

**FIRST RELIGIOUS SOCIETY**

P.O. Box 817  
Carlisle, MA 01741

Address Service Requested

**Non-Profit Organization**  
**U.S. POSTAGE**  
**PAID**  
**Permit Number 10**  
**Carlisle, MA 01741**

**NEIGHBOURS & FELLOW CREATURES**

The First Religious Society in Carlisle

Unitarian Universalist  
A Welcoming Congregation

Volume XXXI, No. 7

December 4, 2006



WE ARE LOCATED IN CARLISLE CENTER OPPOSITE THE COMMON, JUST OFF ROUTE 225 AROUND THE CORNER FROM THE ONLY ROTARY IN TOWN. A CLASSIC NEW ENGLAND MEETING HOUSE WITH THE TOWN CLOCK IN THE STEEPLE. COME AS YOU ARE. "LOVE IS THE DOCTRINE OF THIS CHURCH, THE QUEST FOR TRUTH IS OUR SACRAMENT AND SERVICE IS OUR PRAYER."

**Newsletter for December 4, 2006**

**CHURCH INFORMATION**

**Church Service and Sunday School: Sunday at 10:30 a.m.**

Coffee Hour following services.

**Dates and details of church events on the Calendar on page 7 in this newsletter.**

**Church Office:** 978-369-5180; Fax no. 978-369-1891

**Web site:** www.uucarlisle.org **E-mail address:** frs@uucarlisle.org

**Church Mailing Address:** [including minister and all business]

PO Box 817, Carlisle, MA 01741-0817

**Minister: Tim Jensen** (study and home) 978-369-0284, (cell) 503-816-2859,

Email: uucleric@mindspring.com

**Minister Emeritus:** Dr. Eugene R. Widrick

**Parish Committee Co-Chair:** Suzanne Whitney Smith, 978-369-0922;

swsmeslrs@earthlink.net

**Parish Committee Co-Chair:** Lisa Sama, 978-692-6592, Email: lms@bostonbits.com

**Office Administrator:** Kathy Varney, 978-369-5180

**Religious Education Director:** Molly Sorrows, 978-371-2217,

Email: frs\_re@comcast.net

**Minister of Music:** Marguerite Shaw, 978-501-4220; Email: frsmusic@comcast.net

**Collector of Funds:** Charlie Davis, 978-371-2844; Email: cdavis@modavi.com

**Lay Minister:** Sally Hayen, 978-369-7591

**Membership Contact:** Sue Kirk, 978-371-0176

**Coffee Committee:** Gio DiNicola, Anne Ketchen, Richard Ketchen, Tom Rourk, Suzanne Whitney Smith, Jack O'Connor, Jenifer Bush

**THE ECLECTIC CLERIC**  
**"Counting Our Blessings"**

Last September, at the conclusion of my sermon on "The Plain Simple Truth About the Most Important Thing in the Universe" which I preached to begin our new program year, I described a spiritual practice I sometimes remember to practice myself, which involves waking up each morning with the question "What small thing can I do today, to make the world a little better?" and then recalling each evening before bedtime how lucky we are to be alive, and expressing gratitude for that gift.

Now I discover there is empirical, scientific proof that this simple discipline really works. Research inspired by the work of University of Pennsylvania psychologist Martin Seligman, author of books on "Learned Optimism" and "Authentic Happiness", has shown that individuals who each evening before going to bed habitually list three good things that have happened to them during the day, and briefly analyze WHY those things happened, report significantly higher levels of happiness after six months than the ungrateful control group.

Furthermore, after six months practice the experimental group also found it much easier to identify and remember the good things that

had happened to them during the day than they did at the beginning of the experiment, and at the end of the day could generally list far more than the required three. Counting our Blessings really does work! Doesn't it just make you feel good all over?

This past Autumn our theme here at FRS has been the dynamic relationship between the virtues of Gratitude and Generosity, and how an awareness of the many ways we have been blessed in life can and should inspire us to share our gifts with others. We wrapped up this theme the week of Thanksgiving with two related sermons on "Debts of Gratitude" and "Labors of Love," in which Gratitude and Generosity were themselves connected to a larger panoply of spiritual virtues, which include Empathy and Trustworthiness, Compassion, Understanding and Forgiveness, and finally Discipline and Sacrifice: two essential qualities which allow us to become organized and committed spiritual "learners," and to "make sacred" the things we truly value by devoting them to the service of higher and more worthy purposes.

Now, in December, we turn our attention to the celebration of the holiday season -- always a special time at The First Religious

**THE ECLECTIC CLERIC** *(continued)*

Society in Carlisle. And then in January we will shift our attention to the themes of Honoring Our Past and Visioning Our Future, as we prepare ourselves for our all-Church “Visioning Event” on Saturday, February 10th, facilitated by our District Executive Lynn Thomas.

You’ll be hearing a lot more about all this in days to come. But in the meantime I encourage you all to be thinking about your dreams for the future of FRS, and how by working together with one another we can make these dreams come true. And for those of you who haven’t been with us in church that much this fall, here’s another quick reminder that thanks to the labors of webmaster Bob Luoma, the texts of all my sermons are now easily available through the FRS website. It’s not the same (for me, at least) as looking out into the sanctuary and seeing your smiling faces sitting in the congregation on Sunday mornings. But at least now you don’t need to feel like you’re “out of the loop” if you happen to miss a few Sundays. We miss you when we don’t see you. Which is why we hope to see you again soon.....twj

**GREENS SALE THANKS**

**Gingerbread House Kits:** Helen Lyons acted as chairman with the help of Mary Hult and the youth group with their mothers and fathers. This was truly an intergenerational event filled with laughter, much patience and, of course, hard work. We appreciate the 50 kits we’ll sell at the Greens Sale!

**Sanctuary Decorations:** We are delighted with the new Christmas decorations designed by Kathy Booth and Karen Dunkers. Their committee of Donna Cantrill and Sally Naumann helped make nearly 50 bright, shining new bows, spray pine cones gold and re-assemble everything. It took hours but what a most beautiful way to share their fine creative talents with all. They surely have brightened our spirits for the Christmas Season! We send a huge “Thank You” to all who helped. Merry Christmas, Janice Kissinger

**Inside this issue:**

<i>Christmas Eve Nativity Bell Ringing</i>	4
<i>Greens Sale Update</i>	4
<i>A Supportive Gathering</i>	5
<i>Circle Dinner Extravaganza</i>	5
<i>Habitat Fundraiser</i>	6
<i>Staff and Office Schedule</i>	6
<i>Calendar</i>	7

**Boxwood Tree Workshop:** Thanks goes to our talented chairman, Sue Stengrevics! We had a fun and most successful workshop. Each of the 48 trees is different and beautiful. I met at least 5 new people and enjoyed the young ladies who helped. Thanks to all who helped.

**Please view the FRS calendar on our website under “Calendar”.**

All are welcome to attend Parish Committee meetings, except in cases of executive sessions

FRS Committee meetings are open to any interested party. To address a committee on a specific issue please contact the committee chair.

Next Newsletter Deadline is  
If you would like to be added to or removed from the newsletter mailing list please call or email the church office.

## HABITAT FOR HUMANITY FUND RAISER

The Habitat for Humanity fund raiser featuring the very cool Blues Band "Scrumdaddy" raised \$1260 and gave the participants a very entertaining evening of good music, good food and good fun. Union Hall was transformed into a welcoming candlelit Blues Club with the delicious aroma of tasty appetizers replacing the traditional night club aroma (stink) of stale beer and cigarette smoke. High Output donated all the wonderful lights that made the band look as professional as they sounded. Work gloves and carpentry tools decorating the tables helped evoke the purpose of the evening to raise money for Habitat for Humanity of Greater Lowell. Many thanks to Dian and Bill Cuccinello, the true movers and shakers of the event who worked so hard to make the evening successful. A heartfelt thank you to the ticket takers Marguerite Shaw and Ellen Huber, and the set-up, cooking and cleaning crew, Margaret Darling, Bob and Peter Fox, Alison and Mike Saylor, and Pam Woodhull. Thank you all who attended the event, and to those who did not; you missed a wonderful evening right here in Carlisle!

## STAFF AND OFFICE SCHEDULE

**Church Office Hours:** The church office will be open between the hours of 8:00am and 1:30pm on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. The office will be closed on Tuesdays.

**Minister Office Hours:** Tim is generally available at church most mornings when the church office is open and other times by appointment. It is always a good idea to call in advance. You can reach him at 978-369-0284 (study or home), 503-816-2859 (cell) or by email at [ucleric@mindspring.com](mailto:ucleric@mindspring.com).

**Director of Religious Education:** Molly Sorrows, DRE and Youth Advisor, can be reached by email ([frs\\_re@comcast.net](mailto:frs_re@comcast.net)) or phone (church, 978-369-5180; home, 978-371-2217).

### Music Rehearsals Schedule

The Choir

Wednesdays at 7:30-9:00pm

Sundays at 9:45am

Family Singers TBA

Handbell Choir TBA

Drumming TBA

## MANY THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES AND FRIENDS FOR MAKING OUR HOLIDAYS GREENS SALE RAFFLE A SUCCESS!!!!

- **Home Sweet Home Gift Basket** donated by Dian Cuccinello
- **Yule Log** – Dian Cuccinello
- **10 CDs, a varied collection** – Bill Brown of the Minor Chord of Acton
- **A fleece jacket and turtleneck** – Molly Springer
- **\$75 gift certificate** – Serafina's of Concord
- **Sugarhouse gift basket and \$15 gift certificate** – Fern's of Carlisle
- **Two \$10 gift certificates** -- Java Room of Chelmsford
- **Case of 1/2 red and 1/2 white wine** -- Colonial Spirits of Acton
- **Electric yellow biking shirt** -- Pedal Power of Acton
- **Photo gift mug** -- Anderson Photo of Concord
- **\$25 gift certificate** – Café Luigi of Bedford
- **Certificates for 4 bumper boat rides, 4 buckets of balls, 4 rounds of miniature golf, 4 rounds of pitch & putt** -- Kimball's of Westford
- **Certificate for 2 private Kenpo Karate lessons and 1 month of introductory group lessons complete Karate uniform** -- Callahan's Kenpo Karate of Bedford (Richard Callahan, PO Box 174, 20 North Road, Bedford 01730)
- **\$25 gift certificate for dinner** -- Main Streets Market and Cafe of Concord
- **\$35 gift certificate** -- The Cheese Shop of Concord
- **Ten \$1 gift certificates** -- Helen's of Concord
- **\$20 gift certificate** -- The Concord Bookshop
- **\$25 gift certificate** – The Grasshopper Shop of Concord
- **Three gift certificates, \$25, \$10 & \$5** – India Palace of Chelmsford
- **\$30 gift certificate** -- Yoong Tong Thai Restaurant of Chelmsford
- **Coffee and Tea Gift basket** – Starbucks of Bedford (Lauren and Keith, 186 Great Road, Bedford 01730)
- **One loaf of bread per week for six months** – Nashoba Brook Bakery of Concord
- **\$15 gift certificate** – Lush Beads of Lowell
- **\$25 gift certificate** – The Welles Emporium of Lowell
- **Gift certificate for a Spa Manicure** -- Organix Spa and Salon of Bedford (Lily and Jen, 93 The Great Road, Bedford 01730)
- **\$25 gift certificate** -- La Provence of Concord
- **\$25 gift certificate** – Atlantic Sea Grill of Acton
- **Series of three 1-hour sessions** with Certified Fitness Trainer/Pilates teacher - Dianne DeForge of Carlisle (P.O. Box 239, Carlisle MA)
- **"Mentology"**, A Mind Expanding Game - The Toy Shop of Concord
- **A Collectible** - A Carousel Electric Music Box - Dian Cuccinello
- **\$25 gift certificate**—Quiznos of Bedford

The First Religious Society in Carlisle is an inclusive community bound together in the Unitarian Universalist tradition of friendship, free inquiry and service to humanity.

We recognize our commonality as spiritual seekers, and welcome and celebrate the participation of all people, without regard to age, race, religious heritage, political opinion, gender identity, sexual or affectional orientation, socio-economic status, disability or ethnicity.

We are committed to continual learning and growth toward affirmation of the enriching diversity of humankind, and to working to create a more just, sustainable and loving world.

## PROGRAM NEWS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

### **Our annual Stocking Stuffing Project for the House of Hope is on December 17.**

Children are asked to bring \$5 to \$10 to contribute towards the cost of the stocking gifts. Junior high youth will be attending the worship service on this day, and so are encouraged to come at 10:10 to stuff their stockings before church; all of the other children will help during their class time.

**Caroling time again!** All are welcome to join us for Christmas Caroling on Sunday, December 19 at 6pm. We'll start in Union Hall to warm up our voices together, and then carol at Carlisle Village Court and return to Union Hall for cider and cookies. Please join us for this festive and fun intergenerational event! Any questions, check with Jane Mosier.

### **Upcoming Services**

**December 10:** Join us for the Christmas Pageant during the morning worship service.

**December 17:** Rabbi Daniel Schweber will be our guest speaker.

**December 24:** Christmas Eve Services  
3:00 Service for All Ages  
5:30 The Christmas Story  
11:00 Candlelight Service

**Sunday, December 24 and Sunday, December 31** the church will be open for hospitality and meditation from 10:30am to 12:00 noon.

### **Christmas Eve Nativity Bell-Ringing Ceremony:**

Once again, as part of the 3:00 Christmas Eve service, we will honor the babies born to the FRS community during 2006 with the chiming of a bell as we read their names. If you are the parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, godparent or close friend of a baby born in the past 12 months, please send me the baby's name and date of birth, and we will recognize him or her in our Christmas Eve nativity recitation. Contact Nancy West at NancySWest@hughes.net.

**Save the date:** WomenSpirit Holiday Dinner - Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. More details to follow next week. Questions? Sue Kirk 978-371-0176 [sukirk@aol.com](mailto:sukirk@aol.com)

**Christmas Pageant, December 10.** The Christmas Pageant this year will be as it has been for the past several years; a multigenerational, lively, retelling of the Christmas story with costumes, music, drama, and only one rehearsal. Soon - contact Alison to sign up for your part! 9:00am on Dec. 10 - Rehearsal begins in the Sanctuary; 10:30am on Dec. 10 - Christmas Pageant. Would you and your family like to be part of the Pageant this year? There is lots of room for animals, shepherds, angels and helpers! All are welcome to join in. Please contact Alison Saylor (978) 369-1809 [Saylorfarm@comcast.net](mailto:Saylorfarm@comcast.net)

## PROGRAM NEWS

**Pastoral Concerns Committee:** We serve as a means of outreach to people in our church who need our special support and friendship. We will arrange rides, visits, childcare, meals or anything else that lends a helping hand during short or long-term crises. If you are or know of anyone in need of this support, please contact Sally Naumann at 978-369-3314 during the month of December.

**Just in Time For Holiday Season Donations** The newly arrived issue of the American Institute of Philanthropy's Charity Rating Guide is now posted on the social action bulletin board.

**When The Holidays Hurt: A Supportive Gathering of Conversation, Contemplations, Readings, and Music. Thursday, December 14, 2006 7:30-9:00 p.m., in Union Hall. Facilitated by Rev. Robin L. Zucker:**

For many people, the holidays are a time filled not with joy and celebration but with mixed emotions, such as anxiety, grief, sorrow, or regret. There can be pleasure, but there is also much pain, because the season magnifies the sense of loss. Those who are grieving the death of loved ones, those facing life transitions, illness, aging parents, family and financial challenges, can experience an emptiness that is out of synch with the relentless cheeriness of the season. On Thursday, December 14, from 7:30-9:00 p.m., you are invited to join, in Union Hall, with others who may be experiencing a holiday season that is more blue than green. We will share a quiet oasis of supportive conversation, readings, music, and contemplation.

**Circle Dinner Extravaganza - Saturday, January 27th:** Join us for our annual Circle Dinner Extravaganza which starts in Union Hall at 5:30 where we'll have appetizers. After appetizers we'll head out to our hosts' homes for dinner. The hosts provide the main course, and guests bring the salad, bread, wine or dessert. It's a wonderful way to enjoy the company of old friends and meet new ones even during the cold wintry weather. Feel free to invite a neighbor, or someone you've met through a town activity or a colleague from work. The Membership Committee will make sure you are assigned to the same host. It's a great way to meet some new people. Sign-up sheets at Coffee Hour throughout January. If you'd like to sign-up by phone or email or have any questions, please contact Sue Kirk at 978-371-0176 or [sukirk@aol.com](mailto:sukirk@aol.com).

**Coffee Hour Needs You!** Thanks to those of you who have signed up for Coffee Hour. There are still quite a few Sundays that no one has signed up for. The Coffee Committee will continue to make coffee, and have makings for tea and hot chocolate available. Your contribution does not need to be huge, or glamorous, but the Coffee Committee will need help with set ups and clean ups even if we do not have the additional food. Thank you for your support. The FRS Coffee Committee