



The Parish Record

First Church and Parish in Dedham

www.dedhamuu.org

Volume CXXVI, No. 2

September 22, 2005

Calendar

September

23, Friday, 6:30 pm:
CAKES

25, Sunday, 10:00 am:
Worship Service

October

2, Sunday, 10:00 am:
Worship Service

2, Sunday, 7:00 pm:
Youth Group Meeting

5, Wednesday, 7:30 pm:
Church Council Meeting

7, Friday, 6:30 pm:
CAKES

9, Sunday, 10:00 am:
Worship Service

Sundays in the Meeting House

September 25, 10:00 AM
Rev. Dr. Robert R. N. Ross

October 2, 10:00 AM
Rev. Dr. Robert R. N. Ross

Focus on Religious Education

September 21, 2005

When do we meet:

Sunday, September 25th – Church School

Sunday, October 2nd – Church School

Youth Group – meets on Sunday, October 2nd at 7PM.

The church school year got off to a wonderful start. On Opening Sunday we wrote notes and filled “care bags” for children affected by Hurricane Katrina. Thank you all for bring donations, especially on such short notice. Our kids filled 10 large backpacks to overflowing. Everything will be sent to the Shreveport UU Church, in Louisiana for distribution to area shelters.

Have you ever thought about teaching but were afraid of the commitment? We always have room for substitute teachers. If you think you could help out on occasion please let me know.

If you have a story or activity that would be of interest to church school, we would love to have you join us for a Children’s Worship. We have lots of people in our congregation who quietly go about doing good deeds. Come and share what you do and plant some seeds.

Susan Sennott, Director of Religious Education

The Parish Record is published biweekly.

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From First Church Green

Help create a vision of the future for First Church and Parish. Your voice is important! Beginning on Tuesday, October 18, the Parish Committee and Deacons will participate in the first of several workshops to begin to shape that future. Workshops are also being scheduled for the congregation beginning in November. Every member who wishes will have the opportunity to participate. The workshops are an exciting way to let your thoughts, your concerns, and your hopes for First Church and Parish be known. Please convey to Judy and myself those days and times that are most convenient for your attending so that we can proceed with scheduling specific dates.

The workshops will use a methodology I have developed called *Value Analysis*. The process is both interactive and fun – everyone has the opportunity to contribute to a concrete picture of what is important for the future of First Church and Parish. Using principles of pattern recognition, these pictures – and the value judgments they represent – are artistically blended into a whole to reflect a consensus of everyone’s views.

Value Analysis is based on the belief that decisions about the future of a congregation should express the needs and hopes of its members, and that the voices of all members must be heard. When everyone contributes to the decision-making process and develops consensus about shared values, a congregation can then understand the connection between its *goals* and the *methods* it chooses to achieve them. This establishes the commitment necessary to carry planned actions through to their completion. *Value Analysis* uses small teams and simple visual tools to prioritize major goals, identify barriers, and develop consensus about strategies to best use the talents and creativity of members to shape the future. In the course of the activities, everyone also gets a chance to get to know their fellow members a lot better.

For an idea of the kinds of things congregations have often wanted to be part of their future, the following are some examples:

- Grow from present attendance to 150 in the pews on Sunday.
- Develop wider participation in social outreach.
- Achieve financial stability (no deficit spending).
- Develop a more racially and ethnically diverse congregation.
- Have committees become more like ministries with a spiritual dimension.
- Create a powerful image that captures the essence of the congregation.
- Encourage more coordinated teamwork and less isolated actions.
- Work more closely with other congregations.
- Develop a succession mechanism for church tasks.
- Include the perspectives of other religions and cultures in services and sermons.

Reports on the outcomes of the workshops will be provided to everyone for reflection and further discussion. I look forward to working with everyone to build a meaningful future for First Church and Parish.

Rob

In Our Church Family

From the Church Office:

Thank you to everyone who has helped to assemble the Parish Record. Loyal volunteers include: Fran Grilley, Eileen Coffin and her daughter Dale Holland, Dottie Clary, Janet Haynes, Judy Barrington, Priscilla King, and Evelyn Malm. Our newest workers have been Anne Schiraga and Mary Anne Osborne. This group meets every other Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. to staple, fold, label and sort 230 newsletters. It takes about 2 hours and is often followed by refreshments and friendly conversation. If you would like to help, please call Judy Butler at the church office.

If you would like to receive your Parish Record via first class mail, please send a book of stamps to the church office.

The church office will close at 10:30 on September 23. The office will be closed October 4, 10, 21 and 31.

Thanks,

Judy Butler, Church Administrator

Is the Order of Service getting harder for you to read?

Lighting in the meeting house varies with the weather and depends upon your seating choice. We have several large print Hymnals in the back of the meeting house which may make the print easier to see. In addition, the Order of Service can be produced in any size print from standard to 36 point print (which is really big). Please let me know if you would like to try an Order of Service in a different size print.

Vicky Berg (781-326-3723)

Social Hour Help Wanted

Another year is here! I've lost count of how many years I've been "Coffee Lady". It is a fun job, but I **do** need help!

Please find a date of the signup sheet in the dining room and go for it! The coffee is always made, juice and cookies and cheez-its are always available. All you need to bring is a quart of cream or milk and some sort of centerpiece (which is nice, but not absolutely mandatory) Come a little early to set up and stay a little later to clean up.

It's a wonderful way to keep in contact with old friends and greet new ones. This time is truly a "Social-Hour" and serves an important role in the life of our church. If you have questions, please call me!

Judy Barrington (781-762-2742)

Amnesty International

The following words are from Khrisna Pahadi, a human rights activist:

"AIUSA alone sent 37,400 letters to authorities of Nepal. Such pressure created a different environment. That's why I am taking fresh breath outside prison now."

First Church members were among those 37,400 letter writers who brought about the release of Khrisna Pahadi. Join us on the 25th of September, during social hour for another year of Amnesty International letter writing. Letter writing is an easy and effective means of working for human rights on a person-to-person level.

Peter Elefterakis

Many thanks to all of you who helped me this summer as I dealt with the death of my brother, Parker. Your cards, calls, visits and good wishes supported and strengthened me, then and now. We are truly a caring community. Vicky Berg

There will be a Church Council meeting on Wednesday, October 5th at 7:30PM. The Church Council is a group of committee chairs that meets 3 times each year to coordinate activities and share committee plans for the church year. The Search Committee will present a report at our October meeting.

Ministerial Search Information

Last Sunday the Search Committee unveiled their "Search Info" display at Coffee Hour. This display will remain set up throughout the year and will have up-to-date information on where we stand in the search process. Part of the display includes a "question of the month" asking for your input on the type of minister that will be the right fit for First Church or questions concerning issues facing the church community. We hope everyone will take the opportunity to respond.

The next big search event is the Congregational Survey which will be sent to all members and friends 14 years and older in mid-October. We promise the survey will be detailed but succinct and it will be very helpful to us if everyone will fill one out.

We need **your** input!

The Ministerial Search Committee

From the Wider Community

From the Rev. William G. Sinkford, President of the Unitarian Universalist Association:

Dear Friends:

I am humbled and grateful to announce that the [UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund](#) has received **gifts in excess of one million dollars**. The pride and awe I feel at reaching this milestone is an experience that I know you all will share. This outpouring of generosity from Unitarian Universalists and friends has both moved and heartened me. As we struggle to make sense of the profound natural destruction and the crushing social failures we have witnessed, it is important that we shine a light on inspiring acts of faith such as these. Please know that each of your gifts matter and that your continued generosity will help to restore many lives. And know that we are healing ourselves as we do our small part to help to heal others.

Thank you, friends, for your ongoing acts of faith and generosity.

The Young Widowed Group of Greater Boston meets on the 4th Tuesday of each month 7-8:30 at The Beth Israel Hospital-Needham Center. Contact jconnolly@artsfirst.org for more information.

The deadline for submissions for the next *Parish Record* is October 2.

Send notices directly by e-mail to: tylercarpenter@dedhamuu.org or leave them in the box in the Church Office. **I can accept e-mail submissions until 2 pm Sunday afternoon, but written notes must be in the box by the end of Coffee Hour.** Any questions or suggestions? — call me at home: **617-816-9728**.

Tyler Carpenter

