



The Parish Record

The First Church and Parish in Dedham

www.dedhamuu.org

Volume CXXVII, No. 1

September, 2006

Calendar

August

29, Tuesday, 7:30 PM Parish
Committee Meeting

September

10, Sunday, 10:00: Opening Service
10, Sunday, 11:15: Church School
Teachers' meeting
15, Friday, 6:30: CAKES
17, Sunday, 10:00: Church School
Opens
17, Sunday, 11:00 (right after the
service): Parish Community
Network Meeting

Sundays in the Meeting House

September 10, 10:00 AM: Water Communion Service. The service and sermon is to be announced.

September 17, 10:00 AM: Service to be announced.

September 24, 10:00 AM: Service to be announced.

Focus on Religious Education

When do we meet:

Sunday, September 10th – Opening Service, no classes, but children are welcome. We'll have a teachers' meeting at 11:15

Sunday, September 17th – Church School Begins at 10:00 AM.

I can't wait for the church school year to begin! We have new curriculum such as "The Gospel According to the Simpson's", which I hear is both fun and thought provoking. We'll be doing some of our favorite social service projects like cooking for Arlington St. and visiting Cradles to Crayons, and we'll add some new one's too. Ideas are welcome!

Until we meet, I hope you all enjoy what remains of this beautiful season.

Here is a little summer poem I found in the guest log when I was staying at the dune shack in Provincetown. It was written by the author, Annie Dillard on 8.22.03.

A Sloop close hauled on course to the sun,
A Slap on the back of a bug,
A Slope of gold the wind dug,
A Sleep in the westering wind when daylight's done.

Susan Sennott, Director of Religious Education

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The deadline for submissions for the October issue of the Parish Record will be September 24. Send notices directly by e-mail to:

tylercarpenter@dedhamuu.org or
call me with questions: 617-816-9728.

All Around the Church Community

From the Music and Worship Committee

Great News Regarding Marina Minkin

On July 24 I received an e-mail from our former Choir Director Marina Minkin who is now living in Israel with her son Nick and husband Ales. I know that many people have been wondering how they are doing there. The following is some news from her.

“First of all, we are all fine. We live in the north, and can hear rockets and artillery pretty loud, but our town has not been hit so far and we have even given a refuge to another family. Their place is in ruins, their town is further north, and it looks now like a ghost city; everybody is gone. Nick is staying with his grandparents in Jerusalem, I told him that he has to do it in order to keep their blood pressure normal. Alex is at his lab 20 hours a day, and I am now busy working on a CD recording of Israeli music for harpsichord, for the IMI label (Israeli Music Institute).

Now the good news: I am coming to Boston in September after participating in the Montreal Festival with my group (Tel Aviv Baroque Trio - recorder, cello, harpsichord). We will also have a concert at Harvard on September 18, and will appear live on WGBH the next day. Alex and Nick will travel with me, we will leave Boston on September 24.

I was thinking, how would you like it if I prepare a special Rosh ha-Shana service for the Sunday, September 24? I miss you all, and would be happy to come back, even for just one morning...

Hope, you all are ok, please, tell me how is everybody.”

Well, naturally we all agreed that this would be a wonderful thing to have happen. The details are in progress---so plan on coming on the 24th!!!! (The 10th and 17th too!)

By the way Nick will be singing in the choir that Sunday as well---he'll be singing Bass!

Diane Winchester

From the Parish Community Network

There will be a 10 minute meeting on September 17th after church for all who are interested in being involved with the Parish Community Network this year. We strengthen our community, in part, through the connections we make as we give and receive support within our community. There is also interest in outreach support to other people, including those in the Dedham Jail. Come with your ideas on the 17th and we can choose a meeting time date and time. If you are interested in participating but cannot attend this brief meeting, please e-mail Vicky at v.berg@juno.com so your ideas can be included.

Vicky Berg

News from the Parish Committee

An introduction: I have been Clerk of the Parish Committee for the last year. As part of my new year's resolutions (after 29 years in education my new year always starts in September!) I will attempt to provide of summary of the Parish Committee minutes on a monthly basis. I invite each one of you to read these summaries, to ask questions, and to express your concerns.

The members of the Parish Committee as of June 30, 2006 are:

Deacons:

Judy Barrington
Jeffrey Hutton
Eileen Sullivan

Treasurer

Arnold Sacks

Clerk:

Carol Dixon Hutton

Parish Committee

Beppy Martin
Dan Ewing
Tyler Carpenter
Diane Winchester
Sam King
Natasha Lawhon-Schneider

Here is a summary of the June 27, 2006 Parish Committee Meeting:

Election of a new chair, approval of minutes (5/9/06), treasurer's report, report of the DRE were deferred until the next meeting.

The date of 9/24/06 was set for the Congregational Special Meeting. A review of the fiscal year and pledge update will be presented and discussed at this meeting.

In his report, Rob Ross reported on the illness of a former church member, Edward Russell. We discussed a letter from a church member regarding controversial church issues. Rob suggested that the Parish Committee bring in a third party to assist in this matter.

The committee discussed the *Safe Church Policy* that will be presented to the congregation in the fall of 2006. It was suggested the policy be mailed to the congregation over the summer and small group meetings be organized in the fall to discuss the policy.

Many Buildings and Grounds issues were discussed. The lock has been changed on the Parish House door and new keys are available as needed. Discussion also occurred regarding: replacing the door to the minister's study, the church copier, and difficulties with internet access.

Andrea Gilmore updated the committee on the renovation of the Meeting House. Everything has been removed from the Meeting House. The carpet will stay down during the painting to protect the floor. The clock has been moved and will be cleaned by a clock conservator over the summer. Funds are available in the Steeple Clock Fund to pay for the care of the clock.

The start date has been delayed two weeks, until July 10th, due to difficulty accessing funds. Andrea did state she would need to get a check to the painter, Samuel Chase Co. by July 5th in order to guarantee a start date of July 10th. Roof repair on the edge of the meeting house will occur in conjunction with the painting. After the painting is completed the carpeting will be removed and further decisions about the floor will be made at that time. Andrea also stated that she is investigating cleaning the upholstery.

Parish Committee News, continued.

Diane Winchester brought up an idea that had been discussed by the Music and Worship Committee which was to remove the first row of pews and one extra pew on the left side of the church. The purpose is to allow space for a piano at the front of the church and to provide space for other musical opportunities during church services. In time consideration could be given to constructing a raised platform. The committee discussed the proposal.

Before the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m. the committee thanked Bob Osborne and Beppy Martin for serving as chairs for the past 2 years and to Henry Scouteguazza a.k.a. (Scotty) for his work as treasurer. Next meeting of the Parish Committee is August 29th at 7:30 p.m.

News About the Painting of the Meetinghouse

The interior of the meetinghouse is being re-vitalized while we are away this summer. The Samuel Chase Company has completed all of the painting of the upper portions of the meetinghouse. The peeling paint is gone from the ceiling and the cast plaster medallion looks magnificent with new paint. The multitude of cracks in the walls have been patched and the walls have a new coat of paint. The color scheme is similar to the previous one, but looks quite different when it is clean and new. All of the upper work was accomplished by building a platform scaffolding that was carefully fit between the pews.

This next week there will be a dumpster in front of the meetinghouse as all of the old carpet and padding will be removed. We are not sure what we will find for floors. Our hope is that we can restore the old wood floors in the meetinghouse and then have runner carpets in the aisles. This will depend on what we find underneath.

In conjunction with the painting, all of the smoke detectors in the ceiling were replaced. The gallery clock is being conserved and the upholstery will be cleaned and fumigated.

We are running a bit behind schedule as the painting started a month later than originally planned. However, we are optimistic that the meetinghouse will be ready to use again in September, if not for the first Sunday of services.

Come September, when the work is complete, we will be looking for volunteers to help us move some of the furnishings from the meetinghouse back from the parish house. In the meantime, if you are in town, pop your head into the meetinghouse and see how the work is progressing.

Andrea Gilmore

The Search Continues...

The second year of our ministerial search is beginning in September. What does that mean? Last year we did much of the preliminary work needed before the actual interviewing could begin. We surveyed the congregation and hosted cottage meetings. We completed the Congregational Record, the on line document that serves as the first glimpse that potential ministers have of First Church, and worked on the packet, the more extensive document that will give the full picture of who we are to selected candidates.

This year that actual search for candidates begins and it will be a busy one for us. Beginning in mid-November, we will receive the Ministerial Records, equivalent to resumes, of candidates who have looked at our Congregational Record and are interested in learning more about our church. We will choose those that interest us for preliminary interviews in January and February. By March we will have selected three that we will bring to Dedham to interview in person and hear preach at church nearby, a so-called "neutral pulpit." From these three, we will select a final candidate to present to the congregation during a 10-day period in May. The candidate will preach two Sundays and will be available at gatherings during the week to meet as many of us as possible. After service on the second Sunday, we will vote to call this candidate.

That's the process in a nutshell. Check the Search Info Board in the Parish House dining room for more information about each step as we progress through the year. Though we won't be able to discuss specific questions involving names and places due to candidate confidentiality, we will be happy to answer any general questions you may have along the way.

The First Church Ministerial Search Committee.

Coming in November...

The Parish Players are pleased to announce that they will be presenting a show this fall! "**The Once and Future Parish Players**", a cabaret-style performance, will feature highlights from past productions, and some songs from possible future shows. If you would like to participate, either on stage or off stage, please contact Natalie Jensen (781-329-9289) or Diane Winchester (508-543-6406).

Natalie Jensen

First Church Fall Fair

Saturday, October 14th

On Saturday, October 14th, we will host our annual Fall Fair. As usual, there will be attractions for all ages: farm animals, a moonwalk, games, crafts, take home foods, lunch, a raffle, etc.... This event has great potential as a community builder and if the weather cooperates (!?), a huge fund raiser! Its success, therefore, will be in direct relation to the number of First Church members who become involved. Please save the date to participate in the excitement, by doing something you have always done or by trying something new. Opportunities abound! In particular:

Last year's big "money maker" proved to be a very successful raffle. We were able to present many wonderful offerings, thanks to the generosity of so many First Churchers and Dedham retailers. It would be great to improve upon last year's effort by getting our items in earlier and begin selling raffle tickets a week or two in advance of the fair.

Another area of improvement could be public relations. If anyone, perhaps with artistic or graphic tendencies, would like to take on this job, attendance at the Fair could mount. Responsibilities would include: creating flyers to be distributed at local schools and around town, putting reminders and information into the Parish Record, making announcements Sunday mornings in the meeting house and placing notices in local newspapers just prior to the fair.

Please contact Liz Ames (781-461-9559 or lizziesim@mac.com) with your thoughts, comments and inquiries. Let's work together and have a great day on the 14th!

Amnesty International

Welcome back! Our first Amnesty letter writing of the church year will be on the 17th of September during coffee hour. As always, everyone in the congregation is invited to write letters. See you then.

Peter Elefterakis

CAKES

The CAKES meetings for the coming year will be on the THIRD Friday of the month, not the second. That means that the first one will be Sept. 15. We will probably have to do some changes around the holidays but we can cope with that

Betsy Stevens

B + B Weekend in Vermont

From a UU friend and former colleague of mine...

Twelfth Annual B&B Weekend offered by the UU Church of Rutland, VT. Enjoy the beauty of Vermont, UU hospitality, and a choice of guided activities: hiking, canoing, visiting the studios of local artists, touring historic sites and quaint towns, and much more. Registration is \$275 (single) and \$475 (double). For more information contact uufoliagevermont@yahoo.com or (802)438-2095.

Tyler Carpenter

In Our Church Family

Judy and John Barring a new grandchild! Nerissa Kaelyn Barrington-Haber arrived June 30, 2006. The parents, Aoife and Michael are happy and tired and grandparents Judy and John are thrilled.

Diana and Dan Dechichio will be in town for opening Sunday and look forward to seeing everyone. We are hoping to set up a brunch to go to after church that day so please email if you are interested at ddechichio@hotmail.com

Many thanks from Anne Schiraga and Pam Aiste for all the help received that made for a fabulous Yard Sale and Art Show! There were 25 tables sold, 11 of these to artists who displayed their works in the dining room. The remaining yard sale vendors were in the auditorium

Our sympathies go out to Julia Gecha, who sends word that her beloved father, Damian Gecha, passed away May 24th in Union, NJ. He was 87 years old.

Our sympathies also go out to Carol and Dan Ewing. Dan Ewing's father, Daniel Ewing Jr., passed away June 2nd in a nursing home in Weston.. He was just shy of his 100th birthday.

Safe Church Policy

The Safe Church Policy was mailed out to First Church members on August 18, 2006. If you haven't received a copy, extras are available in the Parish Hall.

As the accompanying letter states, "A Safe Church Policy informs members of a congregation of rules and procedures that protect everyone from inappropriate, threatening, or intimidating behavior during church activities or performance of church-related duties."

Many churches – UU and other denominations – have a Safe Church, or Safe Congregation, Policy in place to create a sense of safety within the community by providing guidance about inappropriate behavior and the response system available when inappropriate behavior is observed or reported.

Today I did an internet search for "safe congregation policy" as well as "safe church policy" and was glad to see how many churches use these policies and to see some of the related resources available from the UUA. It is always interesting to read about the experiences of other communities and individuals when I am trying to think about what is important to me in my relationship with this church.

Making the Safe Church Policy available is the first step to us incorporating it into our gathering and working together as a community. I feel very engaged by this process and hope you will, too. There will be discussions early this fall so that we can all better understand the policy's guidelines, and I'm looking forward to being part of it.

- Natasha Lawhon-Schneider

From First Church Green

We are still in the ‘Dog Days’ of summer (as Buddy continually reminds me). Time to plunge into the ocean waves to get cool (when there are waves – it’s been a rather flat summer for surfing). Time to cut the grass and paint the south side of the house (when the humidity drops). Time to grieve for the Sox (are they truly going down in flames?). Time to look forward to Brady and his crew in Foxboro (will they rise out of the ashes of last year’s injuries?). Time, of course, to walk the dog (as Buddy continually reminds me).

But this is also a time of preparation. For there is much work to be done at First Church and Parish. I, for one, look forward very much to the work of this year so we can all feel confident that First Church and Parish will be in the best position to secure the excellent settled minister it certainly deserves.

Among the first pieces of work that requires our attention is to discuss and confirm a ‘Safe Church Policy’ for our congregation. You all should have received an excellent letter from Natasha Lawhon-Schneider, Carol Dixon, and Debbie Harrison describing the general intention of this policy, along with a draft policy that has been discussed by the Parish Committee and Deacons. The quote from Jim Adams at the head of this letter is indeed *a propos*: “Church is a place where you get to practice what it means to be human.” Church is a place where we learn from one another – ‘learn’, in all its dimension: cognitive, emotional, and, most of all, the dimension of caring. It is most important that everyone read and think about this draft policy, because it is important that, at the time of its ratification by the congregation, it is truly *owned* by the congregation.

To that end, we will be scheduling a number of meetings to discuss and propose any needed modifications to this draft Safe Church Policy. I believe the first meeting has been scheduled for immediately after services on September 17, but this and other dates will be confirmed at the opening worship service on September 10.

Please remember to bring your ‘summer water’ and a story to go along with it to share in our Water Communion service September 10. I look forward to seeing everyone once again.

Rob

