

THE UP-LOOK

NEWSLETTER OF THE
FIRST PARISH CHURCH IN
DORCHESTER, UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
DECEMBER 2009



FIRST PARISH CHURCH
IN DORCHESTER,
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Founded 1630

Rev. Arthur Lavoie, Minister
Lex White, *Director of*
of Religious Education
Ana Popa, *Choir Director & Organist*

Officers of the Congregation:
Edward Baldwin von Brunow, *Chair*
Myles Crowley, *Vice Chair*
Philip Lindsay, *Treasurer*
Douglas Shaheen, *Clerk*

10 Parish St., Meetinghouse Hill
Dorchester, MA 02122

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Office Hours by Appointment

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Interested in writing?

Please submit articles for the
Up-Look by the 15th of the
month to betsymiessner@gmail.com

Layout by Betsy Miessner

*Unattributed articles by Art Lavoie,
Bruce Shatswell*

*Photos by Kirsten Alexander, Betsy
Miessner, Bruce Shatswell*

WORSHIP



Dec. 6 ***The Silence of God***

Rev. Arthur Lavoie

There are times on life's journey when it seems that all is not well, when we are faced with some illness or tragedy that seems to shake the deepest places of our being, when it seems that even God is not present to us. How do we find comfort at such times?

Dec. 13 ***The Light of Hope***

Rev. Arthur Lavoie & Lex White

This weekend shares two celebrations of light. Both Solstice and Hanukkah celebrate the return of light and the hope of a people. We will weave these themes together in this multigenerational service.

Dec. 20 ***The Gifts of Christmas***

Rev. Arthur Lavoie

The Christmas Season offers us many gifts and blessings. There is a magical story that can touch our hearts and bring us together in profound ways. What are the gifts that this holiday season might bring to you? What do you really want for Christmas?

Dec. 24 ***Christmas Eve Service 5p.m.***

Rev. Arthur Lavoie

Dec. 27 ***What a Year! Letting Go, Looking Forward!***

Rev. Richard Kellaway

Will any of us regret letting go of the year past? For Jews Yom Kippur is an annual time of reckoning. Perhaps we could (should) reflect and do the same. Winter is upon us. In this service we'll do a little burning to warm us (and our community) up. Get ready for a few flames.

Jan. 3 ***A Conversation with Our History***

Jim Stillman

*Worship services are held at 11:00 a.m. each Sunday
unless otherwise noted*

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Worship Services

First Parish Church in Dorchester, Unitarian Universalist, is a liberal religious congregation. Our worship services are each Sunday at 11:00 a.m. unless otherwise noted.

Membership

Would you like to know more about Unitarian Universalism or the history of this church? Are you curious about membership here at First Parish? If you would like more information contact Rev. Lavoie at fathaatha@verizon.net or at (617) 436-2999, or Doug Shaheen, Membership Chair at rodenheen@verizon.net

Religious Education & Childcare

First Parish offers a parent-run Religious Education Program under the direction of our Director of Religious Education, Lex White. We use a UUA curriculum that focuses on social action, children's worship, and religious education classes that give children the space to think for themselves. The children are with us in the sanctuary up to the Children's Focus with the Minister and are then invited to go upstairs for the day's program. The Nursery is available for younger children. *Lex White is at FPC on Sundays and by appointment, and is available by email at white20a@metholyoke.edu.*

Volunteer Choir

The First Parish Volunteer Choir sings monthly and on special occasions under the direction of Choir Director and Organist Ana Popa. We rehearse twice a month. If you're interested, speak with Ana Popa.

Social Activities

On the First Friday of each month, we have a pot luck family fun night at 6:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall, monthly activities sponsored by the Parish Activities Committee, community events like the Hoedown, and our Sundays at Three classical music series.

Minister's Musings

This is the time of year when metaphors about darkness and light abound in the northern hemisphere. It seems every culture and tradition has some story or celebration that uses this theme to deal with the encroaching dark that nearly threatens to overcome us.

Then, almost magically, the light begins to return.

In the Christian tradition the symbol of a star, the brightest star to ever appear in the night sky, guides people to the birthplace of the Christ child. This star stands for all that is destined to change the course of history and bring wholeness and salvation to the world.

This has been a difficult year for many who have been affected by the economic crisis in our country and our world. Many continue to be unemployed.

Many in our community face the foreclosure of their homes. Many have had more than their share of grief and sorrow.

We all need something or someone to change the course of our own history, to shift us from our personal story to the story of greater love, generosity and compassion. We all need to be led to wholeness and salvation.

What leads you this winter?
What shining star points the way
beyond distress or unhappiness?

*May each of us
discover within
ourselves...the
star that leads the
way home.*

May each of us discover within ourselves the star that creates a greater balance between light and shadow, a star that leads the way home. May each of us find within

ourselves the Christ, the message that brings wholeness and meaning.

May all be blessed this holy season.

In Peace, Art



Winter Services in the Parish Hall

Once again this year we will close the sanctuary for the winter to save on heating costs. We will hold Sunday services in the Parish Hall beginning on Sunday, Dec. 27. We will reopen the sanctuary/meetinghouse for Anniversary Sunday on Mar. 28.

A Note From the Chair

The first meeting of our committee chairs, held on November 1, laid the groundwork for successful communication and cooperation among the committees in staging and publicizing First Parish events. When the committee chairs meet on December 6, they will be developing the calendar for the second half of the church year, which will include another comedy night, an arts-and-crafts fair, the Gala Dinner, plus dances and hoe downs. It promises to be a busy and exciting spring!

Special Music for Christmas Sunday

Kip Bruggeman, a blues guitarist, will be providing special music for our Christmas Sunday service. Kip and his wife Courtney Pardue have been attending the church for over a year.

Christmas Sunday Brunch

Please join us for a special brunch after the service on Christmas Sunday, Dec. 20. The brunch will be provided by our minister, the Rev. Arthur Lavoie and his partner Mark Watanabe in gratitude for all of the volunteer hours that have been given to the church this year.

Saturday and Sunday, November 14 and 15, were busy days at the meetinghouse. The hall was transformed magically four times into the themes of a Holiday Fair, a family-style Turkey Dinner, coffee hour after worship services, and a night club for Comedy Night. Katharine Baldwin and Myles Crowley created the backdrop of a winter wonderland for the fair. Doug Shaheen and Jim Rodenmacher ran a successful lunch counter with goods donated by various church members. Harry Holmberg and his crew whipped up a delicious turkey dinner. Amy Rands from Needham was a great assist in the kitchen. Comedy Night was organized by T.J. Griffin, and the three comedians--Tony V, Greg Rodrigues and Steve Calechman—were wonderful entertainment.

With the participation of our members as well as the community, these events will help us restore the Meetinghouse to its former glory. The board has approved the hiring of a consultant and architect. There will be a lot of hard work over the next few months, but the events of the last month are proof that we are up to the challenge.

Thank you to everyone who transformed the hall, baked homemade goods, staffed church tables, and worked so hard on behalf of us all. May each of you have blessed holidays and much to be thankful for this season.

In peace and joy, Edward

Calendar

Friday, Dec. 4, Fab Friday, 6pm: Bring your favorite kids, potluck dish and games!

Sunday, Dec. 6, 12:30pm: Committee Chairs Meeting

Sunday, Dec. 13, 12:30pm: Social Justice Committee Meeting We will be discussing upcoming events around the Peace Quilt, a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day community event and other projects.

Monday, Dec. 14, 6pm: Annual Dorchester People for Peace Holiday Party. This year the honorees will be the Association of Haitian Women of Boston and Women in Black. At the Vietnamese American Community Center, 42 Charles St, Fields Corner.

Saturday, Jan. 30, 6pm: FPC Auction! Contact Harry Holmberg at harry91231@hotmail.com or Kirsten Alexander at kalex@alexanderswift.com with services and goods you'd like to donate

Monday, Dec. 21, Winter Solstice, 12:47pm

Saturday, Feb. 13, 6pm: Girl Scouts Me & My Guy Dance

Saturday, May 1: FPC Gala Dinner Save the Date!

Notes from Lex

Religious Education News

To finish up the year the children have been doing more group activities to learn the benefits and challenges of working together. Through crafts, songs, and games they have done a variety of things that encourages communication and cooperation; from making masks to hunt for turkeys to be their friends to working together to cross “ponds” on “lily pads”. Now that we have tackled and grappled with the joys of working together we will continue this fun journey this month. In the upcoming weeks we are learning creative ways to share stories, which you will all see in the intergenerational stories coming soon. Of course

all stories come from somewhere and “In the beginning” things can be confusing which is why so many cultures have different interpretations of how it all started. I’m not talking about the chicken and the egg here, but creation stories, myths and interpretations... You will have plenty of time to think about what that means over the next few holidays but when we come back in January it will all be revealed! If that does not keep you warm during this first part of winter, I’m not sure what will.

Happy holidays to all and to all a good time!

-Lex

Fab Friday

Are you looking for a family-friendly night out? A place where your kids can play with other kids, and you can get to know their parents? And then while the kids are playing, you can play Apples to Apples or Blokus for hours? Or maybe you have no kids at home, and love the kind of energy found only at intergenerational activities? All of this, plus good food and it’s in the neighborhood can be found at Fab Friday, First Parish Church’s First Friday family fun night of each month. Bring some food to share and we’ll provide the fun, fellowship and games. Please join us this month on Dec. 4. Since the first Friday of January is a holiday, New Year’s Day, we will hold January’s Fab Friday on Jan. 8. The pot-luck begins anytime after 6 pm. All are welcome--let the games begin!

Holiday Fair



Noel Currier made the Holiday Fair a fun day for kids with her face-painting talents.

Flowers for the Altar

If you would like to have the Sunday altar flowers commemorate a loved one, the following Sundays in 2010 are available for this purpose: January 10, January 31, February 21, April 11, May 30, June 13, August 1, August 8, August 22, August 29, October 17 and October 31. Please contact Mary Brunswick at 617-328-0029, or email neilandmaryOFD@aol.com.

Building Restoration News Introducing...

The Board of Trustees announced the hiring of Wendall Kalsow from McGinley Kalsow & Associates, Inc, as the architect who will prepare a comprehensive assessment of our church building. Mr. Kalsow and his firm have a long history of working with churches and other historic preservation projects. They are well known and respected for their excellent design work, their ability to accurately assess the project costs, and their skill in working with churches.

The architects will examine and document clearly the building's structure and systems, review other reports on the building that have been prepared in the past several years, research what repairs or remodeling has been done since it was built, and document all of the problems including gaping holes, rot, and water penetration. Building systems to be examined will include heat, electrical, plumbing, and the fire alarm. In addition they will look at the building interior and help us to identify ways our spaces can better meet our needs.

McGinley Kalsow & Associates, Inc. will then prioritize their findings based on issues of safety, deterioration, and accessibility. They will also note which areas may be eligible for alternative funding. Recommended repairs will be classified as urgent, or those which will need to be done in the next 2, 5, and 10 years.

The trustees have also hired Jillian Adams of Building Legacy to assist us with this project. Ms. Adams was our consultant when we worked with Historic Boston on

the bell tower restoration project that we undertook a few years ago.

Her work with us over the next several months will have a few major components. She will assist us with fundraising and grant writing since she brings with her an extensive knowledge of grants that are available for historic restoration. She will help develop partnerships in the community; those people and organizations that are able to help with any aspects of the project.

Another part of her work will be within the congregation; helping us to develop our own resources, gifts and skills so that we might better accomplish the daunting task of restoring our building. Ms. Adams will also be assisting our Building Restoration Committee to manage this phase of the project and report back to the congregation so that we can all be informed of what is happening.

Both Mr. Kalsow and Ms. Adams bring a love and enthusiasm to their work with us and were introduced at a congregational conversation on Sunday, Nov. 22 after the worship service.

In January the trustees will call a meeting to talk about our hopes and dreams for our building and this restoration process. In preparation for this meeting Rev. Lavoie asked us all to think about how this building might best support this congregation in our own programs and in our call to better serve the Dorchester community now and in the future.

Coming next month: The history of our church building

Birthdays

Julie Simmons	Dec. 2
Maria Houton	Dec. 6
Mark Watanabe	Dec. 7
Tammy Tai	Dec. 8
Tim Ashton	Dec. 13
James Baldwin von Brunow	Dec. 16
Cheryl Brown	Dec. 18
Hong Houton	Dec. 19
Robert Baldwin von Brunow	Dec. 26

Anniversaries

Jim Rodenmacher and
Doug Shaheen
Dec. 4

Arrivals

Tyler Hall



Rev. Art Lavoie shows off a decorative tin finial from the roof of the church.



Richard Kellaway as Santa gives Harry Holmberg an assist with the turkey preparation

Collections for Local Food Pantries

We had a great kick-off to our annual winter food drive! This year we have added coats, hats, scarves and mittens to the items we are collecting. Please remember all those who are struggling this holiday season. We can make a difference!

Below, a photo of what we brought in on Nov. 22 for the kick-off



Thank You!

To everyone who helped to make the fair, the luncheon, and especially the turkey dinner, such a success, thank you! It was a great joy to see all those people having such a great time, and enjoying themselves. We managed to have fun and make money for the restoration of the Meeting House all at the same time. It was an honor and a privilege that I look forward to doing again next year. I promise to do as good a job, and maybe better.

*Harry Holmberg
Chair, Parish Activities*

The Auction is Coming!

Think of something you love to do. Perhaps it's cooking, baking or gardening. Perhaps there are crafts that you create. Perhaps you have other skills and talents that you would like to share, or something in your attic that someone else might appreciate.

We are starting to plan the church auction to be held on Saturday, Jan. 30. This has always been one of our most fun events for fellowship and fundraising and this year should prove to be no exception.

Please contact Harry Holmberg

harry91321@hotmail.com or Kirsten Alexander at kalex@alexanderswift.com to talk about what you might offer as an auction item that uses your favorite skills and talents, or appropriate goods.

December 2009



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Full Moon 2:30am	3	4 No Scouts	5 No Scouts
6 Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship Services & RE 11am Rev. Art Lavoie <i>The Silence of God</i> Committee Chairs Mtg 12:30	7 Alcoholics Anonymous 7-8 pm Finance Cmte 7pm Alcoholics Anonymous 7-8 pm	8 Alcoholics Anonymous 7-8 pm	9 New Moon 7:02am	10 Hijra-New Year /Islam	11 Girl Scouts 9:30-11:30	12 Hanukkah Girl Scouts 9:30-11:30
13 Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship Services & RE 11am Rev. Art Lavoie & Lex White, DRE <i>The Light of Hope</i> 12:30 Social Justice Cmte	14 Alcoholics Anonymous 7-8pm Board Mtg 6:30pm Alcoholics Anonymous 7-8pm	15 Alcoholics Anonymous 7-8pm	16 Meetinghouse Hill Civic Assoc. 7pm (3rd Wed)	18 Christmas Eve Service 5pm	19 Church Services-noon No Scouts	26 No Scouts
20 Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship Services & RE 11am Rev. Art Lavoie <i>The Gifts of Christmas</i> Christmas Brunch	21 Winter Solstice 12:47 p.m. Yule - Wicca	22 Alcoholics Anonymous 7-8 pm	23 PR Cmte 7pm Alcoholics Anonymous 7-8 pm	24 Full Moon 2:13pm "Blue Moon"	25 Down the Road Auction! Jan. 30 Me and My Guy Feb. 13 Gala Dinner May 1	26 No Scouts
27 Worship Services & RE 11am Rev. Richard Kellaway <i>What A Year! Letting Go; Looking Forward</i>	28 Alcoholics Anonymous 7-8 pm	29 Alcoholics Anonymous 7-8 pm	30 Alcoholics Anonymous 7-8 pm	31 Alcoholics Anonymous 7-8 pm		

Address Correction Requested



First Parish Church in Dorchester
Unitarian Universalist
10 Parish Street
Meethinghouse Hill
Dorchester, MA 02122



More scenes from the Holiday Fair: above, Alan Cave's trees, above right, the beautifully decorated stage, and right, Santa and Sadie in deep conversation.

Holiday Fair at First Parish