



The Parishioner

News of the First Parish in Bedford
Unitarian Universalist
On the Common,
Bedford, Massachusetts

*"Forge connections within and across generations
and share our work to change ourselves and the world."*

Volume 45, Issue 4

December 7, 2011

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Rev. Megan Lynes, parish minister
Rev. Jack Mendelsohn, minister emeritus
Rev. William F. Schulz, affiliate community minister
Joe Cleveland, ministerial intern
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Janet Welby, youth choir director
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Upcoming Services

Sunday, December 11 at 9 & 11AM

"Everywhere, There is Light"
Joe Cleveland preaching

The holidays are all about family and togetherness. But what if we feel left out?

Sunday, December 18

at 10:00AM

Annual Carol Sing

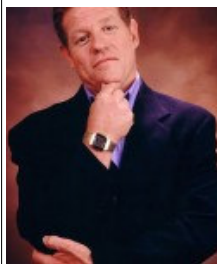
First Parish's Music/Choir Director Brad Conner will lead us in singing everyone's favorite carols and telling a holiday story.



at 4:00PM "Prepare Ye the Way...to Occupy the Holidays!"

Led by First Parish Staff & guest Jimmy Tingle (rhymes with jingle)

Festive holiday revelry for the whole family! Jimmy Tingle is a stand-up comic, social and political humorist, actor, writer and activist. Plan to linger, bring food to share...and party! It's time to celebrate the completion of our *-Bility* project. Over the last three years, we have participated in the development of the plans, the financing and the project management. Let's now pause to use our space and our elevator to celebrate what we have accomplished with a party to follow our 4PM revelry. We'll need contributions of finger food, as well as volunteers to set-up & clean-up. Please contact Natalie Brierley if you can help.



Jimmy Tingle was the American correspondent for Sir David Frost's show for PBS and the BBC, The Strategic Humor Initiative. He completed two seasons with 60 Minutes II as the humorist/commentator in the Andy Rooney spot. He worked as a contributor and satirist for MSNBC and has appeared on Tough Crowd with Colin Quinn, The Tonight Show, Larry King's Weekend, Late Night with Conan O'Brien, The Late Late Show with Tom Snyder, The American Comedy Awards, as well as his own HBO comedy special. Tingle appeared in Chris Rock's film, Head of State. Other film credits include Next Stop Wonderland, Boondock Saints, and By the Sea. Jimmy also starred in the Emmy Award-winning documentary on art censorship, "Damned in the USA." He is a "Best of Boston" performer and producer.

Service descriptions continued on p. 2

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Upcoming Services *(continued from page 1)*

Saturday, December 24

at 4PM

Intergenerational Christmas Eve Service

This is our special time for reflection of the meaning of Christmas with story, carols and candle-lighting in the darkened sanctuary. The Junior & Senior Youth Choirs along with KidSing will be performing. Kids are invited to bring small (barnyard) animals to place with the other animals and people of Bethlehem in our nativity scene during the service. Through a program with the UU Partner Church Council, our church sponsors Karlisle Pierra, a UU child in the Philippines, to attend school. The collection taken at this service helps to fund this sponsorship. All are invited to join us in the miracle and beauty of the evening. Childcare will be available at both services on Christmas Eve.

at 8PM *(NOTE: Prelude music will begin at 7:45)*

Traditional Christmas Eve Service of Carols & Candles

*with a homily by Rev. Megan Lynes, music by the First Parish Choir, soloists and orchestra
featuring excerpts from Vivaldi's "Gloria" and other "Italian" carols*



Sunday, December 25, Christmas Morning

Though we will not have a service on December 25, we are obliged to ring our steeple bell. You see, the bell was given in 1926 by Clara Blinn who directed that "this is a Christmas Bell as well as a Memorial Bell to be rung on Christmas Day in the morning." Cast at the foundry of the Meneely Bell Company at Troy, NY, it weighs 1500 lbs and its tone is the Key of G. Come at, say, 10am, if you'd like to join in the pealing.

And, speaking of pealing, it is also tradition to ring the bell at midnight on New Year's Eve. Last year the accompanied singing was raucous. It is unlikely that this year's chorus will be any more sedate.



Sunday, January 1, 2012 at 10AM

Religious Recycling Service

Phil Vitiello coordinating, with Steve Sussman playing piano

Many of us were raised in other religious traditions before finding our way to Unitarian Universalism and to First Parish in Bedford. As the New Year begins, this service will look back at our religious roots, how they affected us for better or for worse, how we found our way to UUism, what we discarded, and what we retained along the way. I'd like to reflect particularly on what we may have rediscovered in our rejected traditions that continue to inform our spiritual journey. The service will include personal experiences by parishioners, music from various religious traditions, and time for people to share their reflections on how their religious past impacts their current religious/spiritual life.

The Bedford Lyceum

A Forum on the Arts, Spirituality, Science, and Justice

December 11 at 10AM: "Unintelligent Design" with Abby Hafer. Why do men's testicles hang outside the body? Why does our appendix sometimes explode and kill us? And who does God like better, anyway – us, or squid? These and other questions are addressed in *Unintelligent Design—Why Evolution Explains the Human Body and Intelligent Design Does Not*. Abby argues that the human body has many faulty design features that would never have been the choice of an intelligent creator. She also points out other animals that got better body parts and disposes of the idea of irreducible complexity. Her points are illustrated with pictures, wit and erudition. Abby is a Senior Lecturer at Curry College, where she teaches human anatomy and physiology. She earned her D.Phil. in zoology from Oxford University.

NOTE: The Bedford Lyceum will be on sabbatical for the holidays from Dec. 18 until Jan. 8.

Shop (so you won't) Drop!

As you begin your Christmas shopping, keep in mind that you can benefit First Parish through your online shopping at no additional cost to yourself. From the First Parish home page (www.uubedford.org), click on "Shop to support First Parish," then click on the Amazon or Powell's link. Better yet, replace your current bookmarks for Amazon and Powell's with www.tinyurl.com/amazon-uubedford or www.tinyurl.com/powells-uubedford. First Parish earns a commission on all purchases originated through these links all year round!

Mike Boczenowski

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
amazon.com

powells.com

Megan's Corner...

On **January 22nd at 3PM**, our congregation will gather for a celebration of ministry at First Parish. The day is momentous for all of us. For me, it is the first time I will enter into a covenanted relationship formally with a congregation. For First Parish, it is the first time you will ever have two called ministers, formally installed and serving together.

In our religious tradition, no right is more precious than that of a free congregation to choose its minister. By the same token, no right is more precious to a minister than the freedom of association with a chosen congregation. The **Act of Installation**, marking the bonding of a congregation and a minister, symbolizes a covenant between the people of the congregation and its minister. This covenant is based on mutual choice and sustained by the honor and integrity of all concerned. It is a covenant, not of law, but of the spirit. It symbolizes a mutual commitment, an affirmation of shared trust and responsibility and love.

At the Installation, the Rev. Rosemary Lloyd, who has been my UU mentor for the last three years, will preach. She is the Associate Minister at the First Church in Boston. Rev. Carl Scovel and Rev. Diane Teichert will also take part in the service. There will be many ministers, but most importantly there will be all of YOU. The congregation is really the essential part of the ceremony. You are the living tradition, and it is with you that I am ready to promise to walk together in the ways according to love.




BOARD MATTERS

On January 29 the parish will determine whether we will continue the current practice of two services most Sundays next year. In preparation for that decision, we have December and January to evaluate how we think the model serves our community. There will be at least two open forums during the month of January and the discussion list is also an option for conversation. Recent postings on the discussion list have expressed regret for the lack of talk-back following the second service. It was a reminder that this long-time practice of providing an opportunity for discussion of the sermon is missed by some parishioners. The changes in Sunday morning this year did include the designation of a time and space for post-service discussion. It has not been implemented due to conflicting demands on our staff. However, the comments made me recognize that we haven't thought creatively about a new approach that is not dependent on staff participation. What about a volunteer moderator who would facilitate the post-service discussion? The minister of the day would participate as s/he is able given other demands. Is there a volunteer willing to give it a try? Our growth has necessitated adaptation. That many of us regret the loss of some of our past experience is understandable. Prior to January 29's decision, let's engage in an active, respectful conversation about what we like or don't like about two services and what adjustments or alternatives we may want to consider.

Joan Bowen, Parish Board President

Members: Mike Boczenowski, Sandy Ferreira, Margaret Jackson, Bob Johnson, Diane Martin and Dave Packer



Open Forums: Jan. 15, 11:45 & January 22 at 12:45PM

Special Parish Meeting: January 29 at 12:45PM, Childcare provided.

Pastoral Walks

We are beginning a series of Pastoral Walks at Great Meadows conservation land with local wildlife expert Alan Bragg, and one or more ministers. (*Pastoral... see?*) Meet at the Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge parking lot in Concord. Entrance is off Rt 62 and close to 166 Monsen Rd look for a single lane road bordered by stockade fences. Call Alan for details: 339-545-1737. Our first walk will be **Dec. 16 at 10AM.**



Alan, John, Megan and Joe



**Welcome
New
Members!**

On November 13, we welcomed 15 new members: Geoff Speare, Prameela Burugu, Mollie Gorman, Carla Bradford, Paul Bradford, Hilarie Jutras, Marie Ryder, Isabella Yannoni, Patrick Oates, Teresa Lynagh, Clarise Patton, Sarah Lance, David Lance, Alex Werbos, Kallie Hedberg.

Then, just last Sunday, three others signed our book: Ginni & Dave Spencer and Sharon McClatchey. It is exciting and humbling to be part of this growing community where so many have entrusted their spiritual lives.

A Survey for First Parishioners



The Religious Education Committee wants to hear from all First Parishioners! We are taking stock of our program and your opinions matter. The survey, which will be available in January, asks questions about your experiences with the program. We want the perspectives of all parishioners whether or not you have children in the program. We will also want to hear from those who have taught RE and those who have never even considered teaching. So, ALL are invited and encouraged to participate.

The survey will be administered through Survey Monkey. What this means for you is that you may receive the survey electronically through a link in an email or on the church website. The survey will also be available on paper if you don't have computer access. Your responses are anonymous and confidential. Survey Monkey takes your answers and tabulates the results. Survey administrators do not see who completed the surveys. The RE Committee will take the results, share them back with the church community and use them to improve the RE program. We look forward to hearing from you in the new year!

Kristina Philipson, Chair, RE Committee

AIDS Quilt Squares on View Dec. 4-11

Panels from the AIDS Quilt are on display in our Sanctuary until December 11. If you didn't see them on Sunday, feel free to drop by the church during the week between 10AM to 4PM daily to view them.

Since the onset of AIDS in the 1970's, family members and friends of those who died with AIDS have been designing and stitching together 12'x12' blocks about their relatives. These thousand-plus blocks have been sewn together into the largest piece of community folk art in the world. The quilt now weighs well over 55 tons and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989.

Despite medical advances in the treatment of AIDS, researchers stress the need for vigilance in the pursuit of a cure as AIDS continues to spread world-wide. These poignant panels can serve to remind us of not only our own lost friends and relatives but of the millions who have died of AIDS around the world.

Lois Pulliam and Sandra Ferreira



First Parish Potluck & Yankee Swap!

For people in their 20's & 30's

Wednesday, Dec. 14th at 6:30 PM

At the home of Kallie Hedberg and Alex Werbos,
24 Marion Rd, Bedford (Near First Parish)

What to Bring? A potluck dish to share and a \$5 (or under) gift for our swap.

Contact Megan[mlynes@uubedford.org] to let her know: if you're coming, if you need childcare, what you'll bring.

Sunday Morning Tasks

Here are the assignments for the next two weeks. Tasks through Jan. 22 are posted on the rolling bulletin board. Please note that there is no service on Christmas morning, but the church will be open for those who might gather for coffee and conversation. The annual Cusp Service is on Jan. 1, New Year's Day. There are no designated helpers for either of these dates. If you're attending, please consider putting on the coffee or acting as a greeter. Sharing in the tasks of ushering and providing coffee is very much appreciated so thank-you! Please notify the church office (office@uubedford.org) if someone is stepping in to take your place on your assigned date.

December 11:

9AM Ushers:

Joan Turnberg, Melinda Ballou, Richard Krusemark, OPEN

9AM Coffee:

Althea Clark, Paul Turner, Craig Coldwell

9AM Greeter:

Janice Young

11AM Ushers:

Allan Tate, Tom Einstein, Maria Green, OPEN

11AM Coffee:

Cathy Van Praagh, Sarah Thompson, Naomi Dogan-West

11AM Greeter:

Bill Knox

Coffee/Usher Subs:

Rebekah Jones, Fran & Bob Tyler

December 18:

10AM Coffee:

Chris Lanich, Gail Black-Smith, Sue McCombs

10AM Greeter:

Bea Brunkhorst

4PM Ushers:

Maria Green, Doris Smith, OPEN

4PM Coffee:

Sandy Ferreira, Dee Russell, Diane Martin

4PM Greeters:

Corinne Doud, Linda Pollitz

Notes from the MUSIC DIRECTOR

"(Music) is the most human of the arts, the closest to the religious impulse. It is the web we weave across the chasm of time and space, making one community of all who have ever lived, sending a message to those who shall inherit this world from our hands. And this is the message: This is our song, received from those who were here before us, enriched by our living; sing our song with your voices, make it sing with your instruments and the silence which has fallen on us will be broken.

—David Bumbaugh, UU Minister, Summit, NJ
(passed along to me by Dot Ellis)

Dec. 11 (9 & 11): I'll be playing piano and Liz Connors will be joining me on clarinet to perform a duet by Robert Schumann. I'll also play a jazzy piano solo. Liz & I are also planning to collaborate with Cynthia Mork & Larry Herz on a hauntingly beautiful arrangement of a tune by Maurice Ravel (using the text of the Advent Carol "O Come, O Come Emmanuel") entitled "Pavane for the End of Darkness."

Dec. 18 (10AM): I'm hosting my annual holiday sing along with an appropriate story (which may have something to do with a nut-cracker!). Each year since I've started doing this, the attendance has gotten bigger (and more fun). We'll be singing holiday favorites, both secular and sacred, chosen by those adults and youth in attendance.

Dec. 18 (4PM): Carol Hamilton will be playing organ and there will be holiday carol singing and other musical surprises to fit the jovial mood of the service.

Dec. 24, Christmas Eve (4PM): This service will feature the youth choirs under the direction of Janet Welby and KidSing under the direction of Carol Hamilton. Carol will be playing organ, Steve Sussman will be playing piano, and Carol Epple will also be adding her astonishing flute talents. All in all, it promises to be an uplifting way for families to spend time together on Christmas Eve.

Dec. 24, Christmas Eve (8PM) [Note: Prelude music will begin at 7:45]: The adult choir has some fantastic musical treats ready for you! The musical theme of the service is "Italian" and the adult choir with orchestra and soloists will be presenting excerpts from Antonio Vivaldi's much beloved "Gloria" (in my opinion, second in popularity for holiday classical music only behind Handel's "Messiah") along with an Italian carol and Pietro Yon's sublime "Gésu Bambino". Choir and congregation will also be singing some familiar Christmas Carols including "O Come All Ye Faithful", "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" and "Silent Night" (the latter accompanied by mandolin; what could be more Italian than that?)

Dec. 25: Every musician knows that in music the rests are as important as the notes. In the case of Christmas Day, the musicians will be taking a rest, but the church will be open for some coffee, tea and social time.

Sunday, January 1 (one service at 10AM): Steve Sussman will be playing piano for this service. As usual whenever Steve plays, it will be a delightful treat to begin the new year.

Choir rehearsals for the adult choir are on Thursdays, 7:30-9PM in the sanctuary. The adult choir sings on average a couple of times a month. Have you thought about joining the adult choir? Now is a great time to do that! I hope you will give it some thought. We've got some terrific plans for the spring climaxing with Music Sunday which will be a salute to the music of "The Beatles". Isn't it time you made a commitment and joined? You won't regret the joy it will bring to your life!

Brad Conner, Music Director

Pull Out the Stops!... If you enjoyed the outstanding organ concert with William Haller back in October, you won't want to miss this one coming up! On Sunday, Dec. 11th at 4PM, the second fundraising concert celebrating our own Hook & Hastings pipe organ will take place in the sanctuary when organist/pianist Terry Halco returns to First Parish for a concert of holiday music. Halco is the accompanist for Chorus pro Musica, Musica Sacra and other choruses in Boston. The program (revised since last month) will feature Halco on organ and piano, joined by Janet Welby, piano; Carlough Faulkner-Carroll, violin; Carol Epple, flute; and Cynthia Mork, mezzo soprano. The program will include seasonal works of J.S. Bach, Helmut Walcha, Franz Liszt, Corelli, Marohnic, Martin and others. There will be a chance to sing along with some holiday favorites, and a reception with light refreshments. Visit the music page at uubedford.org to learn more about Terry Halco and our pipe organ. Suggested donation: \$10 adults, \$5 Seniors/Students. Age 12 and under free. Proceeds to benefit First Parish. A special collection will be taken for the Bedford Community Table/Pantry.

Cynthia Mork and Donna Cole
(Co-chairs, Music Committee)

Calling All Voices!

Annual VA Holiday Sing

Tuesday, December 13, 7PM

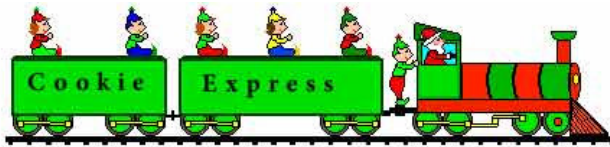
Bedford V.A. Hospital, 200 Springs Rd.

The church is leaving the building! We hope you will come, because it's not just about the choir and ministers – it's about you reaching out to our Vets and letting them know that you still care, just by being there and sharing your energy with them. Volunteers to help move the vets there and back to their rooms are appreciated. Email Linda Pollitz with any questions at linda.pollitiz@gmail.com.

The Best of First Parish Adult Choir CD's are in!

If you haven't already, pick yours up at coffee hour this Sunday, Dec. 11. If you haven't prepaid, don't forget to bring a check or cash. GOOD NEWS – We ordered extras! But there is a limited supply, so don't miss this chance to bring a little piece of First Parish home or to share it with a friend. CD's are \$17 each, with proceeds to benefit First Parish. Thanks to all for your appreciation of our music and support of First Parish!

Cynthia Mork and Donna Cole



Santa's Cookie Express is rolling again. Last year our generous FP elves baked, packaged and delivered cookies to at least 45 of our members and friends who don't get out and around much anymore. If you'd like to hop aboard the Express, bring 2 dozen homemade or fancy bakery cookies to the Common Room promptly at 12:00 pm on Saturday, Dec. 17th. Contact us if you can contribute; also, let us know if you would like to be an assembly elf or a delivery elf. Santa's Coordinators Maria Green (mdgreen42@gmail.com) and Sandy Boczenowski (sandyboz@gmail.com) and especially Santa thank you!



Winter Solstice Sunrise

*..And so the shortest day came
And the year died
And everywhere down the centuries
of the snow-white world
Came people singing, dancing
To drive the dark away
Let's all proclaim together—
"Welcome Yule, WELCOME "YULE!!!*

On Thursday, **December 22 at 7AM**, join fellow parishioners, family and friends to drive the dark away by singing up the winter solstice sunrise at Fawn Lake. We will meet in the Fawn Lake parking lot on Sweetwater Ave (on the right, past the Lane school) and proceed down to the lake shortly past 7AM. The spot we've picked is quite close to the parking lot, so we'll keep an eye out for more people as we await the sun. It's helpful to know who is coming, so RSVP if you can.

If you are unable to greet the returning sun join us afterward for our own brand of sunshine. We will return to the church around 7:45AM and share a light breakfast snack – please bring what you can (don't worry if you can't) – this is all very informal and potluck. It will be what we make it.

For more info or questions, contact Dawn LaFrance-Linden at 781-275-3296.



8th Annual Wish-List Tree Project

First Parishioners and friends have been faithful supporters of the Lowell Transitional Living Center for the previous 7 years by contributing new, basic clothing and personal care items through the Wish-List Tree Project. The need for these items is even greater than it was in 2004 due to the economy. Any item you decide to donate – whether new, warm socks or a tube of Chapstick – will be greatly appreciated by these adults. The details are spelled out on the wall behind the tree. Thank you once again for your support!

Sandy Ferreira, coordinator



SOUP'S ON!

Newcomers and recent new members are cordially invited to attend Soup's On, a luncheon sponsored by the Membership Committee, on **Sunday, January 15**, at 11:45AM in the Common Room. This event is for newcomers and new members to meet and connect, as well as to know who's who in the church. This is a family-friendly event. The bonus is warming yourself with a variety of delicious homemade soups...perfect for a snow-infused winter! Please let the office know if you will attend and if you are interested in childcare.

Warmly,

Linda Pollitz, Membership Committee Chair

Hungarian Soup's On and Movie Viewing Sunday, January 8, 12:15-2:15PM (ish)

The Partner Church Committee would like to invite you to a Hungarian Soup luncheon followed by a viewing of the second installment of Ron Cordes' six-part series detailing the history of Unitarian and Universalist thought from the beginning of the Christian era to what we know today at Unitarian Universalism. Part II takes us to what is now Central Europe and Transylvania where we will meet Michael Servetus, David Ferenc and others who led the formation of the first coherent Unitarian theology in the sixteenth century and follows their influence up to the emigration of Joseph Priestley from England to America in 1794. Following the movie, plans for this summer's upcoming trip to Transylvania will be shared. We hope you will join us.

Donations for lunch will be graciously accepted and will be put toward paying for travel expenses for our Abasfalvan friends to tour the "High Holy" places of Transylvania with us this summer.

Sarah Dorer, for the Partner Church Committee



December 20 at 6PM

Third Tuesday Dinner is a catered meal held each month. It is a time to forge connections within and across generations and to share our efforts to change the world and ourselves. The meal is vegetarian and the cost is:

Adults \$9; Kids \$5 (ages 2-13)

Please RSVP to Joan in the office (office@uubedford.org) by Monday December 19 and let her know the number attending and whether the adult members of your party will be on set-up or clean-up crew. (We are always short of clean-up crew- please, please, please pick that one!)

If you don't like being surprised by the catered meal and/or have food allergies, please feel free to bring your own meal (including dessert, if you wish), but still contact Joan to make sure our headcount is accurate for chairs.

Christine Jesensky Bennett

Please Help Prevent Sore Bottoms!

Many of the Iraqi families that LIFT (Lowell Iraqi Families Team) helps to support have young children. After getting several requests from the families for additional diapers, we decided to find out why they were requesting them. Don't they get them via WIC or other government agencies? The answer is NO. They buy them at the grocery store like the rest of us. And they are costly. It is estimated that it can cost a minimum of \$400 per year per child, or a little more than a dollar per day to diaper a baby. An extensive check on the internet, along with a few calls to local and regional agencies, yielded no free diapers but scads of information about how difficult it is for low income families to find diaper support. Even the few agencies that do give support have frozen their funds or only serve a limited area, because the demand is so great.

At present, there are 12 families with 15 children in diapers. We would like to offer some relief to these families by offering diapers to them. We have yet to work out the logistics for how we might do this (knowing that bulk orders of diapers could rapidly fill our garages!). However, would you consider donating to LIFT's Diaper Fund? Your \$ donations are always appreciated and would go a long way in reducing sore bottoms.

To make a donation to LIFT: For \$ donations, please click the "Donate" button on the LIFT web site (tinyURL.com/LIFTTeam) or send a check made out to 'First Parish in Bedford' with 'LIFT Diaper Fund' in the memo line. Donations to the church are tax deductible. Your company may match your donation, so please check if that is the case. Send checks to First Parish in Bedford, 75 Great Rd. Bedford, MA 01730. Thank you very much for helping.!

Charlie Frean & Chris Rabinowitz, LIFT Team

Peace & Justice News

In addition to our on-going support of Equal Exchange and Fair Trade; Sustainable Agriculture thru New Entry CSA, and a Middle East Action/Study Group, Peace & Justice programming this church year will include "Immigration as a Moral Issue," "Economic Justice," and "Criminal Justice Issues/Prison Outreach" through our partnering with the Concord Prison Outreach Program (CPO) with First Parish as sponsoring faith group. Joanne Glover has volunteered to act as liaison to CPO.

Look for these coming events after the first of the year. On Saturday, **Jan. 14 at 7PM** we'll screen "Tony and Janina's American Wedding," a 'happy ending' feature-length documentary which gets to the heart of the broken US immigration system. The film's director is hoping to screen the film at next year's GA in Phoenix. We'll also host a **Jan. 15 Lyceum** with guest speaker Laura Rotolo, attorney with MA ACLU who'll speak about the controversial Secure Communities Program which Gov. Patrick has refused to endorse. On Saturday **Feb. 11** there'll be an opportunity to meet and hear from John Schuchardt, founder of The House of Peace in Ipswich. John is an expert on Middle East issues and will bring us up to date on the current state of Arab Spring. Stay tuned for more upcoming opportunities and events.

If you are new to First Parish or if you always been here and have an interest in participating in our social justice work, feel free to come to our next meeting, Wednesday, **Dec. 14 7:00-8:30PM** at the church or contact Joe Pompei for more info (joepompei@comcast.net).

F.P. Peace and Justice Group and Concord Prison Outreach invite you to come help us sort items and prepare gift bags weekday mornings through Dec. 13th 9:00AM to 12:30PM at Trinity Episcopal Church in Concord.

Joanne Glover [joglo.mac@mac.com]



Stop & Shop Gift Cards

can be an excellent gift or donation for the holidays. Don't know what to give someone – how about a grocery gift card? Some of our parishioners purchase the cards and give them to needy families, individuals or charities, such as the Bedford Community Table and Food Pantry or to our ministers who regularly receive requests for help. Stop by the table at coffee hour to learn more or purchase cards. Cards can also be purchased at the church office during the week. Pick up a copy of our new information sheet on the advantages of buying grocery cards.

George Epple

The UUSC-UUA JustWorks Trip to Haiti – April 28th to May 5th, 2012

(A message from Megan: “Hi Everyone, I’m saving up to go on this service trip because I want to put my faith in action, and I know my two good hands can make a difference. I trust the UUSC, and I support their good work. I know I will come back with inspiration to share, new connections, a more open heart and mind, and I’d love to be on this service trip with you. Will you consider joining me?”)

On this weeklong trip, participants will work with members of the Papaye Peasant Movement (MPP), a UU Service Committee partner, on projects to help former Port-au-Prince residents build new lives in rural Haiti. Every morning, participants will work with Haitian peasants to build new homes, construct food gardens from old tires, or contribute to other sustainability projects. The afternoons will be spent in dialogue with local MPP members, and trained UUSC staff leaders in a creative learning environment, understanding challenges facing rural Haiti.

MPP is one of Haiti’s oldest and largest peasant organizations. After the earthquake last year, MPP worked with UUSC to construct a new village for Port-au-Prince residents displaced by the January 2010 earthquake. The new settlement, called an “eco-village,” seeks to be completely sustainable. Residents of the eco-village are growing enough food not only to feed their families but also to sell for income. Before being mentored by current MPP members, none of the eco-village residents knew how to farm. On this trip, participants will work on the eco-village or on similar sustainability projects.

Trip Leaders: Evan Seitz, UUSC Assoc. for Experiential Learning and Youth Services and Wendy Flick, UUSC Haiti Emergency Response Manager.

For ages: 18 and over. Teenagers who are 16 or 17 may participate with permission from UUSC and if they are accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Dates: 4/28/2012 - 5/05/2012

Cost: All adults \$1,200; Fellowshipped ministers, religious education professionals, and lay leaders engaged in justice work, \$900; Seminarians, youth (16-17), and young adults (18-35) with demonstrated interest in advancing justice, \$600. Airfare is not included. Don’t let cost deter you as assistance may be available from First Parish.

Megan Lynes has applied. Speak to her or John Gibbons if you’re at all interested! Application deadline is Feb. 5th.

News from the Parish Nose

Craig Jackson is back in gear after a nasty tumble off his bike. *Laurie Groves* is recovering from foot surgery, *Merc Kane* from hip surgery, and *Nancy Forrest* from back surgery. *Lisa Tohline’s* daughter *Karen* is doing well with new chemo treatments for her eyes. A group of around 20 parishioners and friends gathered for a Thanksgiving meal in our Common Room, organized by DJ Prowell. Congratulations to *Aron Barabás* who became a US citizen on November 30. We first met Aron when we visited Abásfalva in 1994. What a long, strange and wonderful trip it’s been! —*tpn* (nose@uubedford.org)



Beloved parishioner Jack Regan died on Nov. 10, surrounded by family and dear friends. An extraordinary memorial service was held at First Parish on Nov. 20. Our thoughts are with his sons Griffin & Ben, his unbelievably attentive friend Gail Black Smith, and all who touched and were touched by Jack’s life. A Jack Regan Memorial Fund has been established at First Parish.

Elizabeth Dorer, Bob’s mother, was remembered at a memorial service in Newton with John Gibbons officiating.

Sadly, we also note the death of Judy Emmons. Her memorial service will be on January 6 at 2PM at the First Parish in Lincoln where Roger Paine, Megan Lynes and John Gibbons will officiate. Judy was an activist, a generous supporter of her churches, UUSC and the UU Urban Ministry, and many other good causes. She once exuded her affection for First Parish Bedford and our “circus-like atmosphere.”

Alice McLaughlin and Dan Cheever, lifelong Unitarians and attendees of the UU Discussion Group at Carleton Willard both passed away in November

On November 11, John Gibbons officiated at the joyous wedding of David Kalloch (Jeannie Balfour’s son) and Kim Petrino. Congratulations!

December and January Caring Network

If you or someone you know at First Parish needs short term urgent help with meals, rides to medical appointments or a few errands, please call us. The Caring Network coordinators and volunteers can help cook and drive and do errands. Call us if you need help! During December call Julia Bosomworth at 781-275-7079; in January call Sue McCombs 781-275-5385.

Jean Balfour, Chair
781-275-4556 jebalfour@verizon.net



...to my First Parish family, for all the support and good vibes sent my way during my recent convalescence! I was wrapped not only in a comfort shawl (made by Emily King) but a huge blanket of love in the form of cards, phone calls, food, flowers, and rides! My cup runneth over!

~*Merc Kane*



First Parish Upcoming Events



| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| <p><i>December 4</i></p> <p>9:00 am + 11 Church Service (S) 10:00 am Bedford Lyceum (202) 10:00 am FP BP Clinic 12:45 pm Pers Com (204) 5:30 pm -8:30 OWL (BR) 6:00 pm -9 Coming of Age (COM+K) 7:00 pm -9 Sr Youth Grp (202) 7:00 pm -9:30 FP Bridge Grp (204) <i>Newsletter deadline</i></p> | <p><i>December 5</i></p> <p>7:00 pm -8:30 SMART Recovery (L02)</p> | <p><i>December 6</i></p> <p>7:00 pm Parish Board (204) 7:00 pm RE Committee 7:30 pm -9 Al-Anon Mtg (202) 7:30 pm Endowment Com</p> | <p><i>December 7</i></p> <p>7:30 pm Guest speaker (202) <i>Mark Kiyimba of the New Life School in Uganda Parishioner published</i></p> | <p><i>December 8</i></p> <p>9:30 am -11 Short Stories Grp (202) 3:15 pm -4:15 Jr Youth Choir (COM) 3:45 pm -4:30 KidSing (202+204) 5:30 pm -6:30 Sr Youth Choir (COM) 7:00 pm Tree Lighting on the Common 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm Choir Reh (S)</p> | <p><i>December 9</i></p> <p>5:30 pm [FP serves at Lowell Trans Ctr]</p> | <p><i>December 10</i></p> <p>2:00 pm -5 Sr Youth Grp babysitting (COM)</p> |
| <p><i>December 11</i></p> <p>9:00 am + 11 Church Service (S) 10:00 am Bedford Lyceum (202) 4:00 pm FP Music Event (S+BR+202) 5:00 pm -8:00 RE Teacher Bridging Dinner (COM+ classrooms) 7:00 pm -9 Sr Youth Grp (202) 7:00 pm -9:30 FP Bridge Grp (204)</p> | <p><i>December 12</i></p> <p>7:00 pm -8:30 SMART Recovery (L02)</p> | <p><i>December 13</i></p> <p>7:00 pm [FP Holiday Program at Bedford V.A.] 7:30 pm -9 Al-Anon Mtg (202)</p> | <p><i>December 14</i></p> <p>6:30 pm [20's&30's Potluck @ Kallie & Alex's] <i>contact Megan Lynes</i> 7:00 pm [Social Resp Council @ Nancy W's] 7:00 pm Peace & Justice Grp</p> | <p><i>December 15</i></p> <p>9:30 am -11 Short Stories Grp (202) 2:30 pm [FP disc group @ CWV] 3:15 pm -4:15 Jr Youth Choir (COM) 3:45 pm -4:30 KidSing (202+204) 5:30 pm -6:30 Sr Youth Choir (COM) 7:30 pm Lay Pastoral Care Team 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm Choir Reh (S)</p> | <p><i>December 16</i></p> | <p><i>December 17</i></p> <p>12:00 pm -3 Cookie express prep (COM+K)</p> |
| <p><i>December 18</i></p> <p>10:00 am Carol Sing (S) 4:00 pm Church Service (S) 7:00 pm -9 Sr Youth Grp (202) 7:00 pm -9:30 FP Bridge Grp (204)</p> | <p><i>December 19</i></p> <p>7:00 pm -8:30 SMART Recovery (L02)</p> | <p><i>December 20</i></p> <p>6:00 pm 3rd Tues Dinner (COM) 7:30 pm -9 Al-Anon Mtg (202) 7:30 pm Phys Plant Com</p> | <p><i>December 21</i></p> | <p><i>December 22</i></p> <p>9:30 am -11 Short Stories Grp (202) 3:15 pm -4:15 Jr Youth Choir (COM) 3:45 pm -4:30 KidSing (202+204) 5:30 pm -6:30 Sr Youth Choir (COM) 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm Choir Reh (S)</p> | <p><i>December 23</i></p> | <p><i>December 24</i></p> <p>4:00 pm Family Christmas Eve Service (S) 8:00 pm Traditional Christmas Eve Service (S) <i>Christmas Eve - Office Closed</i></p> |
| <p><i>December 25</i></p>  <p><i>Christmas - Office Closed</i></p> | <p><i>December 26</i></p> <p>7:00 pm -8:30 SMART Recovery (L02)</p> | <p><i>December 27</i></p> <p>7:30 pm -9 Al-Anon Mtg (202)</p> | <p><i>December 28</i></p> | <p><i>December 29</i></p> | <p><i>December 30</i></p> | <p><i>December 31</i></p>  <p><i>New Year's Eve - Office Closed</i></p> |
| <p><i>January 1</i></p> <p>10:00 am Church Service -one service only (S) <i>New Year's Day - Office Closed</i> <i>Newsletter deadline</i></p> | <p><i>January 2</i></p> <p>7:00 pm -8:30 SMART Recovery (L02)</p> | <p><i>January 3</i></p> <p>7:00 pm RE Committee 7:30 pm -9 Al-Anon Mtg (202) 7:30 pm Endowment Com</p> | <p><i>January 4</i></p> <p><i>Parishioner published</i></p> | <p><i>January 5</i></p> <p>9:30 am -11 Short Stories Grp (202) 3:15 pm -4:15 Jr Youth Choir (COM) 3:45 pm -4:30 KidSing (202+204) 5:30 pm -6:30 Sr Youth Choir (COM) 7:30 pm Partner Church Com 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm Choir Reh (COM)</p> | <p><i>January 6</i></p> <p>POTLUCK 7:00 pm First Friday Potluck (COM)</p> | <p><i>January 7</i></p> |
| <p><i>January 8</i></p> <p>9:00 am + 11 Church Service (S) 10:00 am Bedford Lyceum (202) 10:00 am FP BP Clinic 12:15 pm Hungarian Lunch (COM) 12:30 pm Hospitality Com 1:00 pm film viewing (202) 7:00 pm -9 Sr Youth Grp (202)</p> | <p><i>January 9</i></p> <p>7:00 pm -8:30 SMART Recovery (L02)</p> | <p><i>January 10</i></p> <p>7:00 pm Parish Board (204) 7:30 pm -9 Al-Anon Mtg (202)</p> | <p><i>January 11</i></p> <p>7:00 pm [Social Resp Council @ Nancy W's] 7:00 pm Peace & Justice Grp</p> | <p><i>January 12</i></p> <p>9:30 am -11 Short Stories Grp (202) 3:15 pm -4:15 Jr Youth Choir (COM) 3:45 pm -4:30 KidSing (202+204) 5:30 pm -6:30 Sr Youth Choir (COM) 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm Choir Reh (COM)</p> | <p><i>January 13</i></p> <p>5:30 pm [FP serves at Lowell Trans Ctr]</p> | <p><i>January 14</i></p> <p>7:00 pm Peace & Justice film (COM) <i>"Tony and Janina's American Wedding"</i></p> |

Bracketed events happen off-site -- All other events happen at the church