



SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2009

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THIS SUNDAY’S WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, May 3, 10am

First Parish Honors Youth Coming of Age

FPS Coming of Age, class of 2009, Ms. Roberta Altamari, Rev. Katie Lee Crane

Join us this Sunday as we celebrate our ninth-graders who have completed our yearlong Coming of Age program. The service will feature the offering of personal credos by ninth graders who are making the transition from childhood to youth. This year’s Coming of Agers are: Nika D, Dylan M, Robyn R, and Rowan Y. All members of the community are invited to this special service, which begins at 10 a.m. and is open to all.

While many religions recognize this time with programs and ceremonies that affirm their youth's belief in their religious creed, Unitarian Universalism is unique in its approach to encourage youth to consider their own unique beliefs. What is important to our youth in today's challenging world? Come find out and be inspired!

Coming of Age Sunday is a youth-led worship service that ends a year of participating in a very comprehensive program, said Roberta Altamari, First Parish director of religious exploration and youth advisor. “Our goal is for our youth to explore and define their self-identity as Unitarian Universalists,” Altamari said. “This includes but is not limited to actively participating in discussions about deep theological questions; developing a close relationship with a First Parish mentor; exploration of social injustice and involvement in Social Action work; and involvement in meaningful worship.”

A highlight of the program and Coming of Age Sunday each year is the presentation of personal credos (statements of belief and belonging) by the youth and the invitation to become a member of First Parish.

Congratulations to our Breakfast Club youth for inspiring their young and adult friends alike to help them raise over \$150 for Pennies for Peace! Thank you to everyone who contributed!

WALK FOR HUNGER—DONATE NOW

First Parish will be sending its team of walkers to raise money for Project Bread on Sunday May 3. This will be the 5th time First Parish has been represented in this fundraiser. Money raised through The Walk for Hunger funds more than 400 food pantries, soup kitchens, food banks, and food salvage programs in 126 communities across Massachusetts. Our team consists of Sue C, Beth R, Roger C, Tom McG and Sherri C. Please join our team and help raise money toward our goal of \$6500.00 - OR donate to our team. You can donate on line by going to the following link - or give any team member your check, made out to Project Bread, or cash. We have to turn in our money on the day of the walk, May 3, so please have your donations to us by then.

http://www.projectbread.org/site/TR/Walk/General?pg=team&fr_id=1110&team_id=



R.E.flections
by a chalice D.R.E. amer

My how the year is flying by! I feel like I just started working here at First Parish a few months ago and I vividly remember meeting our children and youth for the first time. Now I can't believe that four of those youth will be Coming-of-Age this Sunday. What a pleasure it has been to get to know them and I look forward to hearing their unique statements of belief and belonging during this special worship. I know they will be inspiring in many ways!

I was most attracted to Unitarian Universalism specifically because of the Coming-of-Age program. Even though my older daughter was just one year old when I first visited First Parish of Watertown, I knew that I wanted her to participate in the program someday. It is so much more meaningful and significant than the rite-of-passage I made in my confirmation program at the Protestant congregational church I grew up in. Having had to affirm a creed I didn't understand or believe in, I knew that I didn't want something similar for my kids. When I found the Unitarian Universalism, I knew I had discovered my spiritual home.

As I turn forty next week, I reflect on such experiences and wonder how much has changed in my lifetime. What is the same and what is different? I came of age in the 80s, a Generation Xer who was exposed to all sorts of societal messages about the importance of consumerism in the era of Reaganomics. One of my college professors called mine the "I want what I want when I want it" generation. But I got a solid enough escape from cultural messages in my youth group and in my work with disabled adults. I had a safe spiritual haven that consistently reminded me of the importance of community and looking out for those people who are less fortunate than ourselves!

Human values like kindness and compassion and community still too often take a backseat to competition and consumerism in our society today (more than twenty years later). I often try to remind myself that our connection to one another is what is most important. This year, I'm asking my family and friends for no birthday presents. The gifts I want are "letters written from the heart", letters remembering favorite moments we shared or words of wisdom for turning 40. These would mean a lot to me.

As we celebrate our individual and community milestones in the coming weeks and months, may we all remember how special we are to each other as we celebrate what is truly important in our lives!

Loving blessings, Roberta ♥

Sunday, May 10, 10am
Music Sunday: Holocaust Cantata:
Music from the Camps
The First Parish Choir led by
Ms. Debra Morris-Bennett

On Sunday, May 10, the First Parish of Sudbury choir will present the *Holocaust Cantata: Songs from the Camps* during the Sunday morning worship service. With music composed by Donald McCullough and English lyrics and readings translated by Marcin Zmudzki, the Cantata threads together songs and readings that capture the experiences of prisoners incarcerated in Nazi concentration camps.

There is no plot or story, according to the composer. Each piece represents a different person, time, or camp, but, taken together, they offer nakedly honest responses to unthinkable experiences. For the inmates, say the program notes from the premier performance, "music functioned as something more than a light in the darkness; its very existence was a form of spiritual resistance in an environment where such resistance risked instant extermination."

It is both "spiritual sustenance" and "spiritual resistance" that the First Parish choir will be exploring in the context of worship. Debra Morris-Bennett, First Parish Music Director, says the piece is both jarring and uplifting. The mixed choir has been rehearsing for several months. The pieces, both spoken and sung, offer a raw look at the role of music in one's very survival. "Remarkably," says Morris-Bennett, "the overall effect is one of the resilience of the human spirit."

Composer Donald McCullough discovered the Kulisiewicz collection at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and immersed himself in the words of the prisoners, eventually choosing certain songs for his cantata. Lyricist Denny Clark translated the original Polish texts into English. The readings are based on interview transcripts, historical data and the story of Irena Augustynska Kafka.