



The Parish Record

The First Church and Parish in Dedham

www.dedhamuu.org

Volume CXXVII, No. 8

April, 2007

Calendar

March

- 25, Sunday: Sharing the Plate: Dedham Food Pantry
- 28, Wednesday, 6:30 PM: Parish Community Network

April

- 1, Sunday, 11:00 AM: Family Friendly Stewardship Celebration
- 10, Tuesday, 7:00 PM: Parish Committee Meeting
- 13-14, Friday: Cakes retreat at Stonehouse
- 15, Sunday, 11:00 AM: Amnesty International Letter Writing
- 22, Sunday, 11:15 AM: Special Congregational Meeting**
- 29, Sunday: Sharing the Plate: International Rescue Committee

May

- 22, Tuesday Evening: Annual Meeting**

Also...

- Aerobics: Mondays and Wednesdays: 6:30 PM
- Meditation: Thursdays: 7:30 PM

The Parish Record is published monthly.
Tyler Carpenter, Interim Editor
670 High Street, Dedham, MA 02026
Rev. Dr. Robert R. N. Ross
Interim Parish Minister
Susan Sennott
Director of Religious Education
Church Office:
Hours M-F 9 AM.–Noon
Phone 781-326-7463
FAX: 781-326-7464
E-mail: firstchurch@dedhamuu.org
The deadline for submissions for the April issue of the Parish Record will be April 22. Send notices directly by e-mail to: tylercarpenter@dedhamuu.org or call me with questions: 617-326-9728.

Sundays in the Meeting House

- March 25, 10:00 AM: Youth Group Service, led by Becca and Andy Hutton
- April 1, 10:00 AM: Stewardship/Palm Sunday
- April 8, 10:00 AM: Easter Sunday. Sermon: *A Song of Solidarity* by Rev. Dr. Robert Ross
- April 15, 10:00 AM: To Be Announced
- April 22, 10:00 AM: Alliance Sunday

Focus on Religious Education

- Sunday, March 25th** – Youth Group Service (Teaching Sunday for Storytime ONLY)
- Sunday, April 1st** – Teaching Sunday
- Sunday, April 8th** – Easter: Intergenerational Worship
- Sunday, April 15th** – School Vacation – Special Activity
- Sunday, April 22nd** – Teaching Sunday
- Sunday, April 29th** – Social Service Project

On Sunday, March 18, the Coming of Age group visited the UU Service Committee, where among other things they learned a bit about what is happening in Darfur. They will follow up with letter writing as part of the program.

Continued on next page...

On our social action Sunday we had several activities going at once:

- Betsy Hetzler started some knitters making hats for the Afghans for Afghans Program. If you are interested in the knitting program please see Betsy.
- Another group began to tie pockets which will be used to hold pictures for our “parish quilt”
- And Nick Ray led an overly enthusiastic group of coin counters in rolling and counting the Guest at Your Table Collection for a grand total of \$99.50.

Susan Sennott, Director of Religious Education

From the Ministerial Search Committee

Candidating Week: May 5-13

As the Search Committee is busy evaluating potential ministers, we thought a review of the search process up to this point might be helpful. At the beginning of this second year of our ministerial search, the committee posted on line our Congregational Record, a detailed description of who we are as a church. Based on this record, potential ministerial candidates expressed an interest in our church. We then reviewed their Ministerial Records, also on line, and choose the ones we were interested in pursuing further. We interviewed seven of these ministers by phone and then had the difficult task of choosing three to come to Dedham as Pre-candidates. During the visits we interviewed each of these three extensively and heard them preach at a “neutral pulpit” nearby.

Last week we finished the Pre-Candidating weekends. We now must pick the person we think will be the best fit for First Church based on the information you gave us last year. This will not be an easy job—we have three wonderful Pre-candidates. Once we decide, we will make an official offer. Assuming the chosen Pre-candidate accepts, a small group comprised of a member of both the Parish and Search Committees and a member of the congregation at large will negotiate a contract with him or her and then s/he becomes our official Candidate for settled ministry.

What’s next? Candidating Week. This is the time when the congregation as a whole gets involved. Beginning Sat., May 5 through Sun., May 13, there will be multiple opportunities for everyone to meet and get to know person selected to be our next minister, as well as opportunities for her/him get to know us. The candidate will preach on both Sundays, May 6 and May 13, as well as attend large and small gatherings of parishioners during the week. He or she will meet with the staff, the lay leadership and various committees. There will be some purely social events and some time to meet with the children and youth. A full schedule of events will be coming soon. But for now, mark the dates on your calendar—you won’t want to miss this important time in the life of First Church.

From the First Church Alliance

*** ALLIANCE MARCH NEWS ***

We had a nice turnout for our Alliance Sunday, March 18. Those who came were treated to an excellent, informational presentation by Andrea Gilmore about the history of our Meeting House. It may only have been the “tip of the iceberg” according to Andrea, but I learned things like there was a bell tower which stood on the High Street side of the Meeting House. There was once a door facing Allin church and High street, and that our two front doors and foyer of the church were additions. When the tower was taken down, parts of the supports were in turn used for support of the “new” church steeple. That the Clock in the steeple and the one inside the Church are very valuable and restoration has brought them back (almost) to what they once were. There was so much more, including a look at the church silver, immediately following the service. If you were not there, I am sorry you had to miss a great service and sharing the excitement as we all looked at the contents of the two trunks.

Jeff Hutton and Sam King were recognized and honored for their support of the Alliance in so many ways over the years. The Alliance wanted to express our appreciation of everything they have done.

Since the Alliance was founded on March 7, 1881, March has been a special month for Alliance activities including staffing the Dedham Food Pantry with church volunteers on Saturdays, 8:30–11 AM. I want to thank all who came these past Saturdays, and who will be coming next Saturday. A very special thank you to Dan Ewing, who came on two Saturdays, and left from the pantry on Saturday, March 17, to shovel the handicapped access ramps to the Church and Parish house. Thank you to Sharon Lane who opened the pantry each Saturday for us, and is making new labels for the pantry shelves, and labels for the limits that a client can take on each visit. Thanks to Pam Aist, Judy Barrington, Betsy Hetzler, Frannie McBrian, Ruth Counts, Beppy Martin, Peter McDonough, Lois Leonard, Kerrie Gallagher, and Meg Duncan. If I have missed you, I apologize, and thank you also. We couldn't do it without you.

Janet Hurwitz, DFP Trustee

Pam Aist, Sharon Lane, Lynn Rogal, First Church Pantry representatives.

All Around the Church Community

Stewardship Campaign 2007

Stewardship Sunday will be April 1st but perhaps it really began today on Alliance Sunday. This morning Andrea Gilmore gave us wonderful insight into the treasured past and caring restoration of our meeting house. Andrea's talk reminded us of how those who came before us carefully tended to the buildings and our community. Our Stewardship Campaign reminds us that it is our turn to be good stewards of our church, to give generously of our gifts, time and talents. Today during the service we welcomed back the Search Committee as they returned from their pre-candidating weekends. We look forward to their news with excitement and hope. As we move into this exciting time for our church we look forward to conducting a successful stewardship campaign.

The Stewardship Committee,

Carol Dixon-Hutton, chair, Vicky Berg, Liz Ames, Judy Barrington, and Beppy Martin

Amnesty International

On Sunday, March 18, we wrote letters to President Bush and/or Senators Kerry and Kennedy in support of legislation that will help those immigrants who were impacted by the March 6 raids in New Bedford.

Allison Staton, Linda Meyer, Sharon Lane, Judy Barrington, Tyler Carpenter and Vicky Berg

Thank you! Below is the story about these raids and the impact they had on people's lives. Thanks to Allison Staton for the story:

Peter Elefterakis

Helping those impacted by the March 6th New Bedford Raid

“The stranger who lives as a foreigner with you shall be to you as the native-born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you lived as foreigners in the land of Egypt.” -- Leviticus 19:34

On Tuesday March 6th, more than 500 Immigrant and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents descended upon Michael Blanco Inc in New Bedford, MA. Over 350 employees, mostly mothers with young children, were swept up in the raid, shackled together in groups of three by their wrists and ankles and marched to buses bound for Fort Devens, 100 miles away. Later, many were flown to Texas.

This is not a new story, but the story keeps getting more horrific. In recent months raids have hit nearly every state in the country. According to ICE's own numbers over 500 people are deported from this country everyday. Each one of these

deportations has a very human element that is about families and children.

People have asked what they can do about the needs of the families of the 350 immigrants who were detained in the March 6th federal raid on the factory in New Bedford, MA.

Many of those families belong to Our Lady of Guadalupe at St. James Church which is a member of Massachusetts Communities Action Network's affiliated organization there called United Interfaith Action of SE Massachusetts (UIA). UIA can be reached at (508) 673-4670 paulfgraham@gmail.com

Here are some ways you can help:

1. 1. Humanitarian Aid: Send donations to the New Bedford Immigrant Families/Niños Fund can be sent to the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts at 227 Union St., Suite 609, New Bedford, MA 02740, or made on line through the MIRA Web site, www.miracoalition.org
2. 2. Political Action: Meanwhile, legislation for national immigration reform including a path to legal status and citizenship for undocumented immigrants is still pending in Congress.

The following is a suggested letter to President Bush asking that ICE raids be halted until a clearer immigration policy is in place:

George W. Bush, President
White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington DC 20500

Dear President Bush

I am writing to protest the Immigrant and Customs Enforcement (ICE) March 6th factory raid in New Bedford. The factory owner did contract work for the Department of Defense and is out on bail while the immigrant workers are detained. Many are on their way to being deported.

Our economy needs these hard working people. In addition, the United States must have policies that treat immigrants fairly and deal with the economic and political problems in their own countries that cause them to immigrate here.

I am asking that ICE suspends raids on immigrants until Congress acts on the pending national immigration legislation.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

In addition, letters can be written to Senator Kennedy and Senator Kerry. Sample letters can be found at www.miracoalition.org.

All Around the Church Community

Family Friendly Stewardship Celebration!! April Fool's Day

There will be an April Fool's Day Celebration and Potluck Brunch right after church on Sunday April 1st. It will be time to celebrate our community and the joys of being a UU. We will have jokes and games for all ages. Wear something funny and be prepared to laugh. There will be prizes for the best fools!!!

There will be a pot luck brunch. Please bring a dish to share but most importantly bring yourself. Any questions or ideas for this "foolish celebration" contact: Carol Dixon Hutton, (781) 461-0522 or e-mail carolhdixon@gmail.com.

A Family Friendly Stewardship Celebration!!

April 1, 2007 -- April Fool's Day

Right after church

**Celebrate our community and
the Joys of Being UU**

Potluck Brunch
If possible bring a dish to share.

Wear something funny

Jokes and games for all

Prizes for the best fools!!

Minutes of the Parish Committee Meeting March 13, 2007

Attending: Rob Ross, Judy Barrington, Carol Dixon, Diane Winchester, Dan Ewing, Eileen Sullivan, Natasha Lawhon-Schneider, Sam King, Tyler Carpenter, Susan Sennott, Jeff Hutton, Carol Dixon, Tyler Carpenter

Meeting called to order by Dan Ewing at 7:05 pm. The meeting began with a moment of silence and reflection. The committee reviewed the Rules for a Successful Meeting.

Minutes of February 13, 2007 meeting - motion to approve by Sam King, second - passed.

Parish Minister's Report

Rob reported on the challenges that various parishioners are facing in their lives and of a child dedication scheduled for the 1st Sunday in June. He reported that Virginia Hickey signed the membership book.

Motion to welcome Virginia Hickey as a member of First Church and Parish in Dedham, by Beppy Martin, second – passed.

DRE Report

Susan Sennott was not able to attend.

Treasurer's Report

Dan Ewing reported that as of February 2007 First Church is on budget for revenues and under budget for expenses. Dan presented a potential check request form. The committee approved the check request form.

Motion to accept the treasurer's report, by Sam King, second – approved.

Settled Ministerial Search Committee Report

Eileen Sullivan reported that the Ministerial Search Committee had just completed three busy, intense weekends meeting with pre-candidates. She was pleased to report that they have a choice of candidates and that they are currently checking references.

Copier

Motion to accept the donation of a copy machine by Image Tech, by Sam King, second – passed. The new copier will be delivered when the contract on the current copier expires. The new copier plus maintenance contract will result in a saving of \$1000. Old copier will need to be returned to GE Capital.

Committee Staffing

The committee reviewed a list of current committee membership prepared by Judy Butler and discussed the status of different committees in the church. The committee confirmed that the Nominating Committee and Finance Committee are fully staffed.

Nominating Committee

Deacon - Judy Barrington
Parish Committee – Diane Winchester
RE Committee - Claudia Leone
Alliance - Beppy Martin
Member At Large - Sharon Lane

Finance Committee

Kathy Elefterakis
Jeff Hutton
Mike Dewar
Dan Ewing

Stewardship Committee

Carol Dixon ,chair
Vicky Berg
Liz Ames
Beppy Martin
Judy Barrington

The stewardship campaign will begin on April 1st.

Delegates of Various UU events

UU Urban Ministry

- Diane Winchester and Ollie Ames will attend as delegates

Mass Bay District Annual Meeting, 4/14/07

- Can send up to 3 delegates

UUA General Assembly Portland, Oregon

- Can send delegates

Motion to elect Paul Rickter as a Mass Bay District Trustee to the UUA Board, by Jeff Hutton, second – passed.

Collaboration with First Parish in Needham

Discussion occurred by the proposal from Needham to share services on the second Sunday of September and on Christmas Eve. The committee decided to offer Needham a time to use the Meeting House on Christmas Eve and to invite them to attend our service led by our new minister on the second Sunday of September, at 10:00 a.m.

T Mobile Proposal

Sub- committee will meet to consider wording of contract.

Andrea Gilmore
Natasha Lawhon-Schneider
Sam King

Buildings and Grounds

The Buildings and Grounds Committee presented a proposal by Samuel S. Chase Inc. for painting the interior of the parsonage. The Parish Committee suggested proceeding with the contract with Samuel S. Chase Inc..

Sharing the Plate

April – International Rescue Committee
May – Dedham Community House Camp Scholarship

Announcements

3/18 Judy Barrington
3/25 Tyler Carpenter
4/1 Carol Dixon Hutton
4/8 Sam King
4/15 Dan Ewing
4/22 Tyler Carpenter
4/29 Eileen Sullivan
5/6 Jeff Hutton
5/13 Search Committee

Easter Coffee Hour

A reminder that the Parish Committee will host Easter Coffee Hour.

Meeting Dates

- 4/22/07 - Special Congregational Meeting
- 5/22/07 - Annual Meeting (Tuesday evening)

Building Use

Proposal from B'Nai of Boston – Dan will meet with their sub-committee on March 18th to tour our facilities.

Odyssey of the Mind rehearsal – approved

Wedding – July 7th

Meeting adjourned, 9:00 p.m.

The Next meeting of the Parish Committee will be **Tuesday, April 10th, 2007, 7:00 p.m.**
(please note time)

The May meeting will be on **May 8th at 6pm. (a dinner meeting)**

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Dixon Hutton

From First Church Green

The Woman Who Fell from the Sky

Spring is a time of reflection about starting anew. But the snow falling outside my window again this evening reminds me that we have not quite left winter – a season that is also a time for contemplating renewal in the Iroquois Midwinter Ceremony, a six-day rite for curing ills when masked curers visit houses, old fires are extinguished and new fires lit. Connected with this celebration is an Iroquois creation myth about the woman who fell from the sky – a point of reference for our own reflections.

In the beginning, in the Sky World, a woman asked her husband to fetch delicacies she craved. But the woman wanted the root of the Great Tree in the middle of the Sky World, which none were permitted to touch. Finally the husband gave in, and scraped away soil to bare the root of the Tree. Underneath was a hole, and as the woman peered down into it, she fell through. Birds transported her as she fell, and the Sky Woman landed on the back of the great Sea Turtle. On the Sea Turtle's back, the Sky Woman planted bits of the roots and plants she had brought from the Sky World. She walked across the turtle's back, planting, praying, and creating the island we know as Earth.

The woman who had fallen from the sky became impregnated by the West Wind. While in the womb, her unborn twins began to quarrel about how they should emerge. The Left-Handed twin refused to be born in the usual way, and forced himself out of his mother's left side. When the Sky Woman died, the twin brothers buried her, and she became honored as the Corn Mother, the source of corn, beans, and squash – the “Three Sisters” of the Iroquois.

But the twin brothers continued to compete with each other as they created animals and plants. The twins represented different ways of living. Right-Handed Twin created beautiful hills, lakes, blossoms, and gentle creatures. Left-Handed Twin created jagged cliffs and whirlpools, thorns and predators. Right-Handed Twin was always truthful, reasonable, goodhearted, and straight-arrow. Left-Handed Twin lied, fought, rebelled, and made crooked choices.

Because Right-Handed Twin created human beings, he is known as Creator, The Master of Life. But Left-Handed Twin helped and invented rituals of sorcery and healing. The world that was built thus included both competition and cooperation, aggression and loving kindness.

After finishing their creations, the twin brothers continued to compete – by gambling, by playing lacrosse, then fighting with clubs. One day, grasping a deer antler, Right-Handed Twin prevailed, throwing Left-Handed Twin over the edge of the earth. As a result, Right-Handed Twin rules day and the sky and Left-Handed Twin prevails over night and the lower world.

The Iroquois believe that both Left-Handed Twin and Right-Handed Twin are necessary for the world to be in balance. During festivals, day activities and cooperative work honor Right-Handed Twin, and night activities such as feasting, singing and dancing honor Left-Handed Twin. This tension and struggle for balance between the two brothers and principles of life is incorporated into Iroquois festivals and cycles of life.

Without resorting to antler clubs and sorcery, I hope our reflections at this time of year may help us see opportunities for balance in our lives – especially those between family and work, ourselves and others, competition and kindness ...

Rob