas for fund raisers and some wonderful ideas were suggested including: Summer Fun Auction, Wii bowling Night, Trivia Night, Coffee House, musical concerts by church members, Accapella Concert showcasing area schools, Square Dance, Movie night, Clothing Swap, Fair Trade Coffee/Tea.

R.E. Committee – Many events will occur in February including Spirit Play training, Cool Deeds for Cradles to Crayons, a bake sale, a food drive, and Coming of Age will be meeting mentors.

Old Business – Dedham Village AA has changed the time of their second AA meeting. We will be voting on being a Welcoming Church at the Annual Meeting on May 16th.

New Business –

Email - All church email password holders will be minister, church secretary, newsletter editor, and both Parish Committee co-chairs.

Church credit card – Treasurer will contact Sovereign Bank about details and will email the Parish Committee with info.

Summer services will be discussed at the next meeting.

Wayside Pulpit will be discussed at the next meeting.

Next meeting will be March 7, 2010 at 7pm.

Kerry Matthews will offer the opening words.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Audrey H. Cecil