

FIRST RELIGIOUS SOCIETY

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NEIGHBOURS & FELLOW CREATURES

The First Religious Society in Carlisle

Unitarian Universalist
A Welcoming Congregation

Volume XXXIII, No. 11

February 4, 2008



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 February 4, 2008

Church Service and Sunday School: Sunday at 10:00 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

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Coffee Committee: Gio DiNicola, Anne Ketchen, Richard Ketchen, Tom Rourk,

Suzanne Whitney Smith

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Email: dianfrancesca@comcast.net

In the Interim

As most if not all of you know we, members and friends of FRS, UU have been going through "a rough patch" with regard to our affirmation that we are "A Welcoming Congregation". A small minority has objected to the congregational vote that decided the issue; have harassed church members who affirm our OWL religious education curriculum; have behaved in a confrontive and threatening manner toward members who disagree with them.

The governing board of the church is in the process of adopting a "disruptive behavior" policy in the expectation that it will serve to curb such un-churchly behavior. While I share that hope, my deeper confidence lies in the wise judgment and good will of our church membership.

That confidence was boosted by an e-mail I received last week from one of our number. It read, in part, "remain calm and focused - the vast, vast majority of our members are supportive of the policies and direction of our church and that those values - inclusion, understanding and the

essential regard for basic civil rights for all individuals are fundamental to who we are. They are worth our resolve. Moments of change in the life of a country, or a church for that matter, are not easy but, if grounded in fundamental beliefs, they are impossible to stop. If people of conviction act with resolve. This will be resolved."

The First Religious Society in Carlisle, Unitarian Universalist is 250 years old. It survived the American Revolution and the Civil War; it survived the struggle to become a Unitarian church and then to become a Unitarian Universalist church. God only knows how many moments of internal strife and discord threatened it over the centuries. It survived them all because wise men and women rose up in its midst to affirm the principles that made it strong and to give good council and direction on the basis of those principles.

If people of conviction act with resolve this too will be resolved. Amen Vic

**SOCIAL ACTION
THANKSGIVING 2007
THANKYOU**

Once again, The Social Action Committee wishes to thank the generosity of the Congregation for donating money to buy groceries for five needy families in Lowell. The families are identified through the Principal, guidance councilors, and staff at the Stoklosa Middle School. This school is located in "The Acre", which is traditionally the immigrant section and the poorer section of Lowell. Shopping and delivery took place on Monday, November 19, 2007. Each of the five families received crackers, cheese, chip, dip, a frozen turkey, stuffing, gravy, cranberry sauce, dinner rolls, butter, potatoes, carrots, celery, onions, squash, green beans, peas, olives, apple pie, pumpkin pie, clementines, apples, cider, juice, plastic wrap, paper towels, napkins, aluminum foil and after-dinner mints. The total bill for the five families was \$377.49. (Although we purchased virtually the same items for five families in 2006, we actually spent about \$5.00 less in 2007. This is because we bought one smaller turkey.) Shoppers and delivers were Ellen Huber, Nadine and George Bishop and Dollina Borella. It was a strenuous delivery, since four of the five families live on the second floor. Any questions on this project can be addressed to Dollina Borella, 978-371-0149. There will be an additional write up on the Christmas part of this project.

UPCOMING SERVICES

February 10

"The Long Shadow of Hurricane Katrina"

This is a send-off sermon. Our FRS/UU delegation (13 strong) is headed for a week in New Orleans to lend their energies to the on-going clean-up and re-building of that city. Last year I was a member of just such a delegation. My eyes were opened to "what lies beneath" the destruction of a great city. The real destruction of that city began after the wind had died down. vc

February 17 "Open Letter to Barack Obama"

This is Black History Month and a black man is running for the Presidency of this country. The son of a white mother and a black father (remember when such a coupling was illegal in many states?). He speaks of "change"; he IS change. The very fact of his candidacy suffuses the process with new meaning. Some words of promise. vc

February 24

"Conflict as a Means of Spiritual Growth"

Spiritual growth is not spiritual agreement. Why is that so difficult to take to heart? Why are we so ready to duck disagreement for the sake of "peace" when we know that we are postponing the conflict that might serve to clear the air. As our great Universalist pioneer Hosea Ballou observed, "We don't have to think alike to love alike ." vc

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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 Hayen at 978-369-7591 during the month of February.

**FRIENDS OF THE UUA
FEBRUARY/MARCH 2008
PHONATHON**

As a supplement to periodic mailings, [Friends of the UUA](#) will be conducting a fundraising phonathon in support of the exciting updates to the [Tapestry of Faith](#) curriculum. Beginning February 13th and continuing through March, Direct Advantage, a telemarketing firm located in Pittsburgh, will be phoning members who are currently active Friends of the UUA to ask them to renew their support.

Our contract with this firm requires that all callers must be courteous, respectful, and succinct as they offer identified Unitarian Universalists an opportunity to support our Association directly. Your feedback about the calls will help us to monitor their quality. We have established a Friends Phonathon Hotline to facilitate that feedback:

Members may send an email to friends@uua.org or call (617) 948-6525 to leave a message to ask to be placed on the "no call" list or to share a comment directly with a UUA staff member. Your willingness to support the UUA enhances our ability to provide services and programs to member congregations and presents avenues for future growth of Unitarian Universalism throughout the country.

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.

STAFF AND OFFICE SCHEDULE

Church Office Hours: The church office is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday between 8:00am and 1:00pm.

Minister Office Hours: Office hours are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings. Vic is available for emergencies any time. You can reach him by email at victorcarpenter@dedhamuu.org or by phone at 781-648-3861.

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

Minister of Music Office Hours: Marguerite Shaw is at the church every weekday between 10:00am and 2:00pm, with occasional exceptions. Call 978-369-5180 or 978-501-4220.

Music Rehearsals Schedule: The Choir rehearses on Wednesday, at 7:30pm. The Sunday warm-up begins at 9:15am.

KIDSKWIRE: Rehearsals are on Wednesday at 3:00pm.

If you have questions about any of the music programs please call Marguerite Shaw.

LESSONS FROM OUR YOUTH by *Molly Sorrows, DRE*

Several weeks ago, I was completing a Eagle Scout reference form for one of our high school youth, and I had the opportunity to ask him a bit about how his experience through different years of Boy Scouts had helped him develop into who he is today. In the past I have similarly asked youth what "being part of" FRS has meant to them. One of the things we hear is that knowing kids of different ages and who are part of different social circles at school is an important way that these organizations help to foster understanding and respect. Elementary children may come home from school excited that they waved to "one of the big kids from church" on the plaza. Our intergenerational activities and events when the classes help each other with projects help to foster a level of comfort between the children. Boy Scouts find this an important aspect of their program as well. The older youth lead activities, plan projects and work with the younger ones. The younger children look up to the "big kids" and those relationships remain special even when the youth are much older and beginning to mentor younger scouts as well. As we create expectations for our children to lead and to work hard, they grow into those expectations and have an opportunity to succeed.

I recently ran across a book called *Fires in the Bathroom* by Kathleen Cushman, which provides advice for teachers from high school students. The snippets of advice from these youth are terrific. Youth know when adults show them respect and it makes them want to show respect back. They want adults who are working with them to be willing to tell them something about their own lives. They want to be praised and encouraged, and sometimes it helps to know that adults have faced challenges too. Often we think that bridging the gap between adults and youth is harder than between different ages of youth and younger children. But in fact, there's no reason it should be. Through scouts and church, the youth tell us that they want our respect and trust, they will rise to the challenges of leadership, and they are struggling with the balance of independence and connectedness. Join us in RE classes, at Soup and Games or other events, and help create these bridges with me.



Soup and Games Night
Sunday, February 24, 4 – 6pm

Save this date for a fun intergenerational activity that has become an annual favorite at FRS. A variety of games get planned -- UU & Bible jeopardy, the "shoe" game, and "Who's like me?" have been among the hits in the past. We have wonderful homemade soups and bread for a light supper, and then pull out some board games for 2, 3, and more players. Cooperative Scrabble, cards, Cranium Cadoo, and various kids games were enjoyed last year. Not just for families with kids; please plan to join us on this final day of February vacation.

To sign up to make a soup or to ask any questions, check with Nancy West or Molly Sorrows.



NEW ORLEANS SERVICE PROJECT UPDATE

by Margaret Darling

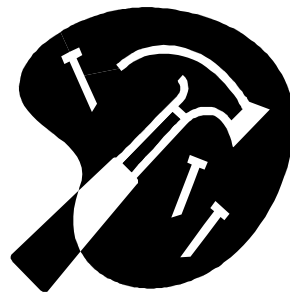
The FRS New Orleans Service Project is moving ahead smoothly. Educational efforts are ongoing - many have seen the display in Union Hall describing the situation in New Orleans, and we are currently planning a showing of Spike Lee's NOLA documentary, "When the Levees Broke," for members of our work group. We are also making plans to show the congregation two selections from Ella Klinger's documentary, "The Kindness of Strangers," in conjunction with Rev. Carpenter's sermon on a New Orleans theme.

Our sixteen volunteers will be arriving and departing in two groups, six of us going from Thursday 2/14 to Thursday 2/21 and ten going from Saturday 2/16 to either Friday 2/22 or Saturday 2/23, with one member staying longer. Registration forms, waivers and checks for our accommodations and meals at Annunciation Mission in New Orleans are being collected from each of the volunteers. The FRS NOLA Building Fund, which has approximately \$2,200 at this point, will be used upon our return to reimburse individuals for purchases of building materials in New Orleans. Thank you to all who have donated to this fund - and if you'd still like to contribute, it's not too late!

The exact nature of the work we'll be doing in New Orleans isn't known at this point - volunteers have to be flexible to the needs of the moment. However, there's a good likelihood that most of the group will be involved in some way in house reconstruction - carpentry, wall boarding, painting and so on. A workshop in basic construction techniques and the use of power tools, led by David Kramer of Gulf Coast Works, our volunteer coordinators, will be presented on Saturday, January 26,. Some of our group also hope to

help re-create gardens, and some will probably be involved in "group maintenance," cooking and cleaning at Annunciation Mission.

In addition to our work, we plan to tour the areas of New Orleans damaged by Katrina, which will probably happen in the small groups that are renting cars together. A discussion on "Race, Class and Katrina" will be led by a team from the First UU Church of New Orleans on one of our evenings there. We will also undoubtedly enjoy spending some evenings in the French Quarter, and taking in the sights, sounds and tastes of this fabled city!



After we return, we'll present our observations about the volunteer effort to the congregation in a "Time to Share" during the service on March 2. After that, we'll be doing a slide show at a Sunday evening potluck on April 6, so stay tuned!

THE PALESTINIANS AND THE SEARCH FOR PEACE IN ISRAEL

February 10
7:00pm

The human rights of two peoples, Israeli and Palestinian, are in conflict. Jeff Klein, peace activist and commentator on middle east issues, is a regular traveler to Israel and a deep observer of the struggle for justice. He will speak about the issues which must be resolved to achieve peace in that contested region on February 10 at 7 p.m. in Union Hall, at The First Religious Society .

Klein has visited the Palestine-Israel region four times since 2004, where he has worked in collaboration with members of the Health and Human Rights Project of Jewish Voice for Peace in Palestine and observed the results of Occupation first-hand. He is very active in his local anti-war, anti-racism organization, Dorchester People for Peace, which has made the issues of Palestine and civil rights for Arabs and Muslims a significant part of its work. He is also a member of Boston Coalition for Palestinian Rights, and the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.

If you have any questions, contact Maxine Barber at 978-369-7943.

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 February 11, 2008

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

MUSIC NOTES by Marguerite Shaw

Here are messages from two musicians who played at FRS recently:

Thanks for having me back. I love visiting you all in Carlisle, and appreciate having the opportunity to lead your worship. I had a wonderful time, as always. In faith. . . .Matt Meyer

And this from Fumito Nunoya: *It was great seeing you again and performing at your church. The people there are very nice, and I always perform better when I am surrounded by nice people (who does not?). I had a great time there.*

Matt Meyer is the fine percussionist who led our service on January 20. Fumito is the world-class marimbist who played a concert for us on Sunday afternoon, January 27, assisted by Alfa Radford at the harpsichord (Alfa is Minister of Music at the First Church, Unitarian in Belmont, MA).

I expect Matt to return during our next church year. Alfa and Fumito will play at FRS again for the Children with AIDS benefit concert on May 30.