



May 2008

# First Parish News

## Upcoming Events:

- May 4<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday Service 10 am  
"Practicing Kindness"  
Rev. Marguerite Sheehan
- May 11<sup>th</sup>  
Congregational Meeting 10 am
- May 18<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday Service 10am  
Led by the children of First Parish
- May 25<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday Service 10am  
TBA  
Leslie Fraser, Guest Speaker
- May 31<sup>st</sup>  
Church breakfast  
8-10am \$6.00

Be sure to check out  
First Parish Website:

[northfieldunitarian.org](http://northfieldunitarian.org)

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*First Parish of Northfield Unitarian Monthly Newsletter*

## Announcements

### Preview of upcoming services:

June 1 Annual Meeting (No Service)  
8 Stephanie Ciccarello – Global Warming, What can we do?  
15 Rev. Marguerite Sheehan  
Followed by end-of-year picnic

### Sunday, May 11<sup>th</sup>

Join us for a Congregational Meeting led by our VERY OWN Paul Bocko!!

What is your history of involvement in the church? What do you see as the mission (not the mission statement) of the church and how has this changed or not over the past? What are the various ministries of the church? (the things we do to forward the mission of the church) What are your visions for the church? What do you see as the helps and the hindrances in going toward that vision? Just some of the questions you might think about before May 11<sup>th</sup>. Hopefully we will have time to review this year and do some long-range planning. What did we do right? What can we do better? The Parish Committee invites you to join in this discussion.

### Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>

On May 18 at 10am, the children will be leading the Sunday service and it should be filled with music, youthful energy, a story and lots of stuff that you have to see to believe. You will leave with more information about Unitarian Universalism and have had a great time. I don't want to divulge too much but please come and support the children of the church. We hope to make this an annual event and want to thank everyone who is helping to make May 18th a memorable event. Do NOT miss it! If you have questions, suggestions or a child who is not aware of the event, please contact Deb Potee.

### TAG SALE Saturday, May 10th

As you are cleaning out your closets, cupboards and storage areas put aside any GOOD ITEMS for our sale!! If you have any questions OR you would like to help, please call Marie Ferre or Betty Gibson.

### Summer Solstice Fundraiser Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup>

Featuring **local produce** and **local cooking**. Money raised will benefit Loaves and Fishes and Katie's Cupboard.

Looking for co-chair & committee to help organize this. Please contact Ruth Potee.  
**It's not too late to volunteer to help – the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting is this Sunday (5/4) before church!**

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### Keep Us In Mind!!

Fair weather painter looking for summer employment...(interior/exterior)... Experienced and reasonable.  
Looking for painting during July, but also if you have something you want done in the spring, let me know. I'm ready to break out from winter!! We also have a strapping 16 year old boy (Nick) looking to earn spring and summer money doing yard work and odd jobs....AND we have competent, trained babysitter(s) (Marykate is more available than Sophie) on hand to take care of childcare needs....

Call Steve and Carey

# Minister's Corner

Finally spring is really here – flowering trees, sunny days, black flies and spring peepers included. I am thrilled to see nature in all its beauty and I am guessing that most of you are well. Spring reminds us that even when times are tough, creative change is alive in the world and will not let us go. All we are asked to do is to pay attention and to respond with praise and care for this marvelous world. One of my favorite poets, Mary Oliver writes about how paying exquisite attention to the world teaches us how to celebrate.

“Don't flowers put on their  
prettiness each spring and  
go to it with  
everything they've got? Who

would criticize the bed of  
yellow tulips or the blue  
hyacinths?  
So put a

bracelet on your  
ankle with a  
bell on it and make a  
little music for

the earth beneath your foot....”

I am taking Mary Oliver's advice this spring and daring to make a little music for the earth beneath my feet. I am walking in the woods, singing to the trees and taking the risk to be silly. I am celebrating the life I am given and the life of First Parish. I am celebrating the children as they stand tall and proud and teach the grownups their new songs. I am celebrating the busting boxes of food from our Sunday food collection. And I am celebrating the friendships between the generations and the hope and love that all of us have for this community of faith.

We are coming closer to the end of our church year. At our congregational meeting on May 11<sup>th</sup> we will ask each other what it is that we each celebrate about First Parish? What have we brought of ourselves into this place and what are our dreams for our church. The following Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup> we will dedicate our Sunday service to the children in our midst and the excellent religious education program that Deb and all her helpers have created this year. On June 1<sup>st</sup> we will gather again for our Annual Meeting and on June 15<sup>th</sup> we will be closing out our church year with a Flower Celebration. These are all ways to pay close attention

to the life of our church. In our honoring this place and what it means to us I know that we will be astonished. And in our astonishment I would not be surprised if we feel called upon to put a bracelet on our ankles and dance.

In faith and celebration! Rev. Marguerite

## This Month in Unitarian Universalist History

This monthly column is dedicated to celebrating some milestones and anniversaries from Unitarian Universalist history. The information is taken from the book This Day in Unitarian Universalist History by Frank Shulman and this month there is also information taken from a paper presented at the Northfield Historical Society in June 1945.

May 1, 1933

On this day, the Humanist Manifesto was published. Signed by 39 prominent thinkers including seven Unitarian ministers and one Universalist minister, the Manifesto affirmed 14 points of religious humanism and became a rallying cry for liberal religion.

May 12, 1820

Florence Nightingale was born in Florence Italy on this day. She was a Unitarian nurse and superintendent of a hospital for invalid women in London. She volunteered for the Crimean War and took 38 nurses with her into the battle fields. Her work on army sanitary reform reduced the hospital mortality rates drastically. She died in 1910.

May 15, 1961

On this day the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America voted to consolidate to form the Unitarian Universalist Association (of which First Parish is a part!) The two denominations had already worked jointly on publication of religious education curriculum since the 1920's.

May 25, 1803

Ralph Waldo Emerson, Unitarian minister, poet, lecturer, essayist and Transcendental philosopher was born on this day in Boston. He spent most of his life living in Concord Massachusetts.

## Two Invitations to join Conversation Circle:

### Meet with us in May!

Everyone is invited to participate in our May Conversation Circle. We will be meeting on Tuesday May 13th (7PM) in the Webster Room for a structured conversation about a topic that will touch on our spiritual understandings of life. Last month we talked about what guides us in our various spiritual journeys. This month we will follow along with that theme by reflecting on the various understandings that we have about the divine. There will be time for listening, silence, personal sharing, and responding to the topic of the evening. Cookies too! Please come and join us for this opportunity in the middle of the month, middle of the week, to get to know each other and ourselves a bit more. Pass this information on to any friend (involved in the church or not) who might be interested but who may not be receiving our newsletter.

Rev. Marguerite

### First Parish Conversation Circles –

Just a little blurb to remind people to think about attending the conversation circles held once a month on a Tuesday night at our church.

We have had two meetings so far (1 in March and 1 in April). Each meeting is set with a "Theme for Reflection." The first meeting we talked about our spiritual roots and backgrounds. The second meeting we talked about what guides us.

I must say I find these meetings very uplifting and inspiring. I feel we can talk openly and without judgment. It's a great way to come together and share your spiritual experiences, beliefs, and concerns on a much more personal level. I find myself walking away from these meetings with a much deeper appreciation of myself and life in general. The other members offer positive feedback that has made me realize I am not alone with my thoughts.

Please join us as we learn and grow together spiritually. You will be glad you did!

Maureen Interlande

### **ONLINE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COURSES**

CLF (The Church of the Larger Fellowship) offers two free online courses - "A Chosen Faith Study Guide" and "The New UU". These are ongoing; you may start anytime and work at your own pace. Visit our Learning Center for more information, and the full schedule of class offerings. <http://clf.uua.org/learn/>

The Environmental Task Force  
Of the Hampshire Interfaith Council  
Presents

## ***Update on Environmental Legislation***

**Sunday, May 4, 2008 at 7 p.m.  
Quaker Meeting House,  
Northampton**

43 Center Street. (Between the Police  
Station and Masonic Bldg.)  
(Enter via the front door)

Speakers will include:

**State Representatives:**

**Ellen Story** (3<sup>rd</sup> Hampshire District)

**Peter Kocot** (1<sup>st</sup> Hampshire District)

**John Scibak** (2<sup>nd</sup> Hampshire District)

**State Senator:**

**Stan Rosenberg** (D-Hampshire-  
Franklin District)

**This is the ninth community discussion sponsored by the Environmental Task Force. These meetings have drawn many concerned citizens and have touched on a wide variety of important environmental concerns. This year's update will concentrate on this state's response to climate change, toxic chemicals, water, and the Environmental Bond Bill. Please use this opportunity to make your voice heard.**

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*"Every step the government, educational institutions, businesses and consumers can take from renewable energy and sustainable building practices to innovative regulations and "green living" is a step worth taking. No matter how small these contributions might seem, each and every one makes a difference."*

The State of Our Environment, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Commonwealth of MA

**Please note that this program is free. All are encouraged to come and to share their ideas. For more information, please call Jenny Fleming-Ives (586-4006) or Tina Clarke (549-6834).**