

CROSSROADS

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Area Church at First Parish in Sherborn

January 4, 2010

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Sunday Services

January 10

– Rev. Ken Reeves, Sabbatical Minister, preaching.

January 17

– Rev. Maddie Sifantus, Guest Preacher.

January 24

– Rev. Ken Reeves, Sabbatical Minister, preaching.

January 31

– Rev. Ken Reeves, Sabbatical Minister, preaching.

Minister's Message

By Rev. Nathan Detering

Despite the test of old fashioned New England winter storm we had a great Sunday on January 3rd, my last before I return from sabbatical in late May. Thank you for the wonderful, heart-felt send-off you gave me. It means more you will ever know.

During my sermon I shared some wonderful news I received from the UUA about our congregation. Here is a portion of the note I received on Dec. 23rd from Rev. Harlan Limpert, V.P. for Ministries and Congregational Support of the UUA:

Dear Nathan,

Greetings. I have good news for you and the congregation you serve.

Each year, the UUA's Growth Team selects four congregations from across the United States that have shown significant and sustained numerical growth and have successfully navigated the oftentimes difficult challenges of being a prophetic UU congregation. We then provide each of these four congregations an opportunity to share their stories of success during a session often attended by 3,000-4,000 congregational leaders at our Annual General Assembly.

Nathan, it is my honor to tell you that the Area Church in Sherborn has been chosen as one of these four Breakthrough Congregations for 2010!

Some of the reasons that the congregation you serve was selected as a Breakthrough congregation include:

- *42% growth in adult membership in the last five years*
- *180% increase in religious education registration in the last five years*
- *Internalizing an identity as an "area church" with responsibilities to the larger community*
- *willingness to hire a part-time membership and communications person to further enhance the already effective work of your staff*
- *successfully installing a ramp to make your building more accessible.*

The letter then goes on to say that among our tasks is the creation of a 12 minute video highlighting our story, as well as our leading a workshop at General Assembly about our best practices.

I hope you will join me in celebrating this significant honor. As I said in my sermon, it is a reminder to me that in the midst of all the religious headlines often the most important religious work is happening below the radar, in faith communities like ours that strive to nourish the spirit and help heal the world.

I will miss you much and often over these next months, but I will also be savoring our good work together, and planning with Maureen Gormley and others our presentation at General Assembly in June. Two requests: if you are asked to help in any way this with this project, or if you think you have something to offer (particularly on the technical side) please say yes. And second: when the camera pans your ways – smile.

With much love and affection,

Nathan

Reflections

By Kate Holland, Director of Religious Education

As part of my job I regularly attend a covenant group of other Directors of Religious Education in our district. This is an important way for me to connect with other Unitarian Universalist churches and also offers us great support and fresh ideas for the work that we do in our congregations. This December our covenant group pondered the idea of unintended gifts. Each of us thought of either a concrete gift we've received that meant more than the giver knew or we contemplated something that someone had done for us that held greater meaning for us than it did to the doer. Over the holiday season I have thought of this conversation often, remembering that it is not always the "big thing" in the box that means so much during the holidays, but the ways that we all touch each other's lives. The moments when a burden is lessened because there is an ear to listen to that which weighs on your heart; The times a door is held for a mother of young children when life has become overwhelming.

I am blessed in the work that I do to see so many wonderful acts of caring and joy that it often humbles me. Each and every week I have over 60 adults each Sunday (multiplied by 3 trimesters a year) who show up to our church to teach our children and youth about our faith tradition. They do projects, have deep discussions, play games, sing and even laugh a good deal in our religious education classrooms. I am so blessed to see the work that they all perform in our classrooms each Sunday. I love walking past classroom windows seeing babies asleep in the caring arms of the adults and Senior Youth that work each Sunday in the nursery. I love seeing children sitting in circles listening to stories and singing songs with their teachers. I love seeing kids and adults outside on the front lawn playing games that go along with their curriculums and enjoying and looking closely at nature and the world around us. These men and women of our church teach not only the lessons on the pages of our curriculum books but also show by example the embodiment of our principals to the 137 children and youth in our Religious Education program. I also feel that all of us, even those among us who will never teach a Religious Education class, teach our children and youth each Sunday what it is to be community and what it is to give your time and treasure to a place that helps you find your deepest spiritual self and reminds you to live your life to your highest principals.

As I write my January column a week away from Christmas I wanted to thank all of you for your time, for your commitment, and for the honor of continuing to serve in the role of Director of Religious Education at our church, a role that gives me so many gifts in my life both personally and professionally. Truly, this is my beloved community.

Kate

An Intern's Journey

By Laura Randall

We've begun another year and talk inevitably turns to resolutions, self-improvements, and good intentions. We are now on the brighter side of the Winter Solstice and minute by minute the days are getting longer. Already we look ahead to spring with hope. We still have some cold, dim months between us and spring, however. Whether you love the winter months or spend each year dreading them, winter offers all of us extra challenges. While January is a time to focus on plans and hopes for the future, I think it is also an excellent time to focus on now.

Years ago, I heard a UU minister give a sermon on salvation and one phrase she repeated during the sermon has stuck with me all these years. What is saving your life now? Barbara Brown Taylor, one of my favorite writers and ministers, also uses this phrase. What is saving your life right now? I think January is a worthy time to ask ourselves this question. What is saving your life now? Is it that quiet moment you have to yourself in the morning before the rest of your family wakes up? Is it your cat who always snuggles with you after a long day? Is it a new episode of *30 Rock*? Is it knitting? Is it biking? Is it hot coffee? Is it *The Beatles*? What is saving your life right now?

Here is what is saving my life right now: My husband. My mother. My dogs. My books which are full of new insights with each reading. Bollywood movies. And you. You are saving my life each week by enlivening my faith and reminding me why I am on this path to professional ministry. This community is saving my life. Maybe it is saving yours, too.

Book Donations For Global Education

Let your bookshelves go green by donating your used books and helping to promote literacy and education where it is needed most.

Our bright blue book collection container for the non-profit organization **Reading Tree** (<http://www.readingtree.org>), formerly called Hands Across the Water, is located in the back of the north parking lot. Their mission is to collect used, unwanted books and ship them to needy schools, libraries, and other community-based organizations around the globe. Reading Tree provides the bin, picks up the books when the bin is full, and distributes them. **We've already filled the container four times ... let's do it again!**



The book bin can be found in the north parking lot up against the white fence.

Almost all books are accepted:

- General reading books
- Paperbacks or Hardcover books
- Fiction
- Non-fiction
- Children's books
- Textbooks

Please note that they *cannot* accept:

- Magazines
- Books with mold or mildew
- Books missing covers, pages
- Merchandise catalogs
- Telephone directories
- Encyclopedia sets

The container looks like a library book return, with a drop slot through which books can be inserted one-by-one. Please do not leave boxes or bags of books near the container.

Impact: Reading Tree has **donated over 9 million books globally** since their inception in 2000. Recent donations were distributed locally to the Rosie's Place shelter (2500 books), the Raising a Reader program (1000 books with a pledge to donate 9000 more), and the Boston Public School system (12,000 books). In addition, 250,000 books were delivered to India in November.

Thanks so much for your continued support of this program. Your "previously loved" books help combat illiteracy around the world, while also eliminating waste here in our communities. Here's a way to make a difference both for the environment and for international literacy and education.

Contact Lisa Palmer (lpalmer@comcast.net or 508-435-3867) with any questions.

News from the Interfaith Hospitality Network

Our past IHN hosting week went very well. (For those new to the church, the Metrowest Interfaith Hospitality Network includes 14 host churches who take turns hosting a small group of homeless families with children in their facilities.)

During our last host week, a total of over **60** people helped with setup and takedown, coordination, purchase of supplies, meal preparation and serving, staying overnight, and laundry. Our database of volunteers includes **93** people, not counting the Youth Group members.

Our next hosting session begins on **February 21**. Anyone new who would like to get involved **must** have a background CORI check and attend one of the following sessions:

Tuesday, Jan. 5, Christ the King, Holliston, 600 Central St.

Thursday, Jan. 21, First Parish Wayland, 50 Chchituate Rd.

Tuesday Feb. 2, St. Andrews, Wellesley, 79 Denton Rd.

Thursday Feb. 18, UUAC

All training sessions are from 6:30 to 8:00 PM.



Feel free to ask Barbie Breer (wambarb1959@comcast.net) or Joan Hunter (jbh_11@verizon.net) if you have any questions about MIHN. If you would like to volunteer to help in February, let us know what you would like to do and which training session you can attend.

Rock to Support IHN

There will be a rock concert to benefit the Interfaith Hospitality Network featuring local bands next Friday January 8 at 7:30pm at UU Society of Wellesley Hills – 309 Washington Street, Wellesley. Enjoy the sounds of Rime, A Shiny New Machine, The Awesome Express, and Jack Fiskio. Sixth graders and older are welcome!

Because Every Child Deserves a Home

Family Promise, the Interfaith Hospitality Network's parent organization was recently featured in the Huffington post. An excerpt from the article: *"America's promise is that each generation's prospects shall be brighter than their parents'. How often, as children, were we assured that our futures were limited only by our imagination? Now, however, that promise is under siege and those assurances ring hollow to children across the country lacking basic necessities like a place to call home, nutritious meals and access to schools."*

The complete article can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/KOlson>



Calling All Quilters

Please join us for fun , friendship and to help make a difference for women and children dealing with cancer and undergoing chemotherapy at our next quilt a thon on Monday, January 18, 2010. The quilt a thon will run from 9 am - 4 pm in Unity Hall . A wonderful lunch will be provided to all volunteers.

A Quilt-a-thon is an assembly line method of making multiple quilts on the same day. A quilt is a tangible connection from the giver to the recipient which says she/he is a person worth caring for during their struggle with cancer. No experience necessary. For more information and to RSVP, please contact Craig Cohen or Vicky Diamond

or <http://uuac-sherborn.org/quilt.html>

1500 Acts to End Hunger 2009 is Successful!

Thanks to all of you who donated so faithfully all year to A Place to Turn, the shelter where our weekly contributions go. They have welcomed our donations of food, toiletries, and paper products. All of our donations help them service the entire Metrowest area of 41 towns. According to their Executive Director, Joanne Barry, UUAC is one of their most regular donors and they have appreciated our efforts so much. They also are very happy with our matching program which has given them \$1500 this year to spend on needed items, especially perishables.

A Very Big Thank You from Barbie & Bill Breer for the Social Action Committee!

For January 2010 – please continue your donations as the need is still there. Suggested items for the next few weeks: Tuna, Canned Fruit/Vegetables, Soup



Caption describing picture or graphic.

Membership Corner

By Alice Clattenburg



Jonathon, Mary Carol, and Allison Lodge

Mary Carol Lodge has been living in Hopkinton for the past four years. Her son, Jonathon, lives with her and attends a Temple in Franklin. Mary also has a daughter, Allison, who lives in Colorado.

Mary was born and raised in New York City in a non-religious Jewish household, moved to Massachusetts to attend college and couldn't leave! She works at Hampton Inn in Franklin where she wears many hats, mainly as Concierge and Event Scheduler. Mary enjoys several activities, including kayaking, country line dancing, bowling and attending movies.

She first came to UUAC in October 2008 and "immediately felt at home." She says that she had been searching for a new home, but has put that on hold because she loves her new community at UUAC. Recently Mary has been volunteering at Good As New Shop and is thinking of joining the Women's Alliance. Welcome, Mary!

Denominational Affairs

By Jill Carroll, Denominational Affairs Chair

UU World's "Opening Words" in the Winter Issue is a passage found in our UUA *Singing the Living Tradition* hymnal #580. The author is The Rev. Dr. Morrison-Reed who wrote *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination* as well as *In Between: Memoirs of an Integration Baby*.

"The central task of the religious community is to unveil the bonds that bind each to all. There is a connectedness, a relationship discovered amid the particulars of our own lives and the lives of others. Once felt, it inspires us to act for justice.

It is the church that assures us that we are not struggling for justice on our own, but as members of a larger community. The religious community is essential, for alone our vision is too narrow to see all that must be seen, and our strength too limited to do all that must be done. Together, our vision widens and our strength is renewed."

This is an important thought to ponder as we start a New Year.

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to the Guest at Your Table collection...one of the many ways we at UUAC support just works.



Janet Petty, UUAC's newest Member Emerita

Update from the Board of Directors

At the November 5th meeting of the UUAC Board of Directors, we voted to give Janet Petty Lifetime Membership in UUAC by designating her as a Member Emerita.

In our mission to serve as a teaching congregation we support the minister and the Board of Directors to select candidates for the student ministry position in the church years 2010-2012. Nathan will interview and recommend a student. Janet McKetchnie is resigning, and the search for a new bookkeeper has begun. Jon Treon will be the liaison from the Board to the Space Planning Task Force. Since UUAC is a public water supplier, we need an Emergency Response Plan. Roger Demler, as Water Commissioner for the Town of Sherborn, has volunteered to work on this.

Classes for Lay Leaders Present and Future!

Are you one of our valued Lay Leaders (Board of Directors, Ministry Council, Committee Volunteers, +) or do you aspire to become one? The Mass Bay District is offering a number of classes in the coming weeks which can help you maximize your experience at UUAC. The best part? **You can attend any of these classes at no cost to you!** For more information or to register (limited to 4), please contact Nancy Cantor at nancy@cantorconsulting.com

Please also contact Nancy with your interest in serving the church in a leadership position – she can help you discover the best opportunity for you.

Ministry Across the Generations: Creating Multigenerational Communities - a Learning Congregation series (LC) workshop

Start Date: February 27th, 2010

Location: [First Parish Church in Weston](#)

9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Led by Rev. Parisa Parsa, Minister, First Church Parish, Milton, MA & Robin Barraza, Director of Religious Education, First Parish Milton.

Intentional multigenerational ministry calls us to meet people of all ages with curiosity, to embrace the richness that diversity brings to our congregation, and to come to know one another as we wish to be known. This workshop will explore how we might build the beloved community by living into the fullness of our common humanity through authentic relationships across the generations.

Discovering the Roots of Islam

On January 12, 2010 UUAC First Parish Sherborn will present a seminar on "Discovering the Roots of Islam", with our own Katherine McHugh. The program looks at some of the basic tenets of the Islamic faith.

With a constant stream of information pouring from our 24/7 media, we still receive confusing and oftentimes contradictory sound bytes. So what do Muslims believe? Who was Mohammed? What is the difference between Suni and Shia? How is the role of the Koran different from how Christians view the Bible?

What can we all do to deepen our and others' understanding of Islam's many facets? We invite you to attend this enlightening program, geared to begin our search into the many facets of the Islamic faith. And pass along the date and time to others in your church and in your community we welcome all. The program begins at 7 PM in Unity Hall at First Parish in Sherborn, January 12, 2010.

Annual UUAC Potlucks!

Saturday evenings, January 23 and 30, we will again be enjoying our community potluck dinners together. If your last name begins with A-J, your dinner will be on the 23rd. If your last name begins with K-Z, you'll get together on the 30th. Make sure to save the date and take this opportunity to connect with each other in January. You will be receiving more information and invitations in the coming weeks. If you have any questions or would like to help, please contact our Celebrations Chair, Darrah Bryans, at debryans@gmail.com

Unitarian Universalist Area Church at First Parish in Sherborn

11 Washington Street, P.O. Box 158
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(508) 653-1422
<http://www.uuac-sherborn.org>

Worship Service: Sunday Mornings at 10:30 a.m.
Crossroads, the newsletter of the UUAC, is mailed to all members and pledging friends via US or electronic mail. Non-members receive a complimentary three-month subscription. The newsletter may be viewed at the church website. Printed copies can be picked up at church.

Crossroads Listing Policy

Submissions to *Crossroads* are always welcome and may be e-mailed to uuac@uuac-sherborn.org (*word format preferred*); or typed/legibly handwritten copy may be dropped off in the Church Office by noon on the deadline date.

We are happy to publish any announcements about UUAC, UU-sponsored events and other non-profit activities of interest to the community. We are sorry we cannot list for-profit announcements.

UUAC Board of Directors

President: Howard Teibel
President-Elect: Jeff Barton
Treasurer: Hank Rauch
Clerk: Alice Clattenburg
At-Large: Deb Boyce
Buildings and Grounds: Allan Green
Finance: Jon Treon
Personnel: Adrienne Walker
Minister (Ex-Officio): Reverend Detering

UUAC Ministry Council

Chair (Ex-Officio): Reverend Detering
UUAC President-Elect (Ex-Officio): Jeff Barton
Adult Programs: Gail Donaldson
Caring Committee: Becky Sheble-Hall
Denominational Affairs: Jill Carroll
Celebrations: Darrah Bryans
Membership: Maureen Gormley
Music: Cathy Leonard
Religious Education: Barbara Bolten and Gary Leonard
Social Action: Vicky Diamond
Women's Alliance President: Dot Widmayer
Worship: Jeff Barton
Youth Representative: Meg Barton

UUAC STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

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Ministerial Intern:
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Director of Religious Education:
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**Membership Development /
Communications Coordinator:**
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communications@uuac-sherborn.org

Music Director: Laura Jensen
401-787-3032/music@uuac-sherborn.com

Sexton: Mark Forsythe
sexton@uuac-sherborn.org

Save the Date! Annual Church Retreat April 30 - May 2

Although it may seem to be far off in the future, plans are underway for the Annual Church Retreat at the Cape Cod Sea Camps in Brewster, MA. One of the highlights of the retreat is a gala clambake, and that clambake is free if you register for the retreat in January! For more information, go to the church retreat web page <http://www.uuac-sherborn.org/retreat.html> and download a flyer with registration information. If you're new, here are some tips:

- We have a scholarship fund for people who might otherwise be unable to come.
- Both children and adults have a great time at the retreat.
- There's nothing more soothing than having time by the bay with friends.

Questions? Call Kathy Greer at 508-561-0764 or Bob Cipriani at 781-934-7317



Enjoying the campfire at the

January 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3	4	5 7 PM - 8:30 PM Is That all There Is? Dedicated Seekers - Cooney Room	6 10 AM - 4 PM Good as New Shop - Unity Hall 7 PM - 9 PM Covenant Group Leaders - Library 7 PM - 8:30 PM Buddhism Group - Cooney Room 7 PM - 9 PM Music Committee - Choir Loft 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM Finance Committee - Yellow Classroom	7 7 PM - 9 PM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Loft 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM Board of Directors - Cooney Room	8	9
10 9 AM - 10:15 AM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Loft 11:40 AM - 12 PM Chalice Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary 12 PM - 2 PM Senior Youth Group - Library 12 PM - 1 PM Social Action Committee - Cooney Room	11 7 PM - 9 PM Religious Education Committee - Yellow Classroom	12 7 PM - 8:30 PM Is That all There Is? Dedicated Seekers - Cooney Room 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM Islam Program - Unity Hall	13 10 AM - 4 PM GANS Half-Price Sale - Unity Hall 7 PM - 9 PM Buildings & Grounds - Library 7 PM - 8:30 PM Buddhism Group - Cooney Room	14 7 PM - 9 PM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Loft	15	16
17 9 AM - 10:15 AM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Loft 10 AM - 11:30 AM OWL - Cooney Room 11:40 AM - 12 PM Chalice Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary 11:45 AM - 12 PM Getting to Know Us - Cooney Room 12 PM - 1:30 PM Coming of Age - Library	18 9 AM - 4 PM PQP Quilt-a-Thon - Unity Hall	19 7 PM - 8:30 PM Is That all There Is? Dedicated Seekers - Cooney Room	20 10 AM - 4 PM GANS Half-Price Sale - Unity Hall 7 PM - 8:30 PM Buddhism Group - Cooney Room	21 7 PM - 9 PM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Loft	22 7 PM - 9 PM Junior Youth Group - Library	23 9 AM - 3 PM MBD Youth Advisor Training - Unity Hall 5 PM - 8 PM Church Potluck - Names A - J
24 9 AM - 10:15 AM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Loft 10 AM - 11:30 AM OWL - Cooney Room 11:40 AM - 12 PM Chalice Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary	25 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM Adult Programs Committee - Cooney Room	26 7 PM - 8:30 PM Is That all There Is? Dedicated Seekers - Cooney Room	27 10 AM - 4 PM Good as New Shop - Unity Hall 7 PM - 8:30 PM Buddhism Group - Cooney Room	28 7 PM - 9 PM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Loft	29	30
31 9 AM - 10:15 AM Choir Rehearsal - Choir Loft 10 AM - 11:30 AM OWL - Cooney Room 11:40 AM - 12 PM Chalice Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary 12 PM - 2 PM Senior Youth Group - Library						