
First Parish of Sudbury News

April 20, 2008

Volume 20, No. 4

Next E-News Bulletin Deadline: April 23, 2008

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Submissions to: office@fpsudbury.org

Next Newsletter Deadline: May 14, 2008

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Making Meanings

This column is a re-run. It first appeared in the newsletter in the spring of 2002. Katie Lee chose it soon after she completed the sermon requested by last year's auction bidders which asked: "What does it mean to push beyond our comfort zone to achieve a greater good?" Maybe, she thinks now, it takes being "crocus-minded!"

It takes *courage* to be crocus-minded.
...I'd rather wait until June.
Like wild roses,
When the hazards of winter are
Safely behind and I'm expected,
And everything's ready for
Roses.

But **crocuses?**
Highly irregular.
Knifing up through hard-frozen
Ground and snow,
Sticking their necks out
Because they believe in Spring
And have something personal
And emphatic
To say about it.



...I am not by nature crocus-minded.
Even when I have studied the
Situation here, and know there
Are wrongs that need righting,
Affirmations that need stating,
And know also that my speaking-
out may offend,
For it rocks the boat –
Well, I'd rather wait until
June.

Maybe later things will work
Themselves out,
And we won't have to make an
Issue of it.

...Forgive (me).
Wrongs *won't* work themselves
Out.
Injustices and inequities and
Hurt don't just dissolve.
Somebody has to stick (their) neck out,
Somebody who
Cares enough to think through
And work through,

Hard ground,
Because (they) believe
And (they have) something personal
And emphatic
To say about it.

Me...: **Crocus-minded?**

*I'll look forward to seeing you when I return
from London.*

Katie Lee

Liberation Theologies

There is a special confluence of worship opportunities in the next few weeks that share stories with themes of liberation. On Saturday, April 26, we will host a Passover Seder with special guest Nina Price from Congregation Beth El as our Seder leader. The next day, Katie Lee will explore *exodus* as a "macro" story which continues to have relevance as people all over the world and in our own neighborhoods continue to be forced to flee for safety from many forms of oppression and violence.

And then, on May 4, we will take a lesson from African Americans and others, both slaves and freedom-fighters, as we shout and sing and whisper and weep at the power of the songs that kept them alive and, eventually, helped to lead them to freedom. We sing these freedom songs to remember... and also to fortify ourselves and our world to fight for the freedoms yet to be won.

Seekers of the Light



“You can only sprint for so long.”
 -- **Katie Lee Crane**

I am sprinting. In addition to my First Parish work, I am taking my last two science prerequisite courses. There will be a month to catch my breath before I sprint again to General Assembly, then fly home and begin my first nursing course 72 hours later. Whew! How do I do it? Lots of motivation, taking time for self care and...knowing my sprints have end-points. That’s really the key. There’s a finish line. Then, time to rest, recover and catch my breath.

In this transition period, I have a chance to name what I see. One obvious thing we all see is our numbers dropping. Analysis awaits, and the causes are sure to be complex. However, I am convinced that one factor is that people in this corner of the world are *constantly* sprinting. In many families, both spouses have high-demand jobs. Children may have three or more activities each week in addition to taxing homework schedules. Aging parents need our attention. A religious community can become just one more demand on time, one more potential battle with overtired children and resentful spouses who would rather the family stay home on Sunday morning. Or, the religion of sports (and it is a religion around here) beckons, and young players and coach-parents prioritize the game over coming to church. Where is the finish line? The quiet time to find the center, to reflect and draw refreshment from deep wells?

Physiologically, we can only sprint for so long before damage occurs. Oxygen and fluids get depleted, muscles buckle, bones fracture. Constant sprinting is an unsustainable state for the psyche and soul as well. They, too, need time to recover and rejuvenate. Folks who are “regulars” here understand the need for intentional spiritual renewal and growth. They prioritize church into their busy lives, knowing they get back at least as much as they give. And I see the difference in the children. Those who attend regularly not only make more friends and are more comfortable at church, they find it easier to touch spirit and to articulate what matters to them about life’s big questions. They are affirmed and challenged in their quest for meaning-making. These children are building a solid, deep foundation to sustain them in everyday life and in crisis. Sunday morning is the finish line, the recovery tent for the week.

In this climate of interminable sprinting, it’s an uphill battle to attract people to a faith community. Over-scheduling is not only encouraged, but people are made to feel inadequate if they’re not going 130% of the time—like most destructive habits, hard to break. Perhaps

some public offerings of spiritually refreshing experiences would at least let people know what they are missing. You may be able to draw them in with the sound of the wind created by collective deep breathing. But this can’t be heard if it’s contained in meetinghouse walls. So get out there and give the breath of life to an exhausted, spiritually starved world. Go! Out the door with you...and bring someone new back with you

Love, Tracy

First Parish of Sudbury’s Pastoral Associates

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| Annmarie Allen | Bruce Porter |
| Audrey Kipp | Fred Pryor |
| Linda Lamenza | Dawn Shilts |
| Polly Meltzer | |

In the event of a pastoral need, please call our minister or any of these Pastoral Associates.

People We Care About



This column seeks to share news (happy, sad, exciting events) of our lives so that we may support each other as we travel this road together. May it be so.

This column is not available on our web version of the newsletter. Please contact the office for further help.

If you have news for this column, send it to the First Parish Office. (office@fpsudbury.org)

Landscape Cleanup Day
This Saturday, April 19, 9am-1pm

All ages welcome.
Pizza for lunch!



Worship at the Meeting House

Sunday, April 20, 10 am
A Story of Hope
Rev. Cricket Potter

An ecological crisis is looming. Our home, planet earth, is suffering damage that is almost beyond repair unless we act now. The facts of it all are daunting and at times completely overwhelming. In honor of Earth Day, we will explore the great story of the cosmos and of earth's creation in a new way to find hope and courage for the work ahead.

Rev. Cricket Potter currently serves as Sabbatical Minister at First Parish Church United in Westford. Prior to that, she served as ministerial intern at First Parish in Lincoln where she was ordained in May 2007. Cricket lives in Acton with her daughter Haley.

Saturday, April 26, 4:30pm
Village Worship: A Passover Seder:
Why is this night different from all other nights?
With guest Nina Price, Congregation Beth El and First Parish volunteers

We join together to retell an ancient story with help from special guest and Seder leader, Nina Price, Director of Congregational Learning at Congregation Beth El in Sudbury. With Nina's help we can learn its meanings and wonder what it can teach us today. This is an "everyone's invited" Village Worship so we can share and learn and be together as neighbors and friends. First Parish will host our own members and friends along with guests from Congregation Beth El and other friends and neighbors in our communities. Join us – and bring a friend.

To plan for this special event, we would appreciate an RSVP by April 19 to
Dawn Shilts: dawn@shilts.org or

Sunday, April 27, 10 am
Fleeing to Safety
Rev. Katie Lee Crane

Biblical scholar, Marcus Borg, claims there are three "macro" stories at the heart of Jewish and Christian scripture, stories that shape the Bible as a whole. One of those macro stories, grounded in the history of ancient Israel, is the Exodus. When the candles are lit and Jewish children all over the world ask *why is this night different from all other nights*, they tell again the ancient story. But the Jewish Festival of Passover is layered with meanings that not only retell the old story but also invite listeners to explore what the story says about the present. Don't we hear stories every day of people far

away and in our own communities who are forced to flee for safety? We will explore contemporary stories of bondage and freedom, persecution and redemption in the face of terrorism and intentional destruction.

Today we will also bless ten handmade quilts made by the First Parish quilters on behalf of the congregation. They will be sent to Renewal House, a home for women and children seeking shelter from domestic violence. Each quilt will be a gift to a child who lives there.

There will be no Hearthside Chat today.
Congregants are encouraged to attend the conversation about Sudbury Town Center.

Sunday, May 4, 10 am
GOSPEL MUSIC SUNDAY: How I Got Over
The First Parish Choir with special guests:
TVS and Hunter Bennett's Jazz Ensemble

Listen and sing! We will fill our Meeting House to the rafters with songs of courage, defiance, and disguised messages, songs that keep hope alive in the face of oppression and suffering. Is it no wonder that traditional songs of slaves still inspire us today? They are songs of freedom. Songs of resistance. Songs about liberation from whatever enslaves all of us: hatred, poverty, exile.... Our special guests include: TVS (The Vocal Section) with Maddie Sifantus, Sally Sweitzer, and Suzanne Boucher and also Hunter Bennett's Jazz Ensemble with special guest keyboardist, Larry Luddecke.

Sunday, May 11, 10 am
Coming of Age
The Coming of Age Youth & their Mentors with
Tracy Duncan and Rev. Katie Lee Crane

This joyous, moving annual service is the culmination of the Coming of Age program for high school youth. Come be informed and inspired by the participants as they share their unique statements of faith, and celebrate as we welcome them as adults in our faith community.

There will be no Hearthside Chat today.
Congregants are encouraged to attend the conversation about Sudbury Town Center.

Sunday, May 18, 10 am
Heart & Soul of Singing: Skill Optional
Guest Emily Melcher with
Rev. Katie Lee Crane & Debra Morris-Bennett

Let's expand our repertoire and learn some songs from our new hymnal: *Singing the Journey*. Emily will bring her guitar and teach some of the best and, often, easiest offering. Can't carry a tune in a bucket? Spouse doesn't want you to sing even in the shower? Join us anyway. Skill is optional! This service is inspired by a workshop of the same title in which Emily helps us to connect with our "inner voice" and make a joyful noise together.

Board of Trustees Report

by Celia Hinrichs, Chair

We are all waiting for more evidence of spring to appear. We know it is spring when we wake up to daylight and end our workday still in the light. But we wait and watch for more. It is a time of expectation, excitement and yes, concern. Will all that we have carefully nurtured become all that we hope and expect?

The Board of Trustees is no exception. With high hopes for First Parish, we have planted the seeds for many wonderful projects. Here are a few that we expect to burst into bloom soon.

We applied to the Mass Bay District of the UUA for a Woburn grant to give us the opportunity to hire a Membership/Volunteer Coordinator for next year, and expect to hear this month.

We are hopeful that the results of the Canvass will allow us to fully fund our proposed budget for next year.

As we say goodbye to a superb tenure with Tracy Duncan, we join in the excitement and hopes for a wonderful new DRE.

We are excited about the Auction, as it gives us opportunities to have fun and financially support our congregation.

We are blessed to have a full Board now that Carol White has joined us.

We are hopeful that several more people will find that they can take leadership roles for the coming year.

The next time you enter First Parish take a moment to feel spring and the gifts it can bring to all of us.

Wanda Paik to Perform in Natick on May 4, 7pm

You'll soon get the chance to hear pianist Wanda Paik play pieces by Beethoven, Chopin, List, Dohnani and Rachmaninoff at the Natick Center for the Arts on May 4 where she will be the featured artist. A reception will be hosted by Sally LaRhette following the performance. The cost of the tickets is \$18, and to make reservations, call 508/647-0097.

4th Tuesday (B-Y-O) Lunch & Discussion

Tuesday, April 22 at 11:30

Each fourth Tuesday, we offer a focused conversation. We eat our own brown-bag lunches while we listen and, then for those able to stay a little longer than an hour, we continue our conversation about the topic of the day.

On Tuesday, April 22 we will meet at 11:30am and listen to a sampling of recordings of the American Public Media's popular, "This I Believe". Earlier this year our worship series was inspired by these radio broadcasts, and during this month's Tuesday lunch, we will hear and discuss several of the short statements of belief.



Info on your home requested

Have You Filled Out Your "Green Sanctuary Environmental Congregational Audit" Yet???

"I thought I was already doing a lot of green things, but after filling out this form I learned I could easily do more."

The audit covers energy used for your home, landscaping around your home, eating, recreation, driving and electrical/computer.

Introduced at the Green Fair on March 9 was The "Green Sanctuary Environmental Congregational Audit". It was written by our Green Sanctuary Committee for use by all members and friends of FPS, and all are requested to fill out the form. The user-friendly audit is almost entirely in a check-off form.

This audit will establish a baseline for comparison with the next time we do an audit in 2-3 years time. So please be honest — say what you really do, not what you plan to do or think you ought to be doing. It may be filled out on paper or online at <http://fpsudbury.org/wiki/GreenSanctuary/InternalAudit> If you wish you can download and print out the form.

The audit is a step in assisting members and friends in reducing your environmental CO2 footprint. The Green Sanctuary Committee will be offering additional assistance in the future and welcomes your questions and feedback.

Join the Discussion on Town Center Changes

The Town of Sudbury has put out to bid the proposal for the survey of the intersection Town Center. They expect to award the contract in late April and have the survey completed by late summer.

This is where we come in, BUT prior to that conversation we at First Parish need to have developed an idea of what we want the outcome of any redevelopment to be. So, come to a series of conversations about Town Center, facilitated by Trustees Bridget Hanson and Annmarie Allen. The meetings will be after service on April 27 and May 11, and Wednesday, May 7 at 7:00 pm. Our questions include: What are desirable outcomes of redoing the intersection? Are there changes that are Right Out? Who will negotiate for First Parish? And how much autonomy will our negotiating team have? Please join us for these initial discussions on this important topic.

Faith in Action News

Project Bread Walk for Hunger – May 4th. Join the First Parish team in our fifth annual walk. It is a great opportunity to see the Boston area in the spring, talk to your fellow FP walkers, and help to make an impact in our community. It is an inspiring event. Walk for only a few miles or the full 20 mile route. No one in this area should go hungry! Each year we have raised more money than the previous year. Help us reach our new goals! Call Beth Rust at.

Sudbury and First Parish Supports Habitat for Humanity

At their March 11th meeting the Sudbury Selectmen moved the Sudbury Habitat for Humanity project forward! Our thanks go to the Selectmen for approving the proposal, as well as the many organizations and individuals spoke in support of the project, including the Sudbury Clergy Association and its member congregations, Earth Decade Committee, MLK project at L/S, MICAH at St. Elizabeth's, the trustees here from First Parish and several neighbors.

The current plan calls for building a duplex colonial home at the corner of Dutton and Pratts Mill Roads built to look like a single-family home. Families who make 25-50% of the area median income and meet the other Habitat criteria could qualify to own their home and provide stability for their family. The Greater Worcester Habitat for Humanity affiliate is sponsoring this project.

If you are interested in learning more about the project, you are invited to attend one of the Public Information Sessions being held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month.

More information about the Sudbury Habitat project is available at Sudbury Community Housing Office site http://www.sudbury.ma.us/services/department_home.asp?dept=CHO or by visiting the Greater Worcester Habitat for Humanity site at www.gwhfh.org or by contacting Mara Huston (mara@hustonfam.net).

We're looking forward to having many First Parish members involved in any way possible. We will share our collection plate on May 4th with the Greater Worcester Habitat for Humanity.

Won't You Join Us? FIA (Faith In Action) is looking for more people to join the Committee. It meets 4 to 5 times a year. The primary responsibilities are to organize yearly activities such as Undecorate the Christmas Tree, Backpack Drive, and Walk for Hunger. The FIA also selects groups with whom to Share the Plate. Finally, the FIA organizes special drives and spearheads special projects. For the last 2 years, First Parish's special project was the Refugee Immigration Ministry's efforts to Prison Ministry, and would welcome more visitors to

Nate, the prisoner whom we are mentoring through his college education. This year our special efforts will be directed toward the Habitat for Humanity project in Sudbury, as described above. Please see Beth Rust for more information about Habitat and Carolyn Lee or Judy Deutsch about the Prison Ministry. Beth, Carol Jerry, Ginny Doxsey, Judy and Sherri Cline will be glad to talk with you about the Committee.

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)

Liaison Needed The liaison is responsible for coordinating the distribution and collection of the Guest-At-Your Table boxes and for informing our Congregation of the many activities of our Service Committee — very hands-on projects aimed at bringing more justice to this world by enabling people to help themselves. Please see Judy Deutsch or Beth Rust if you'd like to learn more about this position.

We Are Invited

- to take action with the UUA and UUSC for Immigrant Rights at Arlington Street Church, May 10th from 11:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. (lunch included) at the Arlington Street Church, Boston.
- to sign the Welcoming Massachusetts Pledge which can be found on the FIA bulletin board.

Signed pledges will be delivered to the Massachusetts Legislature which will be asked to pledge to make Massachusetts a welcoming state. President William Sinkford and Dr. Charles Clements have signed the UUA and the UUSC on to the Welcoming Massachusetts Initiative-Affirming Massachusetts as a Commonwealth that respects the dignity of all people, including immigrants.

Search for a Director of Religious Education

By Carol White, convener

The DRE Search team is happy to report that we are getting responses to our advertisement. We have been interviewing candidates by phone and have already met with one person.

We would all like to thank everyone in the congregation who has responded to the three questions we posed. Your feedback and responses have given us insight and will be helpful as we bring a new DRE on board.

In case you have not had a chance to respond to the questions, please take a minute to do so. The questions are as follows:

1. What do you know about Religious Exploration at First Parish?
2. What about RE do you like and want to keep?
3. What, if anything would you like to see change?

Send responses to carol.white1@verizon.net

Summer Services Begin June 15

Each week we come together on Sunday mornings for a worship service. Our regular congregational year runs through June 8, and then the worship services continue, as we engage in lay-led, more casual services, preceded by a little breakfast. The services begin at 10:00, breakfasts at 9:30, and there is childcare each Sunday from 9:30-11:30.

If you haven't attended a summer service, you don't know what you're missing! The topics are varied and stimulating, and our summer speakers are mostly folks from within our own congregation. They say that everyone has at least one sermon in them. Come to hear what our friends are passionate about!

And, maybe it's YOU who is ready to speak at a service? Or, maybe providing breakfast or music is more your cup of tea. The Sign Up sheet for summer service speakers and helpers will be up very soon in the Parish Hall. Have a look to see what has already been planned, and see what you are able to do to help.

Summer Services are brought to you by your Worship Associates Group, with special thanks to Tom Arnold, who is this year's Summer Service Coordinator. He can provide information, or feel free to call Fran Sharp in the office.

Bruce Langmuir to Receive Award

On April 26 Bruce Langmuir will be presented with one of the Environmental Activists of the Year Award at the Third Middlesex Area Democrats award breakfast, to be presented by U.S. Senator John Kerry and State Senator Pam Resor.

Bruce will receive this award for "leadership in the town of Sudbury, within our UU congregation, at our denomination's General Assembly, with Habitat for Humanity, and for wider associations with innumerable organizations committed to protecting our environment."

Congratulations, Bruce and keep up the good work.

**Green Tips**

Each month in the newsletter, the Green Sanctuary team will suggest a tip on what we all can do to be greener—that is, more ecologically-minded--Earth citizens.

Five Tips for Cooking ~ Dianne Hoaglin

1. Whenever possible, use the microwave rather than the oven, range, or toaster oven.
2. If you must use the oven, bake with glass or ceramic pans, which allow you to set the temperature in the oven 25 degrees lower than the recipe calls for.
3. Cover pans when cooking to keep heat in.
4. Use the appropriate size burner on the range--small for small pots, large for large pots.
5. Make more food than you need for one meal and then heat the leftovers in a microwave.

**Hearing Assistive Listening**

You may have noticed some of us wearing headphones in the Sanctuary during church services. If you think you might also benefit from using the church's hearing assistive listening system, please contact Bruce Langmuir soon. In the next couple of weeks Bruce will be ordering more assistive listening equipment.

The new equipment can be used in the Sanctuary, Parish Hall during special events, and in some meetings. Some of the equipment is wireless.



First Parish of Sudbury Unitarian Universalist
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Office hours: Monday - Friday 9:00am to 1:00pm

We embrace diversity and, as a Welcoming Congregation, are intentional about welcoming the presence and participation of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons in all aspects of congregational life.

Minister:	Rev. Katie Lee Crane	email: minister@fpsudbury.org
Director of Music:	Debra Morris-Bennett	email: music@fpsudbury.org
Director of Religious Education:	Tracy Duncan	email: reducation@fpsudbury.org
Administrator:	Fran Sharp	email: office@fpsudbury.org
Chair, Bd. of Trustees:	Celia Hinrichs	