



The Parish Record

The First Church and Parish in Dedham

www.dedhamuu.org

Volume CXXVII, No. 7

March, 2007

Calendar

February

- 25, Sunday: Sharing the Plate: UU Urban Ministry
- 26, Monday, 6:00 PM: Parish Committee By Laws Review

March

- 3, Saturday: CAKES in Hingham
- 11, Sunday – Daylight Savings Time begins
- 13, Tuesday, 7:30 PM: Parish Committee Meeting
- 18, Sunday, 11:00 AM: Amnesty International Letter Writing
- 25, Sunday: Sharing the Plate: Dedham Food Pantry

Also...

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

The Parish Record is published monthly.

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The deadline for submissions for the April issue of the Parish Record will be

March 18. Send notices directly by e-mail to: tylercarpenter@dedhamuu.org or call me with questions: 617-326-9728.

Sundays in the Meeting House

February 25, 10:00 AM: Sermon: *Ashes, Ashes, We All Fall Down* by Rev. Dr. Robert Ross

March 4, 10:00 AM: Sermon: *Fairness* by Rev. Dr. Robert Ross

March 11, 10:00 AM: Sermon: *A Song of Solidarity* by Rev. Dr. Robert Ross

March 18, 10:00 AM: Alliance Sunday

March 25, 10:00 AM: Youth Group Service:

Focus on Religious Education

Sunday, February 25th - Teaching Sunday

Sunday, March 4th - Cradles to Crayons (for ages 10 and up)

Sunday, March 11th - Teaching Sunday

Sunday, March 18th - School Vacation – Special Activity

Sunday, March 25th - Youth Group Service (Teaching Sunday for Storytime ONLY)

The Coming of Age group had dinner with ministers Reverend Rob Ross and Reverend John Buehrens on Sunday evening, February 11th. The wonderful Chinese meal was followed by lively discussion.

We received a thank you note from the Arlington Street Church dinner program – don't miss it on the RE bulletin board.

Susan Sennott, Director of Religious Education

Where are the Search Committee Members?

For the next three weeks, you won't see Jeff lighting the candles at worship service or hear Natalie's voice in the choir. They, along with the rest of our committee, will be spending their Sundays traveling to other churches, so-called "neutral pulpits," to observe each of our three pre-candidates conduct a worship service.

This is only part of what is known as a Pre-Candidating Weekend. Each weekend the Search Committee will host a different minister. We will spend most of Saturday with her/him conducting a more in depth interview and give each a tour of the church campus, Dedham and the surrounding area. In the evening, we will have dinner together allowing all time for more informal conversation. The next day, after the worship service, we will take the pre-candidate out for lunch giving everyone a chance to explore any remaining questions or concerns.

It will be an intense experience for everyone concerned—imagine a three day job interview! Many of you will be wondering how it is going, what these people are like. We ask for your support and patience. Due to concerns for the confidentiality of the candidates, we won't be able to give you any specifics about them. However, we feel confident, given your feedback from the survey and cottage meetings of last year that we have found three very capable people that can meet the needs of First Church.

Thank You!

On Sunday, Feb. 4, more than 25 people stayed after church for the "Sort & Pitch Party." An amazing amount of stuff was cleared out of the nooks and crannies of the Parish House to make way for painters and cleaners to do their work. The Search Committee wants to thank all who participated both in the Parish House and in cleaning the Parsonage. We can all be proud of how our church buildings will look to visiting candidates.

First Church Alliance Update -- March, 2007

Please join the *Alliance* and other *Church members* in community outreach by volunteering at the

Dedham Food Pantry

1st Four Saturdays in March

8:30 – 11:00 AM or any part of that time

one Saturday or more

WE NEED *YOUR* SUPPORT

Sign up sheets at Coffee Hour or contact:

Pam Aist, Janet Hurwitz, Sharon Lane, or Lynn Rogal

**** Don't Miss ****

Alliance Sunday, March 18, 10:00 AM

First Church Meeting House

Guest Speaker: Andrea Gilmore

Look for Alliance information at Coffee hour in February and March

Alliance Board:

Co-presidents: Janet Hurwitz and Judy Barrington

Board: Pam Aist, Carol Dixon-Hutton, Susan Sennott, Susan White

All Around the Church Community

Stewardship Campaign 2007

Save The Date – April Fool’s Day to kick off the 2007-2008 Stewardship Campaign. Please plan to stay for lunch to for a family friendly event to celebrate our community, to laugh, and to experience joys of being a Unitarian Universalist.

Information on the goals of the stewardship campaign will be mailed to everyone before April 1st. This information will also be posted on the website.

This is the time to envision all we want our church to be. The actions of each one of us make our goals a reality.

“Let us listen to our own prayers. It is we who make them real.” Deng Ming Dao

Thoughts, questions, ideas... please contact Carol Dixon, (781) 461-0522, carolhdixon@gmail.com

Kudos to the Search Committee

The Search Committee has been meeting together since June of 2005. They have met at our house through blistering heat, falling leaves, rain, snow and ice. They have witnessed a total renovation of our front room, plus a renovation of our bathroom, two Christmas trees, and two used cars added to our driveway. Needless to say this is a lot of time away from home, family, spouses, life and work obligations. The Search Committee is now about to enter the most time consuming part of the process “pre-candidating weekends”. Which means they will be spending most of the next few weekends with our perspective ministerial candidates. This is an exciting time but stressful and tiring. Our gratitude goes out to the Search Committee for their tireless dedication and hard work. Also thank you to your family, spouses, and friends. Best of luck on the pre-candidating weekends. We look forward to hearing the results!

Carol Dixon

Fundraisers are Fun

Do you have an idea for a fund raiser for First Church? Perhaps you have a great idea but you aren’t sure how to put into action at First Church or you don’t want to tackle it on your own. If so... this would be a great time to put it into action. We had our successful Fall Fair, thanks to Liz Ames and all her helpers. We will have our June Yard Sale. One more fundraiser will bring us to our goal. Perhaps it would be “Game Night” or a “Wine Tasting” or a “Chocolate Fest”. Is there an idea you would love to try? Any thoughts, e-mail Carol Dixon, carolhdixon@gmail.com or call (781)461-0522. I am willing to provided lots of support to anyone who is willing to pull together a fundraising event.

All Around the Church Community

Amnesty International

The following wrote letters for Amnesty in January and February on behalf of a Kurdish prisoner of conscience, and a Bahraini detained in Guantanamo.

Judy Barrington, Bob Estes, Deb Harrison, Betsy Hetzler, Beppy Martin, Allison Staton, Eileen Sullivan, Peter McDonough, Doug Howell, Sharon Lane, Ben Ewing, Lea Dunham and Diane Winchester.

Thank you!

Peter Elefterakis

In Our Thoughts

Our condolences go out to Bob and Mary Anne Osborne on the passing of Bob's mother. We also wish him well as he is at home recovering from abdominal surgery.

Minutes of the Parish Committee Meeting February 16, 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

Meeting called to order by Dan Ewing at 7:30 pm. The meeting began with a moment of silence and reflection. The committee reviewed the Rules for a Successful Meeting.

Minutes of January 16, 2007 meeting - motion to approve by Diane Winchester, second - passed.

Parish Minister's Report

Rob reported on the challenges that various parishioners are facing in their lives and added that Ruth Koe's memorial service will be held on February 18, 2007. He reported on the *COA Dinner with the Ministers*, Rob Ross and John Buerhens (from First Parish in Needham).. Rob found the dinner to be very productive and recommended that First Church in Dedham continue to pursue joint ventures with First Parish in Needham, especially in regards to membership growth. Rob added that he had met with Carol Dixon in regards to the stewardship campaign. He provided information to help communicate the church's financial needs and that the campaign will begin with a fun event. In addition, Rob added that he will be checking in with older members to see if they need help during the forecasted storm.

DRE Report

On February 4th a group of church school students and parents went to *Cradles and Crayons* in Braintree. Susan also reported on The Coming of Age (COA) program that is a joint class with Needham meeting at our church. Susan reported on a *Learning Congregations Conference* she recently attended. The conference focused on shrinking membership in UU churches. Increased use of technology during inter-generational church services to increase group participation and providing opportunities for "Village Worship" were strategies that were presented at the conference. Susan also reported that the church school has received a "Save Darfur" in appreciation for a financial contribution. The banner will be hung over the entrance of the Parish House. In addition, The World Day of Prayer service will be held at our church on Friday, March 2nd at noon. Sarah Person will do the homily.

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer was unable to attend the meeting. Dan Ewing will meet with Kathy Elefterakis and Arnold Sacks on 2/15/07 to discuss the treasurer position.

Committee Staffing

The committee discussed the need to re-staff the membership committee. Currently Pam Aist and Anne Schiraga are the only active members. As a starting point, Judy Butler will put together a list of people who are currently working on committees.

Nominating Committee

The proposed nominating committee is:

Deacon - Judy Barrington
Parish Committee – Diane Winchester
RE Committee - Claudia Leone
Alliance - Beppy Martin
Member At Large – to be confirmed

Finance Committee

Kathy Elefterakis
Jeff Hutton
2 members not yet confirmed

Stewardship Committee

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

The stewardship campaign will be held during the month of April.

T Mobile Proposal

The committee discussed the responses provided by T Mobile representatives to questions raised at the T Mobile Proposal Informational Meeting held on 1/29/07. Responses were in regards to: fire protection and fire suppression, and churches with T Mobile installations. Sam King reported on a conversation with a representative from the Acton UU church. The Acton Church has had a Cingular Antenna for 10 years and now the Acton Church will also have a T Mobile antenna. Sam relayed suggestions from his conversation related to contract negotiation and income use.

Motion: to move forward with contract negotiations with T Mobile and to delegate a contact sub-committee to start negotiations, by Jeff Hutton, second – Sam King, passed.

Sub-committee to start negotiations with T Mobile:

Andrea Gilmore
Natasha Lawhon-Schneider
Sam King

T Mobile decision will be brought to the congregation for a vote when contract details are more definite.

Buildings and Grounds

The Buildings and Grounds Committee briefed the Parish Committee on plans to renew the waste contract. The Buildings and Grounds Committee is considering switching to a different company, references are being pursued.

Building Use

Erik Meyer and Dale Curly wedding, 10/26 and 10/27 – approved

Haam Inc., children's theatre rehearsal, Tuesdays 5pm-7pm (Feb-May) –approved

Sharing A New Song Concert, Friday, 3/30 – approved

Proposal from B'Nai of Boston – more information needed

Meeting adjourned, 9:15 PM

The next meeting of the Parish Committee will be **Tuesday, March 13th, 2007, 7:00 PM** (please note time change)

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Dixon Hutton

From First Church Green

A Global Religion

The Unitarian Universalist Association has had a tendency to think of itself as an association of North American churches. With the separation of Canadian UUs, it seems even more parochially confined to the boundaries of the United States. However, Unitarian Universalism is a global movement, with member churches and organizations at all levels dispersed across the globe. Many of these can be found in Eastern Europe, where the historical origins of UUism persist. But many exist elsewhere in the world.

The International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) is a global network of Unitarian, Universalist and Unitarian Universalist organizations. Member groups come from 23 countries; many more are being organized around the world.

In his greeting to UUs everywhere, Rev Gordon Oliver of Cape Town, South Africa, President of the ICUU speaks to the goals of this organization. He says:

I'm very aware that in almost every corner of the world the flame of liberal religion burns brightly at this dark time in human history, in a world characterised by wars, poverty, the HIV/Aids pandemic, famine and general turbulence. Always the question: Is there hope for Humanity, as we go about destroying our precious home, Mother Earth? Thank you, all of you, for the work you are doing to keep our flame burning, as we do indeed offer hope to a seething and searching human family . . .

The ICUU was founded in March 1995 at Essex, Massachusetts, after years of discussion. Representatives of Unitarian, Universalist, and UU congregations from around the world came together to form this new organization. There are about 500,000 Unitarians and Universalists in the world today. Many belong to large church organizations while others rarely meet another Unitarian face-to-face. The oldest groups, who are Hungarian speaking, have a continuous church history of more than 400 years. Some of the English speaking groups go back over 200 years. Many of the new groups have a much shorter history.

Full Member groups exist in Australia and New Zealand, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Spain, and Sri Lanka. A Provisional Group exists in Indonesia, with over 250 members. Emerging Groups exist in Burundi, Congo Brazzaville, Cuba, France, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Northern Ireland, Argentina, Brazil, and Bolivia.

Because of their geographic proximity and new political importance to the United States, I have had considerable interest in those UU groups developing in Central and South America, particularly Brazil and Bolivia. For several years I have been in communication with those groups and have been providing counsel to help them develop and establish communication links with UUs in the United States and elsewhere.

The initial purpose of this article is simply to bring to the awareness of UUs here in the United States that Unitarian Universalism is more than a North American phenomenon – it is a movement that has a strong global presence, one that should be nurtured and encouraged.

In future columns I will keep First Church updated on the details of my ongoing work with some of these global UU groups.

Rob