



The Parish Record

The First Church and Parish in Dedham

www.dedhamuu.org

Volume CXXX, No. 5

January, 2010

Sundays in the Meeting House

Note: In order to conserve energy and reduce our carbon footprint we will meet in the Parish House from January 3rd through February 28th.

January 3, 10:00 AM: Hymn Sing
The Music and Worship Committee will lead this service.
Children will start in the Dining Room and be sung to their classes.

Do you enjoy singing? Well January 3rd is for you. We will gather in the Dining Room of the Parish House and sing old and new favorites from our hymnal.

January 10, 10:00 AM: "Cleaning the Slate"
The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.
Children will start in the Dining Room and be sung to their classes.

Have you ever wanted to begin anew without any past baggage? On this second Sunday of the New Year we will reflect upon what it will take to wipe the slate clean and get a fresh start on living..

January 17, 10:00 AM: "The Greater Good vs. The Common Good"
The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.
Children will start in the Dining Room and be sung to a Cool Deed.

At times we hear about the Greater Good and at others the Common Good. In honor of the Civil Rights movement and the Efforts of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. we will reflect upon who or what determines what is Good for us all and why these two concepts might be at odds.

January 24, 10:00 AM: "New Measures of Progress"
The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.
This is an intergenerational service

What do we consider progress and how is it best measured? This Sunday we will explore various ways of looking at both individual and collective progress and explore how measuring our growth in new and different ways might shift our perspective to what really counts.

January 31, 10:00 AM: "Cultivating a Joy"
The Rev. Rali Weaver will preach.
Children will start in the Dining Room and be sung to their classes.

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote that: "Most of the shadows of this life are caused by standing in one's own sunshine." While we might all agree that this is true getting out of one's own way to experience the sunshine is not as easy as stepping into the light. This Sunday we will explore ways to cultivate Joy in our lives in order to live in more sunshine than shadow.

Calendar

Parish Players Auditions: Jan 3, 11:15
Parish Committee: Jan 5, 7:00
RE Committee: Jan 12, 7:00
Cakes: Jan 15, 6:30
"Did I Say That Out Loud?": Every Tuesday at Noon (except Jan 19).
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

If you do not receive our weekly church emails and would like to please contact the church office by phone: 781-326-7463 or by email: firstchurch@dedhamuu.org

From the Minister

“Good resolutions are simply checks that men draw on a bank where they have no account.” – Oscar Wilde

Happy New Year!

Here we are at the start of another New Year and I can't help but wondering what this New Year will bring.

Being part of a Church that is more than three centuries old gives me a sense of time that is an ever-flowing stream. Perhaps this is because the more things change the more they stay the same.

But if we allow them, markers such as that of the New Year can serve as springboards for change.

This year we not only welcome a New Year, but also a New Decade and I can't help but wonder what changes might come our way.

One way we can help to usher in change is to make resolutions.

I don't know about you but each year my resolutions are almost always the same. If I had three categories I think they would always fall under the titles “More Discipline, More Savings and More Fun.”

Perhaps the problem with my resolutions is that they mostly reflect what I think I should be doing instead of what I want to be doing.

As Oscar Wilde suggests the nature of resolutions is not to be banking on changes we are certain should happen but instead upon writing possibilities of unfathomable changes that we have no certainty of happening.

I think the problem with my usual categories of resolutions is that they are all so doable they seem boring. I hope in this new decade we can all reach farther, imagining horizons beyond our current one that we cannot even fully see now.

May your new decade bring you great joy of the kind you have never experienced before and may this community grow and benefit from all of our brazen resolutions so that 2010 is the best year yet.

Rali

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

From Seth – “What Is Alive In You?”

A couple of months ago I watched a video of an interview with Marshall Rosenberg, the creator of the Nonviolent Communication (NVC) method of human interaction. Rosenberg suggested that the common greeting “how are you?” is very much on the surface; that if we really wanted to go deeper, we would ask instead “what is alive in you right now?”

Keeping Marshall’s words in mind, I have been trying to be more intentional in both my asking of and my answering such questions. When a professor asked me how I was doing a few weeks ago, I gave her an in-depth answer, reflecting on a couple of recent challenging experiences. After a brief and yet caring conversation, the professor hurried on her way, but not before thanking me for answering the “how are you?” question honestly, contrary to her expectations. She expressed gratitude for the opportunity it gave us to share more deeply, even if only for a few minutes.

I was reminded afresh of Marshall’s question just over a week ago at one of the opening sessions of the World Parliament of Religions. Swami Agnivesh, a scholar and religious leader in the Hindu reform movement, opened his portion of the presentation by greeting us with “nameste.” Nameste literally means “I bow to you,” but over time it has taken on deeper spiritual meaning in different South Asian traditions. Swami Agnivesh explained to us that in his tradition, nameste means “I bow with my head and heart to the divine in you.” Something opened in my heart in that moment, upon hearing the reminder again, and so simply, that we can see each in ways much deeper than we tend to regularly. When we ask each other “how are you?” on a day to day basis, usually we don’t really expect to get an honest answer in return. Both Marshall’s and the Swami’s words speak to me of the importance of remembering the deeper connection we all share, how we are all truly a part of a powerful and meaningful interdependent web of existence.

As we move into this new year of 2010, I think the question of “What is alive in you?” is a powerful one to ask both of ourselves, and to other people. The many different sacred traditions and holidays of the winter season were originally intended as times of reflection and looking for deeper meaning. Far too often these days, the holidays have become focused on the accumulation of material goods, and involve a frantic pace of preparation and celebration that does not leave much time for discovering, creating and experiencing deeper meaning. So I ask: What is alive in you right now? What is alive in those around you?

May the New Year bring a deeper sense of happiness and fulfillment to your life.

Peace and love,

– Seth

Seth Carrier is a ministerial student at Andover-Newton Theological School. He is interning here at First Church for the 2009-2010 academic year, and can be reached at sethcarrier@gmail.com

Focus on Religious Education

I hope you've all had a wonderful Christmas and are working hard on those resolutions. A reminder to teachers and parents and children alike that classes are starting again this Sunday, January 3rd. And while we have teachers for every class, we still can use a second teacher for the Special Places (K-1) and Coming of Age (Grades 8 and up) classes.

Aoife

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

From My Deacon's Corner.

Imagine a time when the Meeting House was heated with wood. Former Deacon Bob Clark told me of a time when he would come to church before daybreak Sunday morning to start the wood furnace for church services. The heat spread through the meeting house by convection. In the late 50's the Church sold two wood lots in Westwood used for many years to heat our buildings. Today wood still burns in the Parsonage. Any of you luck enough to attend a meeting in the parsonage, when Rali lights a fire, knows the warm, spiritual magic of that fireplace.

Alas, the wood lots are gone. But many of us have trees that need trimming or branches that might have come down in the winds this past week. If you're planning tree work please call me to see how best we could collect that wood. The parsonage wood pile is meager and would welcome contributions. Even a simple bag of dry wood is helpful and appreciated.

Jeff Hutton

All Around the Church Community

Great Thinkers and Thoughts in Unitarian Universalism

Join Rev. Weaver in front of the fire at the Parsonage the Second and Fourth Tuesday of the month from January 12 through April 20th to discuss central thoughts and thinkers of the Unitarian Universalist Movement. Drawing from such great thinkers as Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Ellery Channing, Theodore Parker, Hosea Ballou, Harriet Martineau, Henry Whitney Bellows, William Lawrence Sullivan, Sophia Lyons Fahs, and Forest Church we will explore Unitarian and Universalist thought through the decades. Some pre-reading is required please contact Rev. Weaver for details raliweaver@dedhamuu.org.

All Around the Church Community

Tuesday Lunch Sharing a UU Author

Our church administrator, Judy Butler, welcomes you to an hour of company and conversation on six Tuesdays in January and February. This series will resemble a book club, minus the mandatory reading. Judy has chosen a uplifting collection of essays written by Unitarian Universalist Minister, Meg Barnhouse. The UUA Bookstore describes *Did I Say That Out Loud?* this way: "From this widely popular writer and songwriter comes another wonderful collection of nearly forty essays filled with humor, sharp wit, optimism and wisdom." You are encouraged to purchase the book to read at home and then share your thoughts at lunch. For those of you who are just too busy to read, feel free to drop in and listen to the short essays read aloud. The series is free. Bring a bag lunch. She'll put the coffee on.

Did I Say That Out Loud? Musing from a Questioning Soul by Meg Barnhouse

Skinner House, \$12.00, www.uua.org/skinner

Meeting times: Tuesdays 12:00 – 1:00, Starting January 5

Amnesty International

Thanks to the following who wrote letters on behalf of people in Mexico, Sri Lanka and Guyana during coffee hour in September, October and November:

Richard Wendler, Jenny Carlson-Pietraszek, Geoff Tegnell, Eileen Sullivan, Tom Donaghey, Betsy Hetzler, Natalie Jensen, Rob Krikorian, Sharon Lane, Kerrie Gallagher, Kia Davey, Steve Davey, Joan Giblin, Deb Harrison, Judy Barrington, Seth Carrier, Kathy Widger, Sam Bitar, Jane Ferreira, Julia Gecha, Ruth Counts, Amy Shevory Bob Estes, Diane Winchester, Meg Duncan, Becca Hutton and Jeff Hutton

Last church year we wrote letters on behalf of the women of Atenco, Mexico who were sexually assaulted during a brutal police crackdown. The following letter was written by one of the victims, Claudia Hernandez.

"I am very grateful to everyone who is part of Amnesty International. Thanks to the solidarity with the women of Atenco, we have hope of obtaining justice and keeping this from happening again.

To close people in and fill them with anger, fear, suffering and powerlessness is to suck the life out of them. Only an even more intense emotion can heal the damage, and that is exactly what you all have given us through your solidarity, sisterhood, affection, support and fighting on our behalf. You have taught us not to be ashamed of what happened. And even though we know that they want to wear us down by making the road to justice as long as possible. I want them to know they have failed because we have you at our side, bringing us back to life.

It is an honor to fight at your side, and when I am sad and tired, all I have to do is open one of your letters to realize that we are not alone and that we can't back down., because you are all there, pushing us ever forward. Thank you for all your support, thank you so much".

Peter Elefterakis

The Parish Players...

I hope you all had a great holiday. You probably already have seen the notice in this week's e-mail but auditions for Guys and Dolls is this upcoming Sunday, January 3. Please contact me by email (with the information requested below) if you would like to audition.

Please note that we will see all kids under the age of 7 together, with or without their parents, between 11:15 and 11:25, and those from age 7-10 from 11:25-11:35. These times may be extended depending on how many sign up. If you have been in a previous show and would like to be in the chorus, no audition is necessary; please complete the information form and return it by January 3rd or email the information to me by then. Callbacks will be Monday evening, January 4th.

2010 Guys and Dolls Audition Sheet

Name:

Address:

Phone# (Day): (Night):

Email address

The email address is very important: A lot of communication about the show is done through e-mail. Please let us know if it is not possible to reach you this way.

Age:

Describe any performing experience you have had (acting, dance, musical, etc.):

Performance dates are March 19, 20 and 21. Rehearsals will be **every Sunday** starting at 11:30 am (with some beginning at 1:00 pm - more information to follow) There will also be one evening rehearsal a week for leads or small groups, from 7:00-9:00, Please let us know which weeknight is best for you. In March, rehearsals will become more frequent as we approach the show date.

Because of the short production schedule this year, **attendance at all rehearsals is mandatory**. We regret that we cannot cast anyone who will miss more than one rehearsal for non-emergency reasons such as sports, vacations, or business trips.

Please review the time commitment carefully and if you If you have a schedule conflict, please let us know the date at or before auditions.

Looking forward to a great production! Thank-you!

Virginia Hickey-Ferentinos

Minutes of the Parish Committee Meeting, November 2009

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

Meeting called to order at 7:04 pm

Unison Affirmation. Opening words by Grace Pena.

Minutes of 10/6/09 – Motion made to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Second, motion carried.

Ministers Report- Rali reported that October was a good month for the church community. The BSO performance was a delightful event enjoyed by all. **The Parish Committee warmly welcomes three new members to the church - Sam Bitar, Simone Carpenter, and Karly Moore.** Several parishioners will be kept in our thoughts and prayers - Bruce and Dotty Clary, Marge Wiren, Francis Brooks and Jane Kelley.

Got Books Bins looks like a good fund raising opportunity. Rali will be offering Jane Ferreria a room at the Parsonage to share the large house. Betsy Hetzler approached Rali about talking with a farm share program in the Dedham community about the use of the parsonage garage for storage of delivery items.

Work of the Parish Committee –

Chair and committee members:

Finance Committee- Dan Ewing

Membership Committee- Kathy Widger

Personnel Committee-Eileen Sullivan will chair, Claudia Leone, and Kathy Elefterakis

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

Nominating Committee- Judy Barrington, Janet Hurwitz or Susan White, Sharon Lane, RE Chair, and Peter Elefterakis.

Definition of Roles – of Parish Committee Chairs, Treasurer, Deacons, Clerk, Parish Committee Member, and the Annual Meeting /Special Meeting will be written up and reviewed at next meeting.

Treasurer's Report – Michael Roberts provided an accounting of last month's financial transactions. We are approximately \$3000 shy in receiving this year's pledges. Income for the year from the Amazon Books site is approximately \$240. Motion made to approve the Treasurer's Report. Second, motion carried.

Building and Grounds – Jeff Hutton reported that few people showed up for the Fall clean up in October. A second clean up will take place in November. The front of the Parish House was painted. The possibility of carpet cleaning of the nursery rug was discussed.

Fund Raising – Approximately \$3,500 has been raised so far this year from the silent auction of sports tickets, yard sale, Fall Fair, UNO Pizza event, and Amazon Book earnings. The Harvest Dinner will take place this weekend. New ideas for activities include a Comfort Food Night dinner and a Trivia Night event.

R.E. Committee – Things are going well with RE. Aoefe is working on a safety policy. The Halloween Lantern Walk was fun and they had good participation.

Old Business –

Dedham Food Pantry has located temporary space at the Dedham Plaza. Thus, the meeting we had scheduled for November 15 will still take place but instead of voting to offer space to the Food Pantry, it will be an informational meeting. It will keep the congregation apprised of the situation and further our offer to collaborate with the Food Pantry as they seek a permanent home. Perhaps a committee can be developed, from those in attendance at the meeting, to bring forward proposals for a vote at the Annual Meeting.

Goals for the New Year – The Got Books Bin will be pursued. Buildings and Grounds will be asked to recommend where the bin will be placed. A motion was made, seconded and carried for Rali to offer the use of the garage to Enterprise Farm for pick up and distribution of farm share items.

New Business

Goal Setting and Review of Business Plan were deferred until the next meeting. Seth Carrier, our student minister, will attend some future Parish Committee meetings.

Next meeting will be December 1, 2009 at 7pm.

Carol Dixon will offer the opening words.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:51pm

Respectfully submitted,

Audrey H. Cecil