

The Messenger

The Newsletter of
**THE NORTH PARISH OF NORTH ANDOVER,
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST**
A Welcoming Congregation

Volume XLIII January 9, 2006 No. 1
Sunday Services for Worship and
Religious Education begin at 9am and 11am

Speaking Frankly

I keep thinking of these words from Ralph Waldo Emerson: "People wish to be settled; only as far as they are unsettled is there any hope for them." Well, if you've been by the church lately, you might get the impression that there is a lot of hope for the North Parish! We are a bit unsettled—this week we've been moving out of the church building, establishing office and meeting and worship space in Old Center Hall, and sending lots of stuff to storage or into the trash.

I am so proud of the North Parish congregation—that we made the choice to move ahead with this work, which will make our beloved old building more accessible, more functional and more beautiful. It was a choice that Emerson would applaud, because it is a choice to be less settled for a while. And it will be good for us!

One way I'm imagining this move is as a camping trip. When you go camping you can't take everything with you, so you make do with what you have. On a camping trip you try to prepare for things like wind and rain, but you don't get to control the weather. And if everyone on a camping trip pitches in and does their part, then you're more likely to have happy campers!

We are a congregation with a friendly, optimistic, "can do" spirit. I was talking with a newer person in our community about this at coffee hour last Sunday. She said, "Not all churches are like this." I replied, "I know." But I wonder—do you know this? If not, please hear me: you are a very special congregation, and I'm excited about this chapter in our life together.

It's been a joy over the past few weeks to see many of you coming by the church to help out with this move. **Thank you** for this, and for all the ways you support the North Parish and our mission of being a welcoming spiritual community!

If you weren't in church on New Year's Eve, I thought you might like to see the words we used to bless Rev. Lee and her family as they left on sabbatical:

Lee, Terry and Andrew, our hearts go with you on your sabbatical journey. We will miss you. But we are glad to give you this gift of time to be together. May it be a time of great

blessing for your family. We wish for you safe travels and we bid you farewell. We will hold you in our thoughts and prayers. May the Spirit of Life bless you and keep you until we are together once again. Amen.

May this time of renovation and renewal be a blessing on us all. See you in church!

~Frank

RE News

The Work and the Love of this Congregation Go On

As I sit in Old Center Hall surrounded, not just by boxes, but by members of this congregation who are transforming Old Center Hall into our new community and worship space. Volunteers are sewing, decorating, hanging, sorting, unpacking, wiring, cleaning, connecting, and consulting with one another about how to make our temporary home attractive and efficient- the right space to allow the important work of our beloved faith community to continue this spring.

We are in different space, 'tis true, but the work and the love of the congregation go on:

- On February 18, twenty-seven youth and eight adults will travel to the Gulf Coast to help rebuild there, having received the strong support of the leadership and the membership of the North Parish. They will engage issues of classism and racism, both in preparation for the trip and in the course of the service week itself, and will share their experiences and learnings with the entire community.
- Rev. Frank and I will host an evening showing of *When the Levees Broke: A requiem in Four Acts* on Friday, January 19, inviting all of us to honor the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King by *not* turning away from pain and injustice here in our own land.
- The seventh and eighth graders will continue with their families' project, naming and honoring all the different kinds of families in our congregation.
- The People's Pantry will continue, as will the sponsorship of our Ethiopian children, as will the work of Partakers Prison Ministry, Jericho Road, Stand and Deliver, and the justice and equity work of countless members of this North Parish congregation.
- There will be a chocolate communion, a joyous Easter Sunday service, a Coming of Age ceremony. New members will be received and welcomed into our parish. Guests will be welcomed and invited to join us for coffee. Babies will be dedicated, couples married, and lives celebrated through memorial services. We will minister to the sick, the grieving, the struggling in our midst.
- There will be an annual pledge drive, budget preparation, and an annual meeting to review our accomplishments over the past year.

- Children will meet each Sunday for worship, either in a large group or a smaller one, and will share their lives and reflect on wisdom from our living tradition.
- Rev. Frank and others, with the support of Grace, parish musicians, and worship committee volunteers, will prepare and lead a worship service each Sunday that will touch your spirit, invite you into places of deeper reflection, and challenge you to carry your faith into the world.

In all these ways, we remain faithful people, working to bring more love, more peace, and more justice into the world. Join us weekly in our Old Center Hall “campsite.”

Gail Forsyth-Vail

Ministerial Musings

“Where is the Rage?” – Pat Scanlon’s Peace Project:

Dear North Parish members and friends,

Pat Scanlon, a North Parish member and Vietnam War veteran, has teamed up with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, Veterans for Peace and eight other national peace organizations to promote a project to help end the war in Iraq. He invites all of those who are concerned about the war to join him in getting this message out.

Pat has written and produced an anti-war song called “Where Is the Rage?” which you may heard or have seen featured in *The Boston Globe*. Pat is in the process of sending his CD— along with information about the war— as a “Peace Package” to thousands of peace organizations, Unitarian Universalist congregations, college and public radio stations and individuals throughout the country. His goal is to encourage conversation and education about the realities of the war, to give concerned people resources and connections, and to help individuals and congregations realize they can make a difference in the outcome of history.

Pat would like to invite any North Parish members who feel concern about the war in Iraq to join him and the UUSC in this effort. He is gratefully accepting financial contributions towards CDs or the project ([send to Pat Scanlon, 34 Washington Ave, Andover](#)), and at some point in January he hopes that [some](#) North Parish folks will join him in a “packing party”—to pack up and send off all of those free CDs and Peace Packages! Thanks to Pat, here is something tangible we can do to help bring peace in the New Year. Stay tuned for more information, [or check out \[patscanlon.com\]\(http://patscanlon.com\) \(where you can also download the song\).](#)

I received a phone message the other day from Elder Services, which is looking for some volunteers to

help teach quilting to elderly Cambodian, Chinese, Vietnamese elders from the Merrimack Valley Asian Center in Lawrence. I thought to myself, “Well, gee whiz, who would have thought someone would be looking for quilters? And yes, we have some who might be interested.” I thought, “You just never know what skills will be the perfect match for a new service or outreach opportunity.”

But what I most wanted to share with you is that the woman who called said she did so because “I understand that your church is very involved in outreach and creative projects.” Wow, what a reputation to have! The word is out on the streets, apparently. We’re “moving and shaking” in more ways than one as a congregation. As you all go through this rather bumpy, transitional time without me (what timing, I can’t believe it!), I hope that you will all keep a little smile on your faces, knowing that this is our reputation in the world. That’s not a bad way to start the year!

I will be missing you very much, and also doing my best to use this sabbatical time very well. I will also eagerly look forward to seeing photographs, hearing stories, and being introduced to the new ideas you’ve come up with while I am away. Take care, everyone, don’t forget to laugh, and I’ll see you in June!

In faith,

Rev. Lee

News around the Parish...



...**Breck Arnzen**, past Chair of the Personnel Committee, for his many excellent years of service!

...**Lisa Reed and Jackie Orent-Nathan**, who are helping to lead the “Our Whole Lives” values and sexuality education curriculum, with a partner from the Andover UU church.

...**Keith Wentzel**, who has agreed to coordinate the final phase of the Capital Campaign. Keith will be focusing on new donations towards the renovation and accessibility project.

...**Mark Caggiano**, who will complete his term on the Board this month, just a few months early. We thank Mark for the contributions and legal expertise which he has brought to the Board, and wish him the best in his continuing endeavors in his law practice, Harvard Divinity School, his internship at the Watertown UU Church, the North Andover Board of Selectmen and parenting!

...**Sandy Garron**, who has accepted an appointment by the Board to fill out the rest of Mark Caggiano's term on the Board of Trustees. Sandy joined the church in 1998, and has been a COA mentor, a Junior Youth Group leader, Partner Church Committee member, co-chair of "Greens" for the Red Bow Fair, sung in the Vocal Choir and Java Ice, among other church volunteer efforts.

...**ALL** of our **Christmas services participants musicians, vocal and children's and bell choir members, readers, light bearers, worship assistants, ushers, stage managers, etc!** We couldn't do it without you!
(Question whether we list all the names or not- there are a lot of them!)

Congratulations to...

...North Parish graduate **Phillip Bancroft** upon his engagement to **Alexis Caselle** in December! Congrats to his parents **Don and Martha Bancroft** as well

Our Condolences to...

... **Betty Hopping**, whose 46 and a half year old pet monkey named Freddie died on December 9th.

The Church Has Left the Building! Kudos to...

... **Betty Hopping**, who knits baby sweaters and hats for Lawrence General Hospital maternity ward, in addition to being a participant in the North Parish shawl ministry

The Church Left the Building and is Traveling down Jericho Road.

- Thanks go to **Renee Slack** who just completed a successful Jericho Road database project for **Bread & Roses Housing**, an impressive nonprofit that builds affordable housing in Lawrence. Their Executive Director describes Renee's work as "fabulous." As if this isn't enough, Renee is preparing to go back on the Jericho Road to work on an even bigger database project with **Groundwork Lawrence** at the beginning of the year.
- Returning for a second gig on the Jericho Road, **John Weaver** just finished helping **Notre Dame Education Center** solve a payroll problem. It took John a few hours to solve a problem that would have cost this nonprofit unnecessary time and money. John is scheduled to help Notre Dame with their bookkeeping system in a few months. The director of this nonprofit is the same Sister Gwynette Proctor featured in *The Eagle Tribune* as the "sweet nun" who teaches ESL by day, and transforms into

a tough coach for the boy's basketball team for Notre Dame High School by night. John Weaver is also acting as backup for another Jericho Road volunteer, **Damon Thomas** (friend of North Parish) who is helping the **Bread & Roses Heritage Committee** on their nonprofit reporting requirements for the Secretary of State.

- **Karen Nemeth Bowe** has put in plenty of sweat equity for Jericho Road. She is working on a Jericho Road project to develop a strategic plan for the **Greater Lawrence Education Collaborative's (GLEC) Enrichment Program** in order to achieve ongoing community support and advocacy for this excellent organization. This is Karen's second Jericho Road project. She is also on the Jericho Road Board and their grant writer extraordinaire. Advising Karen on the fundraising component of GLEC's strategic plan is **Pat Edmonds**. Thank you so much, Pat!
- Thanks also go to **Noreen Carter** for meeting with 2 nonprofits--**Bread & Roses Housing** and **Si Se Puede**. Noreen helped both of their directors define the scope of their Quickbook bookkeeping software needs. This may develop into a Jericho Road project down the road a piece.
- An extra special thank you goes to **Laura Landy** for the many hours she spent working with **Family Service Inc.** to help them define their web needs. Most importantly, this wonderful lady assembled the Jericho Road team that will be working on Family Service's web site project--**Peter Reed, Chris Schena**, and **Dave Cook!** By the way, this is Chris Schena's second project for Jericho Road. Chris also designed the Jericho Road Newsletter, "The Road."
- It's hello, again, **Jim Palatine**. Jim received accolades for his first project with **Adelante Youth Center**. No surprise that he was asked back to work on a follow-up assignment. Adelante Youth Center serves 1500 youth annually on a variety of great after school activities.
- After he returns from being a world traveler, **Ron Hilbink** will be working on a Jericho Road project in strategic planning for the **Essex Art Center**. If you haven't visited this remarkable organization, you must see them in action as they guide their talented youth through some pretty impressive art projects. Ron is also a valued member of Jericho Road's Board of Directors.
- Last but absolutely not least, **Dave Lewis** has been making great connections for Jericho Road and the University of Lowell. Dave has offered to travel as far as Boston to help the **Higher Education Resource Center (HERC)** on a potential database project that HERC needs in order to quantify the dramatic successes HERC has achieved helping Lawrencian youth enter college.

There have been many talented North Parish parishioners who have met with Jericho Road to discuss potential volunteer openings. From the grapevine, we hear that there are some interesting projects coming down the pike that just might strike their fancy and be the fulfilling match they were looking for. We encourage you to contact Jericho Road to explore the program and its potential volunteer opportunities working with nonprofits servicing the City of Lawrence. 978-687-7948 X8

Welcome
A GUEST AT YOUR TABLE

**Support the Unitarian Universalist Service
Committee**

In Partnership

With Grassroots Organizations Worldwide
(including on the Gulf Coast)
Promoting Justice and Basic Human Rights for All
People

**If You Have a Box and Have Been Putting
Money in it Regularly...**

THANK YOU! Please return it this Sunday,
January 7 (or, if you forget, on January 14)

If You Do Not Have a Guest at Your Table Box....

**Please take advantage of the UUSC
envelope in your order of service to
make a contribution or send a check to
the office before January 16 made out to
the UUSC.**

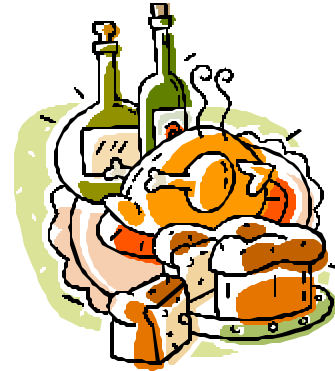
Instructions for Turning in Boxes and Money

1. If at all possible, please count your money and convert it to a personal check made out to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC).
2. If you cannot convert your money into a check, please convert it to bills and put your name and address on the flap of the box. Cash donations will be combined into one check from the North Parish.
3. If your donation is \$40 or more, you will become a Member of the UUSC, and will receive information about the organization's work directly.
4. If your donation is \$75 or more, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock in New York will match the total amount. Let's see how many of us can double our contribution by giving at this level!

A personal note: my family not only contributes through the Guest at your Table program, but also makes a monthly donation to the UU Service Committee. I count on the UUSC to know where my money is most needed in the world and to put it to good use. I invite you to join me in supporting their work.

Gail Forsyth-Vail

WINTER SEASONAL SUPPER



An informal gathering of folks with food is the basis for the Seasonal Suppers. Coming up on January 20th, we will be having the winter

potluck dinner in member's homes.

These are small groups of 8-10 people. If you're interested in participating; sign up with Dotti Anderson or Lora Stewart after services on January 7th or 14th.

For more information or to sign up; you may also call Dotti Anderson (978-887-3099) or Lora Stewart (978-683-8966).

There's always great food and conversation (a good way to get better acquainted with others in our church community).

**Encounters with Change, Grief and Loss
A conversation with Gail Forsyth-Vail and Rev.
Frank Clarkson
Wednesday, January 24, 7 to 8:30 PM, 1st floor
OCH**

Change comes to all of us, sometimes when we least expect or desire it, and so does loss and grief. One of the blessings of community is that we do not have to go through these things alone. A burden shared is often a burden lessened.

As we begin this sabbatical time, you are invited to a conversation with Gail and Frank about whatever you may be struggling with right now. We will offer some strategies for dealing with change, grief and loss, but our primary intent is to

provide a chance to offer one another the gift of compassionate listening. Please join us.

Tuesday Noon: Connection Lunches at North Parish

Almost every Tuesday we host a brown bag lunch gathering at North Parish. You're always welcome to join us—here's the schedule!

1st Tuesday: Monthly theme (related to the liturgical year)

2nd Tuesday: Religion and the news (your topics welcome)

3rd Tuesday: Original Lunch Bunch (mostly retirees and friends)

4th Tuesday: Ministers Book Group (see schedule below)

Jan 9: Religion and the News

Jan 16: Original Lunch Bunch

Jan 23: Book: *Faith: Trusting Your Own Deepest Experience*, by Sharon Salzberg

Feb 6: "Constancy"

Feb 13: Religion and the News

Feb 20: Original Lunch Bunch

Feb 27: Book: *Losing Moses on the Freeway: the 10 Commandments in America*, by Chris Hedges

Mar 6: "Re-focusing"

Mar 13: Religion and the News

Mar 20: Original Lunch Bunch

Mar 27: Book: *Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith*, by Kathleen Norris

Apr 3: "Freedom and Rebirth"

Apr 10: Religion and the News

Apr 17: Original Lunch Bunch

Apr 24: Book: *Abraham: A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths*, by Bruce Feiler

May 1: "Independence and Community"

May 8: Religion and the News

May 15: Original Lunch Bunch

May 22: Book: *Reason for Hope: A Spiritual Journey*, by Jane Goodall

June 5: "Play"

June 12: Religion and the News

June 19: Original Lunch Bunch

JANUARY 2007 FLOWERS AND STEEPLE LIGHTING

1.7.07 Flowers by Betty Hopping "In loving memory of Elizabeth Hopping by her family."

1.7.07 Steeple Lighting by Leslie Young-Lemire "In celebration of the life of John Naaykens, my best friend in high school, who died of AIDS in 1989 by Leslie Young-Lemire."

1.14.07 Flowers by Donna Cooper "In loving memory of Chloe Jarrell Cooper from the Cooper family."

1.14.07 Steeple Lighting by Anne Low "In loving memory of Gregory, George, and Anne Moss from the Low and Wood families."

1.21.07 Flowers by - open

1.21.07 Steeple Lighting by - open

1.28.07 Flowers by - open

1.28.07 Steeple Lighting by - open



Breakfast to Honor Dr. King on January 15

The Annual Merrimack Valley NAACP breakfast is 8:30 on January 15th at Lenzi's Restaurant on

Rote 113 in Dracut, MA. The North Parish is sponsoring a table, and you are invited to join us. The cost is \$25 per person. Please contact Rev Frank (asstminister@northparish.org 978-687-7446) to reserve a seat.

The speaker is the Rev. Dr. E. Darlene Williams, Area Minister of the American Baptist Church Association, on "Renewing the Legacy". This would have been MLK's 78th birthday!

Master Calendar of All Congregation or Special Events, Jan – June—not including special Sundays....

January 27th **Youth-Led Coffeehouse**, to benefit Youth Trip for Hurricane Katrina Clean-up

January 28th **Great Pond Sangha Open Practice Day**, with Joel Baehr

February 2-4th **Music Ministry Visioning Workshop**, with Mark Slegers

February 18th - 24th **Youth Mission Trip** to New Orleans, LA/Biloxi, MI, for Katrina Clean-up

March 17th **St. Patrick Day Concert** with the Goodhues, to benefit Youth Trip for Katrina Clean-up

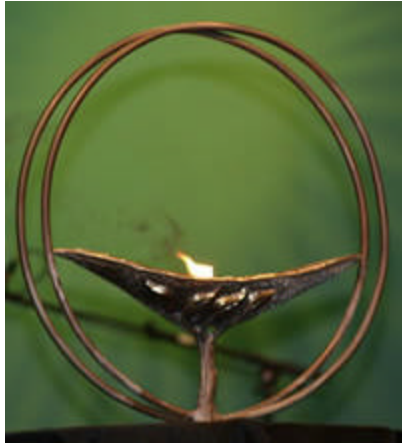
March 23rd?? **North Parish "Friday Night Live" Comedy Night**, to celebrate the 2007-2008 Pledge Campaign

April 27-29th **DRE Covenanting Workshop**, with Gail Forsyth-Vail and Sandra Greenfield

May 5th **Art Show and Wine Tasting**

May 20th **Annual Meeting and Amelia Reeve Awards**

For more information please contact Alice Galloway at 978-794-0836.



The deadline for the next issue of Steeple Talk is January 15. Preserve those meaningful memories of this holiday season by putting fingers to keyboard. Maybe this was your first Christmas with us at North Parish and/or your first Christmas Eve service for a number of years? What did it feel like to be shoulder-to-shoulder in the pew in the dimmed light with your candle held high to bring more light and love into the world? No memories will be too short. Or perhaps you feel inspired to share your prayers for a world ravaged by war, famine and poverty. Send files to sadams@aappm.org or call Editor Suzanne Adams at 978-682-8585 if you have questions.

Meeting with MassEquality
When: Monday, January 22, 2007 at 7pm
Where: Old Center Hall 1st Floor

On January 2nd, two-thirds of Massachusetts legislators voted against a proposed constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage, but their votes were not enough. The amendment, which required only 50 votes to move forward, will now face a second round of consideration in 2007 or 2008.

On January 22nd, at 7 PM MassEquality's Campaign Director, Marc Solomon, will be hosting an organizing meeting to go over strategies and next steps to protect same-sex marriage. This is a great opportunity to bring questions and ideas you may have to help block this anti-gay amendment once and for all.

Come to the meeting Monday, January 22nd at 7 PM to join us in this fight for equality.

The Schedule for upcoming Messenger deadlines and mailing:

Deadline	Mail-Out
Jan 18	Jan 22
Feb 1	Feb 5
Feb 15	Feb 19

The deadline for all information that needs to go into the Sunday Bulletin is 7am on Friday.