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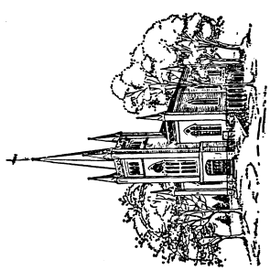
The North Parish of North Andover
Unitarian Universalist
190 Academy Road
North Andover, MA 01845-4022



The Messenger

The Newsletter of
THE NORTH PARISH OF NORTH ANDOVER
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
A Welcoming Congregation
190 Academy Road
North Andover, MA 01845-4022
www.northparish.org
Founded 1645
The Reverend Lee A. Bluemel, Minister
Minister's Study, 978-685-2845; minister@northparish.org
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AdminAssist@northparish.org
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Next Copy Deadline: December 17, 2004 at 10am.
January Calendar Deadline: Monday, December 13, 2004

Vol. XXXVII December 6, 2004 No. 27

WORSHIP AT THE NORTH PARISH

Worship and Religious Ed at 8:30 and 10:30am

Dec. 12th ~ Rev. Bluemel, "Being Good for Goodness Sake"
Dec 19th ~ Winter Music Sunday
Dec 24th ~ Christmas Eve services at 3:30, 5:00 and 7:00pm
Dec. 26th ~ Rev. Jan Bowering and Lani Arnzen **10:30 ONLY!**
Jan. 2nd ~ Gail Forsyth-Vail
Jan. 9 ~ Rev. Jim Sherblom

Please be aware that there is an emergency exit at the front left of the church, and keep the platform clear of the doorway, just in case.

MEMORIAL FLOWERS & STEEPLELIGHTING
If you are interested in memorial flowers and/or steeplelighting at $25 each,
call Claire McCarron, 978-689-2858.

THE FLOWERS were given in loving memory of…
...a very special grandmother, Laura Burden Woodruff by her granddaughter Nancy Redding on December 12.
…Christmas Flowers on December 19!
…Charles Keenan from his daughter, Claire McCarron on December 26.

THE STEEPLE was lighted in loving memory of …
…Sieglinde S. Martin by the Martin family on Dec. 5
…Patricia Seeber and Walter Wentzel by Matthew, Kirsten, Lynn and Keith Wentzel on December 12.
…Charles and June Mueller by Carole and Bill Cowie on December 19.
…Helen and Mason Ingram by their daughter and son-in-law Marcia and Bill Lamb and their grandchildren Lisa, Victor and Mindy on December 26.

****Special thanks to Pat Edmonds for creating the beautiful squash arrangement on November 21.*

Christmas Poinsettias:

Claire McCarron will be in the Parish Hall after both services on December 12 for sign-up for Christmas poinsettias.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

To avoid scheduling conflicts, you must check with the church office before booking meetings/events!

Standard Meetings:

AA: Every Monday, 7:30-9:30 pm, parish hall
Pantry Set-up: Alternate Mondays, 7:30-8:30 pm, OCH (12/20)
People's Pantry: Alternate Tuesdays, 9:30-11am, OCH (12/ 21)
Al-Anon: Every Thursday, 10am-noon, parlor & hall
Yoga: Tuesdays 1 & 7:30pm, Wed. 9:30am & 1pm, Thursdays 9am & 7:30pm, Old Center Hall

This Month to Date

All Committee Meeting: Tues., Dec. 7, 7pm
Movie/Book Discussion: Thurs., Dec. 9, 7:30 pm, parlor
Staff Meeting: Fri., Dec. 10, 9:15am Parlor (no phone cover)
Small Group Ministries: Fri., Dec. 10, 7 pm, parlor
Crossroads Coffeehouse: Saturday, Dec. 11, 8 pm, parish hall. www.crossroads-coffeehouse.org. With Bob Martin and Chuck Hall.
Parish Potluck and Sing-a-long: Sunday Dec. 12, 5:30pm
Interweave/Welcoming: Mon., Dec. 13, 7 pm, RE wing.
Parish Council: Tues., Dec. 14, 7:30 pm, parish hall
Trustees Meeting: Wed., Dec. 15, 7pm parish hall
Messenger Deadline Thurs., Dec. 17 at 10am for Envelope Mailing
Sangha Buddhist Meditation and Potluck: Sat. Dec. 18, 4-7pm OCH
20/30 Something Brunch: Sunday, Dec. 19, 12 noon, Old Center Hall
Junior Youth Group: Sunday, Dec. 19, 6:30-8, parish hall
Lunch Bunch: Tues., Dec. 21, 12 noon, parlor
SGM – Jeri Bayer: Tues., Dec. 21, 7pm, parlor
CCNS Holiday Party: Wed., Dec. 22 am and pm Parish Hall
Group Spiritual Companion: Mon., Dec. 27, 10-12 pm.
Merrimack Valley People for Peace: Tues., Dec. 28, 7pm
SGM Facilitators: Tues., Dec. 28, 7pm
Messenger Deadline Thurs., Dec. 30 at 10am

GREAT POND SANGHA BUDDHIST GROUP
Intergenerational Meditation/Potluck
Sat., December 18, 4-7 pm, Old Center Hall
Includes children's session.
Call Regina Jesser, 978-975-8153, to R.S.V.P.
WEEKLY MEDITATION BEGINS!
Now EVERY Wednesday, beginning January 5
Meditation and Study
Call Laura or Brad Howell at 978-685-8323

The next Junior Youth Group Meeting

will be December 19 in the Parish Hall from 6:30PM to 8:00PM. The meeting will be a good old fashioned Yankee Swap to celebrate the Holiday season. Refreshments will be included. For more details, watch for JYG E-mails or contact Rich Sarro, Carol Weldin or Dan Luterman.

Octogenarian Charlie Chappell has recently had open heart surgery and is recuperating nicely. To send him a little note, write to Charles Chappell, c/o Mass General Hospital, 55 Fruit St. Boston, MA 02114.

The Thanksgiving Collection from the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Day evening service on November 21 at First Baptist Church brought in $379 for the People's Pantry. The collection from the North Parish on that day was $1105, so the combined total for the People's Pantry was $1,484.00. Thank you!!!

MINISTERIAL MUSINGS

Amidst all the festivities of the season, we also find ourselves facing some sad goodbyes. Four families among us will be moving to new climes over the next few months, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank them all and to send them our best wishes and blessings on their way.

Gregg and Christine Freeman, and their children **Zachary** (3rd grade) and **Megan** (kindergarten) will be moving to London, England at the end of December for Gregg's new job. Christine has served as Assistant Collector and as a Religious Education teacher, Gregg has been a critical member of our Finance Committee and was instrumental in last year's Pledge Drive, and Zachary and Megan have been active and much loved members of the church school.

Pete and Marge Titcomb will be retiring to Yarmouth, Maine this month, where they have bought a home just across the street from the UU church. Marge has served on the Leadership Development Task Force, as Secretary for the Parish Council, as Crossroads Coffeehouse Co-chair, and of course, most recently, as Co-Chair of the Red Bow Fair for the past two years. Pete has volunteered with her on the Coffeehouse Committee (since 1989) and not surprisingly has been drafted into selling Christmas trees at the Fair (among many other things) for the last two years.

Charlie and Joyce Kellogg will be retiring to Warner, New Hampshire this winter/spring. Joyce has been a member of the Vocal Choir and Membership Committee, and Charlie was a member of the Staff Relations and Membership committees as well as a Senior Youth Group leader.

Finally, **Kelly and Reed Cundiff** announced on Sunday that they and their children **Taylor** and **Dylan** will be moving to Seattle for Reed's new job, sometime this winter. The Cundiffs have been loyal supporters of the nursery and the 8:30 service, Reed has served on the Membership Committee, and Taylor and Dylan have constantly lit up many a room with their presence, smiles and energy.

I know I speak for the congregation when I say it has been a joy and a privilege to count such wonderful people as our friends and fellow North Parish members, and while we wish you the best in your next chapter in life's journey, we must also admit our sadness at saying goodbye. We extend our goodbyes and well wishes to the Freemans and Titcombs, and the congregation will get a chance to do so again to the Kelloggs and Cundiffs in a few more months. We hope you will visit if life's travels ever bring you back to North Andover! In a slight adaptation of the words of the Rev. Duke Gray in our hymnal, "May the blessing of truth be upon you, the power of love direct and sustain you, and may peace preserve your going out and your coming in, from this time forth, until we meet again."

In faith—

~ Lee

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The children and youth continue with their special advent programming. Details of the program are being sent by e-mail each week to registered families of children in pre-K through grade 8. If you have not been receiving the weekly RE-mail and would like to do so, please contact me. Thanks to all those who are helping with the various workshop choices for children on Sunday morning.

You may have heard some "buzz" about a pageant this year. We will be doing a "paper bag" (no rehearsals) this year at the 3:30 service on Christmas Eve. All those who wish will be able to participate in the pageant as the story is told. Simple costumes will be in paper bags for participants. Thanks to Pat Grimm for working on wooden animals (sheep, donkeys, ducks, chickens, and pigs) for the pageant and to Barry Low, who will provide musical accompaniment on his accordion. The 3:30 service (which will include a candlelight ceremony) will be geared to families with younger children or to those young at heart who love Christmas pageants!

Looking ahead to *January*:

The children will learn about some of the heretics, mystics, visionaries, reformers, and Unitarian Universalists that Rev. Lee speaks of each Sunday at chalice lighting time. We'll begin our series of "Great Debates about God" on January 2 with an intergenerational service in the sanctuary about the Council of Nicea (325 CE) where the Trinitarian position on the divinity of Jesus was established as orthodox, and Arianism, the precursor of Unitarianism, became heresy. We'll re-enact the famous meeting and all present will be participants in the re-enactment. I'm seeking a few actors for that morning. Please let me know of your interest.

Gail Forsyth-Vail ~~~~ dre@northparish.org

HOLIDAY POTLUCK AND SING-A-LONG

Jingle, Jingle, and Ho, Ho, Ho! It's time for the annual Holiday Potluck and Sing-a-Long. Come along with the whole family (even your Great Aunt Edith) for a relaxing evening in the midst of the season's flurry. Bring a dish to share (salads, appetizers, desserts, or green bean casseroles). Drinks will be provided. The Youth of our church organize this evening for the congregation. See you for dinner at 5:30 on Sunday, December 12th.
THAT'S SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, PARISH HALL

UPDATE FROM THE MINSTERIAL TASK FORCE

The Rev. Bluemel's maternity leave officially begins on January first, and the Ministerial Leave Task Force would like to keep your informed about how communication will work during that time. If you have any questions, please feel free to speak to us!

While this is not a sabbatical, a maternity leave does mean actually "leaving" for a while, setting down the work of parish ministry not just physically but also mentally so one can return refreshed to the work. Leaving Lee out of the picture for three months will sometimes be hard for both Lee and us, but there are three reasons why it's important for us to experience this as a "leave":

1. It's important for Lee, as her first leave from parish work in twelve and a half years and a time to give her family life her full attention.

2. It's important for the congregation to experience our own capability to manage our church life and to stay engaged with one another as a religious and spiritual community.

3. If the leave isn't really a leave, neither of us will experience the benefits of this time.

The two people who have permission to alert the Rev. Bluemel to apprise her of how things are being handled in the case of an extraordinary situation or a death are the Board Chair Nancy Lennhoff and the Leave Minister the Rev. Jim Sherblom. The Leave Task Force earnestly requests the congregation to honor a hiatus in email and telephone contact with Lee during her leave.

From time to time, Lee will be letting us know how things are going by sending an update. When the baby is born, the church will be notified via a Sunday announcement, the Messenger or email (depending on the timing). We'll also look for an occasion a while after the birth for a social visit at church if possible, and she will plan to make an appearance at the Capital Campaign Kick-off Event on March 5th.

A brochure with contact information for ministers, staff and lay leaders during the leave will be available from the office, in the sanctuary and the January calendar Messenger mailing. The Rev. Jim Sherblom will begin his part-time position here on December 15th. He can be reached via email at jim@seaflower.com or through the church office. He will usually be in the office on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons and evenings; *please email or call* if you'd like to make an appointment.

There's an old saying that "While the cat's away, the mice will play." While it may not apply in this case exactly, we plan to have a lot of fun and accomplish great things at church in the next few months, and will enjoy telling Lee all our news when she returns!

The Ministerial Search Task Force: Cindy Cook, Deb Hall, Ginny Montella, Rob Riemer and John VanDrie

New UU Class

January 19, 26, Feb. 2 7:00 to 9:00 pm

This is a class open to all curious visitors, friends and new members of the congregation who would enjoy a chance to meet others who are new to the church and learn more about Unitarian Universalism and this congregation. The facilitators are John VanDrie and the Rev. Jim Sherblom. Call or email Pam Guerrieo in the church office, 978-687-7948 or adminassist@northparish.org to sign up!

Crossroads Coffeehouse's December 11th concert will feature Bob Martin and Chuck Hall. These two gifted folk singer/songwriters connect with their audience through songs which reflect the colors and feelings of New England.

While growing up in Lowell, the Merrimack River was a constant presence in Martin's life and as a result, the river, the mills, the history were woven into many of his songs. Lowell Sun's Dave Perry chose Martin's "*The River Turns the Wheel"* as the best folk CD of 1997, describing the songs as "Martin painting his masterpiece" and that "…his songs are a direct homage to Lowell".

Chuck Hall of Rowley connects with his audience through his stories, pleasing voice and excellent playing of a variety of instruments including the guitar, banjo and cittern. The Boston Globe said Hall's "craftsmanship and ballad-like lyricism make his songs hard to forget."

Crossroads Coffeehouse at North Parish Church, 190 Academy Road, North Andover. Doors open 7:15, concert starts 8:00, tickets are $14. For information, call 978-687-3960 (978-687-7948 evening of the concert) or visit www.crossroads-coffeehouse.org.

People's Pantry

For Thanksgiving the pantry served 204 families! We thank each of you who donated a grocery item.

We thank Cara Marshall and Mary Kilpatrick for driving to Foxboro on 11/20 to pick up a large quantity of groceries from the Food Caravan of grocery wholesalers. Also, thank you to Tina Klein for coming forth in response to our ad for help picking up at the food bank. And to Dave Lewis who works with both of these efforts as well as being the "main man" for food bank pickups.

And many thanks to the Senior Youth Group who are now doing a weekly grocery collection effort for the pantry - their donation basket will be outside the sanctuary each week - we encourage you to bring in non-perishable food items when you attend Sunday Services. Big "Gracias" to the Senior Youth Group!!!

During this holiday season please remember that there are many who would do without, but will be better off because of your generosity to The People's Pantry!

The pantry staff wishes each of you a happy holiday season.

Cari

Fair Trade Coffee

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) has partnered with Equal Exchange to sponsor a project to emphasize the use of Fair Trade coffee in our congregations. We will sell the regular / decaf coffee every other Sunday during coffee hour, with profits going to the UUSC and North Parish. See Dan Brosnan or any YAC member.

New GLBT Parents Support Group

A support group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender parents is forming. The first meeting will be Friday, January 14, 6:30pm in the Parish Hall. Child care will be available on site. Sponsored by the Interweave/Welcoming Congregation Committee. If interested, please contact Brenda Myers at brendajmyers@comcast.net.

STAFF EMAIL CONTACTS AND OFFICE HOURS:

Administrator, Cynthia Sulesky
office@northparish.org M - F, 8:30 – 5:00

Administrative Assistant, Pam Guerrieo
adminassist@northparish.org
M, W, F 9:30—2:30; Sunday 8-1

Director of Religious Ed, Gail Forsyth-Vail
DRE@northparish.org T-F, Sunday, evenings

Early Childhood Coordinator, Carolyn Zimmer
earlychildhoodcoord@northparish.org
Tues or Thurs a.m., Sunday

Minister, the Rev. Lee Bluemel
minister@northparish.org T-F, (Thursday sermon prep), Sunday, various evenings
confidentialminister@northparish.org

Music Director, Jim Dalton
Music@northparish.org Tues/Thurs.5:30-9pm, Sunday.

Sexton, Richard Beaudoin 978-685-0923
various evenings, and on-call emergencies

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