



The Parish Record

The First Church and Parish in Dedham

www.dedhamuu.org

Volume CXXIX, No. 8

April, 2009

Sundays in the Meeting House

April 5, 10:00 AM: "The Lessons of Holy Week".
The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.
The Intergenerational Choir Will Sing.
Children will start in the Meeting House and be sung to their Sunday School classes.

Within the Christian context Holy Week is an opportunity to walk with Jesus through the last days of his life focusing on themes of preparation, repentance, healing, forgiveness, prayer and death. On this first Sunday of Holy Week we will explore these themes with our rationalist lens and ask what if anything they might have to teach us.

April 12, 10:00 AM, Easter Sunday: "Total Transformation"
The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.
The Children are invited to bring their parents and stay for worship.
There will be an Easter Egg Hunt Following Social Hour.

This Sunday we will bring our eggs to decorate our egg tree sharing our thoughts of hope this Easter Sunday. Our hopes are frameworks that lead us to transformation. This Sunday we will ask what it takes to transform our hopes into realities and what might be required to truly live life anew.

Calendar

Welcoming Congregation: Introductions and Expectations: April 5, 12:00

Also...

Parish Committee: April 7, 7:00
Passover Seder: April 10
CAKES: April 17, 6:00
Earth Day Celebration: April 18
Chalice Crafters: April 21, 7:00
Family Fun Work Day: April 25, 9:00
Memorial Garden Planning/Tea: April 25, 3:00
OWL Classes in Needham. Sundays, 10:15
Lenten Bible Study: Sundays, 5:00
Youth Group: Sundays, 1:00
Aerobics: Mondays & Wednesdays, 6:30
Meditation: Thursdays, 7:00

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

If you do not receive our weekly church emails and would like to please contact the church office at firstchurch@dedhamuu.org

April 19, 10:00 AM: "In Celebration of Our Mother Earth".
The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.
Children will start in the Meeting House and be sung to their Sunday School classes.

This Sunday we will reflect upon all the gifts we receive from our Mother Earth and our responsibility to care for her. We will also explore these themes of the earth through music. If you have an acoustic selection to share this Sunday Please contact Sam King or Rali Weaver.

April 26, 10:00 AM: "Our UU Roadmap"
The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.
Children will start in the Meeting House and be sung to their Sunday School classes.
There will be an opportunity to offer your Joys and Concerns as a part of Worship.

This Sunday we will explore what our Unitarian Universalist principals and purposes have to offer us for a guiding light on the road of life. We will welcome New Members This Sunday. If you are interested in joining our church please contact Rev. Rali Weaver. A celebration to welcome our new members will follow the service.

From Our Minister:

The Origin of “Family Fun Days”

When I was a child my Father used to always call the days we would clean up the yard “Family Fun Days”. I always thought this was sort of a joke. Raking isn’t fun. As I have grown older though and have had to do some of the same jobs all alone I realize how much less fun it is to rake by yourself.

Our church grounds are vast and need many hands to care for them. There is raking to be done and gardens to be planned and prepared, buildings to be cleaned, painted and repaired, lawns to be mowed and plants to be planted. None of these jobs all by themselves are much fun to do but as we all know “many hands make light work” and all of us together can get much more done than any one of us alone.

As I have grown older I have realized that working together on our yard was more fun than doing it by ourselves and also that some of those hard working days when I was a child I remember more vividly than play days and just maybe my father was right. Anything we approach as a family is much more fun to do. And so I hope you will join us for our Family Fun (Work) Days on April 25th and May 2nd so that we can spruce up our grounds together- The More the Merrier.

Our Building and Grounds Committee could also use a bit of sprucing up. If you would like to have input into the care of our grounds, and can attend about one meeting per month we could use you! Please contact Andrea Gilmore, Sam King, Jeff Hutton, Rev. Rali Weaver for more details.

Rali

Focus on Religious Education

We have had a good month in church school and we hope that we have seen the last snowy Sunday! This morning I noticed that some of the daffodils that we planted last fall during one of our “Cool Deed” Sundays are now starting to grow. Spring is on the way! The ever popular Easter Sunday Egg Hunt in the Meeting House will be here before we know it. In church school we have been learning about some of the spring holidays associated with Judaism and Christianity. The “Special Times” class, grades K to 2, has been learning about the Jewish Holiday Purim and about Lent. The “Timeless Themes” class has been learning more about the life of Jesus and stories from the New Testament. The OWL class has started their curriculum. They are meeting with youth from the Needham at the Needham UU church. Thanks to Allison and Tyler for putting some much time and effort into the OWL class. Also thanks to everyone who contributed to the “canned protein” collection. We collected 82 cans which will be donated to the Greater Boston Food Bank and 12 pairs of boots which were donated to Cradles to Crayons. The pre-school children continue to have fun. This class is always in need of adult or teenage friends to help and give our dedicated, consistent teachers a chance to attend church.

The February “Cool Deed” went well. The children enjoyed learning more about Pakistan and dressing up in head scarves and tunics. Most of the children liked the lentils and rice (especially the rice). The Islamic Design Center was very popular as then used markers to trace shapes and make their own designs. The penny jar is getting heavy but there is room for plenty more! We will be collecting pennies until March 22nd. This project supports the building of schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan. “Pennies for Peace” also advocates for the education of girls in these countries. This work was started by Greg Mortenson and his efforts are described in the book “*Three Cups of Tea*”. Our next “*Cool Deed*” will be on Sunday, March 22nd. On that Sunday we will empty the penny jar and begin the sorting and counting process.

Looking Ahead:

March 29th	Curriculum	
April 5th	Curriculum	Family Choir
April 12th	Easter Family Service – No Church School	
April 19th	Intergenerational Service or Special Activity	

Help Needed:

- Sign up at coffee hour or contact Carol to be a nursery volunteer. Help our nursery director, Adeline with our littlest First Church friends.
- Substitute teachers are needed for the spring semester. Please let Carol or Rali know if you could help out for a couple Sundays during the spring semester.

Carol Dixon
Chair, Religious Education Committee

All Around the Church Community

Dedham Music Access Group Coffee House: Saturday, March 28th

First Church will host a coffee house on Saturday, March 28th. This is a joint effort with the Dedham Music Access Group. The coffee house will feature singer and songsmith Jud Caswell. First Church will provide the space for the coffee house and we will sell refreshments. The Music Access Group will provide the artist. We will need bakers and some volunteers to help on the evening of March 28th. Please contact Audrey if you can help.

Welcoming Congregation: Sunday, April 5th

From Noon to 2pm on Sunday, April 5th, we will meet to learn about the Welcoming Congregation program, provide introductions and discuss expectations. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

To Everyone involved with the Parish Players production of "You're A Good Man Charlie Brown"

Thank you everyone is hardly enough. Your work, your play, your enthusiasm, your creativity, your willingness, your desire for excellence, your talents, your skills, your time, your patience, your camaraderie, your joy, your love of the stage, your overcoming fear, your growth, your laughter, your cooperation, your exuberance, your playfulness, your voices, your generosity, your belief in each other, your belief in yourselves, your belief in us, your trust, your dedication, your humor, your persistence, your friendships---for all of these and more I am grateful.

Kudos to each and all!

Diane

Meditation Group

The Meditation Group continues to meet each Thursday at 7:30pm (please note the time change). We encourage first timers to join us. Please let me know if you are interested or call the church office.

Carol

If you do not receive our weekly church emails and would like to, please contact the church office at firstchurch@dedhamuu.org

All Around the Church Community

Building and Grounds Needs You!

If you are handy or even can lend a hand, if you would like to have more input into the care and nourishment of our Building and Grounds- The Building and Grounds committee needs you!! Please contact Jeff, Andrea, Sam or Rali if you are interested in attending the next meeting and finding out more about what we are about.

Passover Seder

On Friday, April 10th there will be a Passover Seder. If you are interested in attending please sign up in the Dining Room of the Parish House or contact the Church office. Families are invited to attend. This will be a pot luck style Seder, there are recipes available for those who need them.

Easter Events

On Easter Sunday (April 12th), families are invited to decorate eggs to hang upon our Easter Tree. As part of our service, families will be invited to bring forward an egg for our tree and share a hope for the coming year. Pipe cleaners and directions will be distributed on Palm Sunday.

And following Social Hour on Easter Sunday there will be an Easter Egg Hunt. If you would like to help to hide eggs, please contact Rali Weaver.

Family Earth Day Celebration

Watch the website and the all church emails for details about an Earth Day Celebration Saturday, April 18th

Family Fun Work Days

Keeping our grounds in ship shape order takes many hands. If you enjoy working outside please join us for two Family Fun Work Days April 25th and May 2nd from 9-2. You can join for some or all of those days. If you cannot be there but would still like to help, please contact Rev. Rali Weaver to choose a job to do at your own pace, there is plenty of work to go around.

All Around the Church Community

Memorial Garden

There will be a tea at the parsonage at 3 pm on Saturday, April 25th for those interested in helping to plan a Memorial Garden, which will sit behind the Meeting House. If you would be interested in helping to plan the Memorial Garden but are unable to attend the tea, please contact Rev. Rali Weaver

News from the District



Massachusetts Bay District of UU Congregations @ Work

Congregational *What?*

by Rev. Sue Phillips, Director of Program Development

Most of us sitting in the pews on Sunday morning take pride in the autonomy of our Unitarian Universalist congregation, which calls its own minister, creates its own annual budget, and decides which symbols adorn its sanctuary. All those important decisions are ours and ours alone.

This same sense of congregational independence was equally prized by our Puritan forebears - indeed they were its authors. But those wise people also knew that unchecked autonomy is no healthier for individual churches than it is for individual people. They knew that autonomous congregations - like people - are stronger when they band together. And so the churches joined in a covenant, promising each other "care, consultation, admonition, participation, recommendation and relief." This is congregational polity.

And this is why the Massachusetts Bay District of UU Congregations and the Unitarian Universalist Association exist: to help congregations help each other. The 55 UU congregations in the Mass Bay District band together to offer one another leadership development, technical training on everything from worship to stewardship, assistance during the search for professional leadership, grant funds for growth projects, and District staff to turn to when they need support.

Sometimes people use the principle of congregational polity to focus on the autonomy of individual congregations. We might recognize this focus in a mild distrust of the UUA or a reluctance to pay District dues. And yet congregational polity is so much more than a justification for independence. It is the vehicle of *interdependence*.

Ours is a living theological tradition, but our polity has remained virtually unchanged for hundreds of years. In a religious movement without a shared theological center, our polity is what holds us together - it's the covenant out of which our connective web is woven.

Resources

Interdependence: Renewing Congregational Polity (UUA Commission on Appraisal)

Walking Together: Polity and Participation in UU Churches, by Conrad Wright (Skinner House Books)

Upcoming at Mass Bay District

Lay Pastoral Care Teams Training:
March 21, 2009

Seeking Wholeness in a Fragmented World, Spring Conference and Annual Meeting: April 25, 2009

www.mbdoua.org / 617-393-4216

Minutes of the Parish Committee Meeting February 3, 2008

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

Meeting called to order at 7:04pm

Unison Affirmation

Opening words by Judy Barrington.

Minutes of 1/6/09 –Motion made to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Second, motion carried.

Ministers Report

Rali Weaver submitted the minister's report. We've had ongoing high attendance. Five Sundays of services have been scheduled in the Parish Hall to eliminate the need for heating the Meeting House during the coldest phase of winter. January's "share the plate" collected \$72 for the Minister's discretionary fund. Rali attended a Youth weekend sponsored by UU Youth, Rali taught a Spiritual Discernment Class. A class entitled Becoming Older and Wiser will be held at the church in the coming weeks.

Work of the Parish Committee

Personnel Review Committee - Sharon Lane reports that the committee had its first meeting. They looked at UUA guidelines from other churches. They plan to draw up a draft document and bring it to the March Parish Committee meeting.

Welcoming Congregation Committee- The committee met last week. Dale Myer- Curley heads up the committee. They are planning a kick off meeting on March 1st after church.

Stewardship Campaign

Tam Johnson will co-chair the committee with Kerry Gallagher instead of Jeff Hutton. Tom Donaghey will be added to the committee. Stewardship Sunday will be March 22.

Treasurer's Report

The December worksheet was reviewed as were the July – December expenses and the Budget vs. YTD Actual Motion was made to accept the report. Second, motion carried.

The church checking account is currently with Sovereign Bank but alternatives are being explored.

Building and Grounds

Parsonage - Jeff Hutton and Sam King installed a new tank less, energy efficient water heater in the parsonage, which the Deacons agreed to fund out of building maintenance funds. Natalie Jensen is assisting with winterizing by insulating pipes in the parsonage.

Parish House – An alarm system estimate was obtained. Sam King will request clarification about some items on the estimate.

Jeff Hutton installed a safe in the Parish House.

Fund Raising – The Service Auction will take place this Saturday. Lots of great services have been donated. Andrea Gilmore will prepare the dinner. There will be a silent auction and a live auction.

By-Laws – Olly Ames presented research he did that builds on the work of the 2007 By Laws Committee. He met with historian Conrad Wright and obtained insight into issues pertaining to the construction of church by-laws. What he learned is that it will be legally complicated if we decide to combine the church and parish entities, in part, because of real estate issues. We will need to review and make decisions about moving away from polarity or keeping our by-laws as they are currently.

New Business

A Coffee House will take place in the Parish House on March 28th. The host group, Music Access Group, has agreed to pay for a janitor. They have also agreed to having us to sell snacks at the event.

Tax letters have been sent out.

Next meeting will be March 3, 2009 at 7pm

Carol Dixon will offer the opening words.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:23pm

**Respectfully submitted,
Audrey H. Cecil**