



The Parish Record

First Church and Parish in Dedham

www.dedhamuu.org

Volume CXXVI, No. 7

January 3, 2006

Calendar

January

8, Sunday, RE Reminder: Return your
Guest At Your Table boxes
9, Monday, 6:30: Aerobics
10, Tuesday, 7:30 Parish Committee
Meeting
11, Wednesday, 6:30: Aerobics
13, Friday, 6:30: CAKES
16, Monday, 6:30: Aerobics
17, Tuesday, 6:30: Alliance Potluck
Supper
18, Wednesday, 6:30: Aerobics
28, Saturday, 6:00: Wine Tasting at the
Parish House

Sundays in the Meeting House

January 8, 10:00 AM: The "Official Welcome" for Dr. Ross by the Committee on Ministry. The sermon will be "A Spiritual Journey" by Rev. Dr. Robert R. N. Ross

January 15, 10:00 AM: Heroes. The sermon will be "Martin Luther King" by Rev. Dr. Robert R. N. Ross

January 22, 10:00 AM: Pulpit Supply

Focus on Religious Education

January 1, 2006

When do we meet:

Sunday, January 8th – We gather in the meetinghouse for a special all family service to celebrate Rev. Dr. Robert Ross being with us. (No Teaching)

Sunday, January 15th – Martin Luther King weekend – special activities (No teaching, but helpers are needed)

Sunday, January 22th – Nursery, Storytime, In Our Hands (First teaching Sunday of the new semester). Timeless Themes and UU Heritage – trip to Cradles to Crayons (teachers or drivers needed – see inside for details). We will depart at 9:15 sharp and expect to return by 1 PM. A snack will be provided.

Other Items:

On December 14th we had our 1st Parents' Night Out. After selecting and wrapping presents we all enjoyed fresh baked cookies, hot chocolate and a couple of fun Christmas poems.

Again this year we filled Lynn Rogal's van to the brim with gifts, hats and mittens for Renewal House. The staff welcomed us and helped us unload the car. Thank you to Vicky Berg who helped organize the packages and make sure we didn't leave anyone out.

Susan Sennott, Director of Religious Education

The Parish Record is published biweekly.
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The next deadline for submissions (the New Year's Issue) is January 15. Send notices directly by e-mail to: tylercarpenter@dedhamuu.org or call me with questions: 617-816-9728.

In Our Church Family

We extend our deepest sympathies to the Mel, Phil, Christina and Jeremiah Chaplin in the death on November 27 of Mel's mother, Angela Chavez, in Las Cruces, NM. The family suggests memorial donations be made to the Mesilla Valley Hospice, 299 E. Montana, Las Cruces, NM 88005.

As many of you know, Phyllis Ambrose died just before the Holly Fair. She was in her nineties and still quite active until recently. Her keen mind was agile as ever. She did not let vision and a hearing loss hamper her. For many years Phyllis was in charge of the "GREENS" table for the Alliance Holly Fair. She loved the Alliance POT LUCK suppers and attended our most recent Harvest supper in November. In January 2006, the Alliance will have a POT LUCK SUPPER in her honor and memory. After dinner, please plan to share a favorite story/anecdote about Phyllis. If you prefer, write it down and Judy or I will read it for you. Look for more information to follow soon.

Janet Hurwitz and Judy Barrington.

A Please and a Thank You:

On Sunday, January 22nd the Timeless Themes and UU Heritage classes will go to Cradles to Crayons in Braintree. We are scheduled to be there for about 1 ½ hours starting at 10 AM. All adults are welcome to join us by signing up on the sheet in the dining room. Drivers for our classes are encouraged to join us.

Also, we had a lovely note from the director of the Friday Night Supper Program at Arlington St. Church. He thanked us for delivering our meal on schedule during the snowstorm. He was happy their record of 21 years went uninterrupted. The dinner guests commented that they especially enjoyed our chicken cacciatore.

Susan Sennott

Amnesty International

The November 20th AI letter writers were Sharon Lane, Tyler Carpenter, Dell Lawhon Schneider, Natasha Lawhon Schneider, Eileen Sullivan, Deb Harrison, Judy Barrington, Vicky Berg, Lynn Rogal, Betsy Hetzler, Jeff Hutton and Beppy Martin.

24 Holiday Cards were written during Coffee Hour on December 18th. The following wrote cards: Eileen Sullivan, Sam King, Beppy Martin, Andrea Gilmore, Tyler Carpenter, Betsy Hetzler, Audrey Cecil, Meg Duncan, Frannie McBrian, Judy Barrington, Carrie Cecil, Tam Johnson-Helligers, Bob Estes, Susan Sennott.

January 15th will be our next Amnesty International letter writing session. See you then!

Peter Elefterakis

Save the date – Sunday, January 8

Come celebrate Rob Ross in church and at coffee hour! Rob has been with us since September, and the Committee on Ministry is sponsoring an "official" welcome. This will be a service for all ages as some young folks will participate, Susan Sennott will tell a "Story for All Ages", the choir will offer an appropriate song or two, and Rob may have a surprise himself! The Committee on Ministry plans to bring the flowers and plenty of coffee hour goodies.

Save the date II – Saturday, January 26

We will have a wine tasting to be held in the Parish House! Come join us.

Lost: Andrea Muraida is looking for her Olympus 35mm camera that she had at the Holly Fair. If anyone noticed a camera lying around the church, please contact her at 781-320-1958 or at amuraida@aol.com

If your Parish Record is arriving very late (or not at all), please let me know. I spoke with Patty the Dedham Post Office this fall to ask about the problem. She recommended that we sort the Parish Record by zip code and also place it in an envelope. Still, some people are not getting their Parish Record promptly. I will visit the Dedham post office again this winter with the addresses of people who are getting their Parish Record late.

Judy Butler, Church Administrator

From First Church Green

During this period of transition, First Church and Parish also faces the task of growth in its membership. We are reasonably well-positioned for this task for two reasons. First, the congregation is beginning to reflect on its past, present, and future needs and is beginning to frame a plan that will be an expression of its unique identity. Second, this congregation is renewing its sense of commonality and caring that establishes genuine unity of heart and mind.

To help put into action some of the goals expressed through our Value Analysis process, I would like to share a few of the large number of suggestions for membership growth that derive from the UUA Extension Services.

- Create a bulletin board display of pictures highlighting *current* activities of the church, including youth projects. This will allow visitors to get a sense of our identity as a congregation. This will also help visitors more easily approach members.
- The church might plan and announce some special, purely social events for newcomers and visitors – an informal dinner, a tour of the facilities, a children’s party – to let people in the community know we welcome new members.
- Have someone be responsible for following up on all visitors, including children, youth and young adults. The minister currently does this as a matter of course, but when a church member as well calls on a newcomer within 72 hours after the visit, the chances for a return visit increase by more than 50%.
- Assign “buddies” to every visitor. The buddy stays with the visitor to answer questions, to introduce the visitor to others, and to follow-up during the coming week.
- Hold regular “Invite-a-Friend” Sundays when active members are encouraged to bring friends who are potential members to church. There is considerable evidence that membership growth is very much a function of *personal networking*.
- Each active committee should invite a new member of the church into its work, and make time for orienting the new member about the life of the church.
- Establish a special budget and defined activities for the Membership Committee.
- Include in Sunday morning greeters at the entrance areas an ‘unofficial’ Young Adult greeter who identifies and connects with visiting Young Adults.
- Use community organizations to advertise the activities of the church. Welcome Wagon, local media, and the web are often the first places newcomers to our community will hear about churches.
- Expand the “ownership” of the congregation to include young adults in some committee. Congregations that have actively made its youth responsible participants in some decision-making functions of the church have grown stronger and gained fresh viewpoints.

These are probably enough ideas for now. I have great confidence in First Church and Parish and its ability to become a strong and visible parish.

Rob

Focus on Religious Education (continued)

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