



# The Parish Record

The First Church and Parish in Dedham

[www.dedhamuu.org](http://www.dedhamuu.org)

Volume CXXVIII, No. 4

December, 2007

## Calendar

### November

27 - 30, Tues to Friday:  
Preparation for the  
Holly Fair

25, Sunday, 7:00 PM:  
Youth Group

### December

1, Saturday, 9:00 AM:  
Holly Fair

2 and 16, Sunday, 7:00  
Youth Group

8, Saturday, 7:30 PM:  
Benefit Concert

11, Tuesday, 7:00 PM:  
Parish Committee

14, Friday, 6:30 PM:  
Men's Group

21, Friday, 6:30: Cakes

24, Monday, 6:00:  
Christmas Carols

### Also...

Aerobics: Mondays and  
Wednesdays: 6:30

Meditation: Thursdays:  
7:30 PM

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

The Parish Record gets published monthly.

The deadline for the next issue will be

**December 16**

First Church and Parish in Dedham

670 High Street,  
Dedham, MA 02026

Church Office:

Hours M-F 9 AM.-Noon

Phone 781-326-7463

FAX: 781-326-7464

E-mail: [firstchurch@dedhamuu.org](mailto:firstchurch@dedhamuu.org)

Rev. Rali Weaver, Parish Minister

Judy Butler, Office Administrator

## Sundays in the Meeting House

**December 2, 10:00 AM:**

**The Hanging of the Greens.** Sam King will preach.

**Church School regular classes, but children will start in the Meeting House**

### Of Paganism and Wreaths

Our long tradition of the hanging of the greens and wreaths, has always had a pagan history. Just what is Paganism? Where do wreaths fit in? And **why** are the wreaths different this year?

**December 9, 10:00 AM:**

**Needham will join us in worship. Needham youth begin in the Meeting House. Dedham youth will begin in the Parish House for pageant rehearsal.**

### Preparing Our Hearts

In the Christian tradition advent is a season of waiting and preparation. In our hectic culture holidays often come with little time to prepare. This Sunday while our children and youth prepare for the Christmas pageant we will begin to prepare our hearts for the upcoming holiday season.

**December 16, 10:00 AM:**

**All Church Family Service**

### The Dedham Christmas Pageant!

This year's pageant will be "*The Star on the Christmas Tree*". The pageant is inter-generational, adults and children working together. Everyone has a little part; there are a few bigger parts for those who enjoy performing! It has all the elements of a regular pageant: a story, singing, costumes, a little chaos, and sweet moments. Please note that there will be a rehearsal on Saturday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, at 9am.

**December 23, 10:00 AM:**

**The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach**

**No Church School. Everyone will be in the Meeting House**

### Annunciation

Second only to icons of the Madonna and Child, The Annunciation is one of the most frequent subjects of artistic representation in both Eastern and Western Christianity. In the Christian tradition the story of the revelation to Mary, the mother of Jesus by the archangel Gabriel is a central part of the Christmas story. This morning we will explore what truths this myth might have for both believers and non believers today.

**December 24, 6:00 PM: Carol Singing on the Meeting House Steps**

**6:30 PM: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

**December 30, 10:00 AM: Worship Committee Sunday.**

**Cool Deeds Sunday. Church School will start in the Meeting House.**

## From Our Minister:

What to do with Christmas?

I must confess that although I grew up in the Methodist Church by the time I got to seminary Christmas had little meaning for me. Sure the Holidays offered a wonderful time to gather and remember old times (and I always loved the food). Retailers have made a fortune marketing Christmas and I find it hard to escape the tinsel and lights. But the theological significance behind this holiday seemed to me to be irrevocably lost in the hubbub of the season.

I like to imagine that this wasn't always so. That at some point there was a peaceful and pure purpose to the celebrations that took place at this time of year. But even pagan celebrations included a form of wassailing that sometimes turned raucous and unfriendly. Even the Christian story of a birth seems out of place at this time of year when everything around us in this season seems to be coming to a close and to be quite frank-- I don't think there is anything all that pretty about a baby being born in a barn because his parents have had to leave there home due to tax requirements.

Sometimes it seems easier to put blinders on and just get through this season.

Having had the opportunity to spend the past two years serving King's Chapel (which is a Christian Unitarian Church) Christmas has taken on a new meaning to me. At first I looked at my time at King's Chapel as being a sort of intellectual exercise but in time the stories became mine and the season of the liturgical calendar became an important part of my spiritual practice.

In worship this month we will be exploring the themes of the season, and I hope giving each of us an opportunity to connect more closely with the myths and traditions in our own ways. Carol Dixon will also be offering a seasonal walking meditation. If you would be interested in any of these events, or if you have any other ideas of how you would like to prepare together as a community for this season, please contact me [raliweaver@dedhamuu.org](mailto:raliweaver@dedhamuu.org) or by cell at 617 459 5979.

Whether you celebrate the Solstice or Christmas or Chanukah or Kwanzaa or something else I hope this season brings you peace and joy and love. Merry Merry Season of Love to you all.

Rali

## Focus on Religious Education

It has been a busy month in the church school. The UNICEF Bake Sale was a great success netting \$32.40. The Neighboring Faith's Class visited the Temple Beth Shalom synagogue. The Youth Group successfully moved the couches upstairs, with the help of Sam King. Last week we had a 369<sup>th</sup> Birthday party for First Church. Now we will move into the busyness of December.

On Sunday, November 25<sup>th</sup> we will have our next "Cool Deeds" Sunday. . Grace Pena and Sharon Lane will be coordinating this event. The focus of Sunday's Cool Deed will to help those who are hungry. The children will learn about the Heifer Project and will select the animal they would like to purchase for a needy family. They will make "Betsy's Famous Granola" and will sell the granola at coffee hour to begin to raise money for their Heifer Project animal. The Heifer Project is well known for helping people learn to help themselves, for more information on the Heifer Project check the website, [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org).

**On Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup> we will prepare for the Christmas Pageant.** This year's pageant will be "*The Star on the Christmas Tree*". The pageant is inter-generational, adults and children working together. Everyone has a little part, there are a few bigger parts for those who enjoy performing! It has all the elements of a regular pageant: a story, singing, costumes, a little chaos, and sweet moments. Please note that there will be a rehearsal on Saturday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, at 9am. The pageant will be performed as part of the church service on Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup>.

There will be many opportunities for finding meaning in the Holiday Season at First Church. We are currently working on coordinating a gift tree with Renewal House ( a shelter for women and children who are victims of domestic violence). Also you are invited to decorate the "Mitten Tree" with mittens and hats during the church service on December 23<sup>rd</sup>.

With Thanksgiving on everyone's mind, it is only fitting to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed to our Religious Education Program so far this year. Each volunteer brings unique talents and greatly enriches our program. You do make a difference. Happy Thanksgiving and enjoy the bounty of the holiday season.

### **Dates to remember:**

- **November 25<sup>th</sup> – "Cool Deeds Sunday"**
- **December 2<sup>nd</sup> – Curriculum Sunday**
- **December 9<sup>th</sup> – Preparation for the Christmas Pageant**
- **Saturday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 9am, rehearsal for Christmas Pageant**
- **December 16<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Pageant Family Service, no church school but nursery care will be provided.**
- **December 23<sup>rd</sup> – No church school. Children invited to bring their parents to church. Nursery care will be provided**

Carol Dixon Hutton  
Religious Education Committee, chair  
[carolhdixon@gmail.com](mailto:carolhdixon@gmail.com)

### **HELP WANTED!**

- Teachers to join the pre-school team
- Nursery volunteers
- "Cool Deeds Leaders" January 27<sup>th</sup>, March 16<sup>th</sup>, April 13<sup>th</sup>, May 11<sup>th</sup>

## All Around the Church Community

### Carolers Wanted

On Friday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, First Church will participate in the **Dedham Square Circle's Holiday Stroll** by contributing a band of costumed carolers. All are welcome to join us as we sing traditional Christmas favorites from various locations around Dedham Square. We will probably sing for about an hour, most likely from 6:30-7:30 pm. We will get together after church on Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> to practice the music and plan our costumes (luckily it will be dark!). If you'd like to participate, please let me know as soon as possible and no later than Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Natalie Jensen  
[jenray1@msn.com](mailto:jenray1@msn.com)  
781-329-9289

---

### Amnesty International

Thanks to the following members of the Dedham and Needham churches who wrote letters on behalf of a Chinese human rights activist: John Buehrens, Geoff and Jennifer Tegnell, Tom Gehman, George and Tabby Rappolt, Virginia Hickey-Ferentinos, Meg Duncan, Ron and Calvin Kinghorn, Jennifer Pike, Karen Schaeffer-Gadd, MariAnne Hudee, Carol Alper, Tyler Carpenter, Beppy Martin and Janet Humble..

We invite everyone in the church community to participate in our monthly letter writing on behalf of prisoners of conscience. The next letter writing opportunity will be November 25th.

Hope to see you then,  
Peter Elefterakis

---

Thanks to everyone who helped make our first Community Harvest Dinner a great success. It was a real team effort from set up - to clean up, with lots of food preparation and cooking in between. Special thanks to Natalie Jensen, who cohosted the event, and Joan Wislocki who baked eight delicious apple pies.

Thanks also to Sam King, Carol and Dan Ewing, Susan and Jack Sennott, Janet Humble, Julia Getcha, Kathy Elefterakis, Judy Barrington, Julia Ray, Jeff Hutton, Lynne Flodin, Peter McDonough, and Eileen Sullivan and David Gilmore. If I have forgotten anyone, rest assured that we are grateful for your help.

We hope everyone enjoyed the evening and we look forward next year's Harvest Dinner. Happy Thanksgiving.

Andrea Gilmore

## All Around the Church Community

### An Evening of Music A benefit concert/gathering for the Carlson-Pietraszek Family

**Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM**

We will have a benefit concert by **Catie Curtis**, ([www.catiecurtis.com](http://www.catiecurtis.com)) whom the New Yorker called a “folk rock goddess”, on December 8 at 7:30 PM. Tickets (\$20) will be available from the Blue Bunny, through a reservation at [theally@verizon.net](mailto:theally@verizon.net), or at the door.

## Holly Fair Information

### Food Table

Hear ye, hear ye all good cooks from First Church -- We need lots of food for our table such as the following suggestions.

- **Small loaves-cranberry, pumpkin or whatever you like to make.**
- **Cookies**
- **Fudge**
- **Jams, jellies and pickles**
- **Cole Slaw**
- **Potato salad**
- **Pies**

Please label items and indicate if there are nuts in items.

Please wrap in clear plastic wrap so that customers can see the items.

Please drop off at church Friday night, November 30 or early on Saturday so that we can price goods before the hungry throngs arrive.

Any questions, please call Joan Wislocki at 781- 326-4867 or Susan White 781-762-3546.

---

## Holly Fair Information

### The Trading Post

The Yankee Trading Post urgently needs those things you have been saving all year in your cellar, attic or garage. The Holly Fair is just five weeks away! So bring them as soon as you can. The Parish House is open every morning, thanks to Judy, and you can put things on the stage in the auditorium.

We also need your help. The cliché “Many hands make light work” is a cliché because it is true. If you can give an hour or a few to help set up the Trading Post, it would be MUCH appreciated. Please try to reserve a few hours in the week before the Holly Fair (the last week in November – the Fair is **December 1<sup>st</sup>**!) to help us sort and price the Trading Post donations. We will be working Tuesday through Friday, all day and evening, so any time you can give would be great. Elves are also needed the day of the Fair.

The Yankee Trading Post at the Holly Fair works on the principle of “one person’s trash is another person’s treasure.” We accept items large and small, elegant and utilitarian. If you can no longer find a use for it, someone else will treasure it. We pass “special” items on to the Specials Room, new unused items to the Gift Table, but we are a treasure house of just that eggbeater like grandma once used that you’d love to take home.

Please do NOT bring TVs or monitors. They cost us \$10 to dispose of if they do not sell. We will try to sell them only if you will give us your name and agree to dispose of them if they are still around after the Fair. Please also discuss any larger furniture items with Beppy before you bring them. Otherwise, almost anything usable goes, and someone will treasure it.

Call me at 781-326-2288 if you need item to be picked up.

Beppy Martin

---

## **Minutes of the Parish Committee Meeting November 11, 2007**

**Attending:** Carol Dixon, Diane Winchester, Dan Ewing, Eileen Sullivan, Jeff Hutton, Tyler Carpenter, Sharon Lane, Claudia Leone, Rali Weaver, Judy Barrington

Meeting called to order by Diane Winchester at 7:04 pm. The meeting began with a reading. **Minutes of October 10, 2007 meeting - motion to approve by Eileen Sullivan, second - passed.**

### **Minister's Report**

Rali submitted a written report to the committee. She reported on: church attendance, visitors to church, and the Social Action brainstorming meeting. Rali stated that she hopes the church will focus on two main social action themes a year. Interest was expressed in focusing on Poverty and Justice and Becoming a Green Church. Rali also reported on the success of the Harvest Dinner. She stated that the "Dealing with Difficult Behavior Class" will be postponed until January. Rali also reported that she will be away from November 18<sup>th</sup> until November 24<sup>th</sup> and that has started a blog which can be found at: [www.raliweaver.com](http://www.raliweaver.com).

### **Treasurer's Report**

The treasurer's report was submitted in written form by Dan Ewing. Dan stated that this month our expenses are at budget and our income is more than budgeted. **Motion to accept as presented by Judy Barrington, second - passed.**

### **Resignation**

The committee regretfully accepted the resignation of Natasha Lawhon-Schneider from the Parish Committee due to time constraints. This vacancy will be filled at the next congregational meeting.

### **Special Congregational Meeting**

A tentative date was set but has not yet been confirmed.

### **By Law Committee**

This committee met at the Registry of Deeds to obtain more information about the ownership of the property.

### **Buildings and Grounds**

The parking lot has been paved. Work was done in the sanctuary on clean up day.

## **Religious Education Committee Report**

Carol Dixon Hutton reported on the Religious Education program. The RE program is going well and we are continuing to have new registrations. Adeline Farrell has returned to care for the children in the nursery. The RE Committee has written a job description for a DRE and has a suggested salary range. Further discussion regarding hiring a DRE will occur at the December meeting.

### **Building Use**

December 8<sup>th</sup> concert – approved

### **Stewardship Committee**

The committee discussed setting up the stewardship committee. Discussion will continue at the next meeting.

### **Visioning Exercise**

The committee participated in a visioning exercise related to “Why we serve on the Parish Committee?”.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 11, 7pm, at the parsonage**

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Dixon