

First Church in Jamaica Plain, Unitarian Universalist

January 2008 Newsletter

P.O. Box 186, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130 – (617) 524-1634

Rev. Terry Burke, Minister
Rev. Marshall Hawkins, Affiliate Minister
Rev. Patricia Brennan, Affiliate Minister
George Wardle, Trustees Chair
Andrée Záleská, RE Director
Jean O'Leary, Church Administrator

Ellen McGuire, Music Director
Janna Frelich, Soloist
Giulia Norton, Standing Committee Chair
Philomena O'Donnell, Head Usher
Monroe Heyman, Building Use

Thoughts From Rev. Terry Burke

Lots of foods are supposed to be good luck when eaten on New Year's Day. Black-eyed peas are considered especially good. The Internet tells me that ham and other pork products are desirable, as pigs are a symbol of prosperity. Spherical and circular foods, such as donuts and even Brussels sprouts, are also lucky.

On New Year's Day, my wife Ellen, two of our children and our dog Cobb and I went hiking in the Blue Hills. Young and middle-aged went their separate trails; we had the dog. Braving black ice, we made it to the observation tower: the metro Boston area looks so wooded and peaceful from up top of the tower.

Traipsing down the hill, we greeted cheerful strangers with a "Happy New Year." We watched folks going up the hill on the lift and zooming down on their skis. Reunited with our children in the parking lot, we then drove to Dunkin' Donuts for warm beverages. Ellen, Cobb and I indulged in a New Year's Munchkin each. The health conscious children declined the lucky spherical objects.

Through the ups and downs of 2008 to come, I'm grateful we are all in this together. I wish you a wonderful year, a year full of friendship, creativity, and love.

Happy New Year! Happy 25 years together! Hugs, Terry

Greetings from Andrée, Director of Religious Education

The darkest days are now behind us, and we've been blessed with snow as well. 2007 was a good year for us: we have many new families in RE, classes are filling up and attendance has been good. I want to thank our outgoing teachers, Laura McCord and Chris Toppin, and welcome with gratitude Larry Zaborski and Kevin and Valerie Marren for this term. Meanwhile, Chuck Collins and Suzanne Demarco have taken on a whole year with the 4th-6th graders! And Alice Hawley is co-teaching the multi-church OWL class. My job couldn't be easier thanks to all these folks.

Having cleaned up our space last year, now is a good time to work on program building, and to that end we are planning to take up a new and very different curriculum called Spirit Play. Montessori based, it focuses on telling the stories of the major religions, as well as our UU traditions, in a very tactile and meditative way, using small objects. A Spirit Play committee is forming to acquire the materials, implement the program and practice the method, and we already have four teachers trained in our program. Look for upcoming **Spirit Play demonstrations** that will show the whole congregation how this works.

Terry, Ellen and I are also working hard on developing a new approach to intergenerational worship through the "Five-Senses Sundays", and we welcome feedback and suggestions from the whole congregation.

Please contact me directly with your input, your donations of time or materials, and your interests of any sort in Religious Education.

Happy New Year to you all! It is a pleasure to work with you. -Andree Zaleska

Celebrating Twenty Five Years of a Generous, Unique and Ubiquitous Partnership!

Please join us this Sunday for a special service to recognize our

25 years with Terry Burke and Ellen McGuire.

Carl Scovel will be preaching and following the service we will have a reception in the Parish Hall. We could use more appetizers and sweets for the reception as well as muscle power to set-up and clean-up. If you can bring snacks like small sandwiches, cheese and crackers, hummus, veggies and dips, fruit, or desserts we would greatly appreciate it. Please let either Thalia McMillion, tmcmillion@gmail.com, or Alice Hawley, ahhawley@mindspring.com know.

Coming Up at First Church

Rev. Terry Burke will be attending a two-week educational program at St. George's College in Jerusalem! He leaves on January 30th, and the program begins on February 1st. Terry will be back for the service on the 17th, then away on vacation during the February school vacation week. Rev. Marshall Hawkins will be on call for him during that time in case of pastoral emergencies. The minister's revised letter of call states: "The minister is encouraged to avail himself of opportunities to further his professional capabilities, through attendance at conferences, colloquies, etc., sponsored by the denomination or other appropriate sources. The total amount of time spent out of town for such activities should not exceed three weeks in any on church year..."

Upcoming Adult RE Class: *Exodus*, led by Marshall Hawkins, Meeting Monday evenings for six sessions, Jan. 21 thru Feb. 25, 7:30-9:00pm, in the Morse Room.

Exodus tells the story of Moses leading the Israelites out of captivity in Egypt. It contains some of the Bible's most vivid imagery, including the burning bush, the seven plagues, and the receiving of the Ten Commandments. Our group will engage with these characters and events—and with each other—looking toward insights into our own lives. Minimal reading required. Visual media and art used to enhance the discussion. Participants should try to commit to attending all six sessions, to help build group chemistry. Sign up at the side table in church, or send an email to: mhawkins@qis.net.

Have you thought about joining First Church's adult choir? We are a group of singers with good ears, although not all of us can read music. We sing twice a month (avoiding three-day weekends) and rehearse the Thursday evenings before we sing. It's a good time to join us, since we are beginning to prepare for the Fellowship Dinner and Easter. For more information, talk with our Music Director, Ellen McGuire: etut53@aol.com

Literary Celebrations. The book group had a potluck in November to celebrate 9 years of meeting. It was a true potluck and we had lots of really tasty and nutritious entrees and salads and drinks and... no desserts! The spread was quite a treat, and we actually did talk about the book for a while. As always, people are encouraged to come whenever the book looks interesting, with no pressure to keep coming or show up every month. The order of service has the books we've selected for upcoming months. Here's to sitting in a warm room, reading, and watching the snow." –Giulia

Book Group: January 8 we'll be *On The Road* with Jack Kerouac. You've always wanted to read *On The Road*! Come slake your wanderlust with us." On February 5, we'll discuss the ethical and personal dilemmas presented in *Stones from the River*, about a dwarf living in small-town Germany across the two World Wars. The author, Ursula Hegi, lived in Germany until she was 18 and brings the town and citizens to life with intimate detail. On March 4, we continue on the themes of " how fate can debase youthful expectations" (according to one review) and of the power of the oral tradition with Truman Capote's first novel, *Other Voices, Other Rooms*. Come to one session or all; anyone can bring books to suggest.

[Unitarian Universalist Bed & Breakfast Directory](#)

Do you dream of inexpensive vacation travel to interesting destinations where you can stay in the homes of friendly people who share your ideals and are happy to provide directions and advice for their area?

The UU bed and breakfast directory *UU're Home* (formerly *Homecomings*) can fulfill your dream. For 28 years, we've provided a network of hosts in the United States (and a few abroad) who enjoy meeting new friends and who are happy to open their home to like-minded people.

You can also become a host and be listed in the directory. Contact us at info@uurehome.com, or at 828-281-3253, and we will gladly send you information about listing your accommodations.

Host listings on the *UU're Home* website at www.UUreHome.com are updated whenever changes are made or new hosts are added. The paper edition is published every year in April (and has some listings different from those on the website). For a copy of the 2008 directory and a year's access to the website listings, please click on "become a member" to pay by credit card or send a check for \$25 and your e-mail address to UU're Home, 43 Vermont Court, Asheville, NC 28806.

[Jamaica Plain Forum's Upcoming Events:](#)

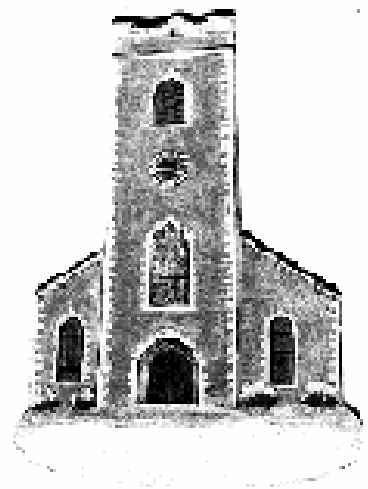
"Turning the Climate Corner" with Ross Gelbspan
4 January – 7:00pm

"Mapping Stem Cell Research: Terra Incognita"
11 January – 7:00pm

"Banished" Documentary and Discussion
18 January – 6:00pm

"Everything's Cool" Documentary and Discussion w/ Gelbspan
25 January – 7:00pm

In Parish Hall-for more info: www.jamaicaplainforum.org



[Trust Notice Re: Planned Giving to First Church](#)

Would you like to help your children's children, nieces and nephews attend First Church in the future? The Trust, the church's endowment, contributes to the operating budget and makes needed repairs to the church building each year.

The Trust has funded major capital projects such as the tower and clockwork. The Trust has also provided the required matching money, which enabled the Church to receive grants to build the disability access ramp and bathroom and to reupholster the pews in the sanctuary.

Include First Church in writing your will or preparing your estate plan. You may contact Vauntina Franklin, 617-434-4627, the Trust administrator at *Bank of America*, directly or you may speak with any Trustee. The Trustees are:

George Wardle, Penny Wells,
Theo Colburn, Gerry Culver,
Judith Garfunkel.

Membership Corner

"Bring your friend to church" Sunday! The new year has started but we can still "party-on" with friends and family. Continue the celebrations on January 27th.... it is "Bring your friend to church" Sunday! Start the day with your friend/s or family members at 9:30 am for a delicious breakfast, followed by the regular service at 11:00 am. Please join us in sharing our church community. Let us know how many people you will invite on this special day by sending an email to cherprieve@yahoo.com by January 25th so we will know how much food to prepare!

The next New to UU Discussion group meets on Tuesday January 15th at 7:00 pm. Our focus is "A Chosen Faith" by John Buehrens and Forrest Church (see link [A Chosen Faith](#)). All are welcome!

Choosing to join First Church in Jamaica Plain is making a commitment to our community. The members of our spiritual community need to know that we can count on one another to walk together in beloved community. Being a member of our community means getting to know our covenant, our programs, and each other. Becoming a member brings benefits and support. Any questions on this process please email/call the membership chair, Cherisse, at cherprieve@yahoo.com, or call our minister Terry Burke at the church office. The next book signing is scheduled for February 3. Please contact us if you want to be a part of this special service.

January calendar follows.

January 2008 Calendar

- 3 Thursday Choir Rehearsal 8:00pm
- 4 Friday JP Forum: Turning the Climate Corner 7:00pm
- 6 Sunday Membership Mtg. 9:30am
RE resumes
Carl Scovel preaching 11:00am
Celebration of Terry & Ellen's 25 years 12:00pm
- 7 Monday Building Committee Mtg. 7:00pm
- 8 Tuesday Book Group 7:30pm
- 11 Friday JP Forum: Mapping Stem Cell Research 7:00pm
- 13 Sunday RE Committee Mtg. 9:00am
Service: Silver & Gold, Rev. Burke 11:00am
Finance Committee Mtg. 12:30pm
Social Justice Committee Mtg. 12:30pm
- 15 Tuesday Standing Committee Mtg. 7:00pm
- 16 Wednesday Ministry Committee Mtg. 7:00pm
- 18 Friday JP Forum: *Banished*-documentary & disc. 6:00pm
- 20 Sunday Chuck Collins preaching 11:00am
Denominational Affairs Comm. Mtg. 12:30pm
- 21 Monday Adult RE: *Exodus* 7:30pm
- 24 Thursday Choir Rehearsal 8:00pm
- 25 Friday Youth Night
JP Forum: *Everything's Cool*-documentary 7:00pm
- 27 Sunday *Bring a Friend Sunday*
Rev. Burke preaching: "Christian Fascists" 11:00am
Semi-Annual Congregational Mtg. 12:30pm
- 28 Monday Adult RE: *Exodus* 7:30pm
- 31 Thursday Choir Rehearsal 8:00pm