

First Church in Jamaica Plain, Unitarian Universalist

March Newsletter, 2008

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

email: Firstchjp@aol.com

web site: www.firstchurchjp.org

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

I had a wonderful study/pilgrimage in Jerusalem, thanks to you! I look forward to sharing my experiences, memories, and photographs in the weeks ahead. The church Music Director Ellen McGuire (also my spouse) and I are doing an adult religious education class on memory, starting on April 2nd. I will be speaking on the spiritual use of memory in religious groups, and Ellen will be helping us to create "memory boxes" or "shrines" to honor and remember an individual or event. Something along the lines of the Mexican shrines for All Saints Day, the "Day of the Dead."

Easter week comes early this year. We will recall the stories that Jesus' disciples told about his life and teachings, death and resurrection. We remember those stories in our own ways in our community. We have a Maundy Thursday Communion service, open to all; a Good Friday Tenebrae Service that involves readings of modern day crucifixions with the extinguishing of candles, ending in darkness; an early 7AM service in our Parish graveyard (come rain or shine), and a celebration with special music in our sanctuary at 11AM.

I look forward to sharing my memories of the places in those stories that I have seen. My Russian friends say "Memory Eternal" when someone dies. Our memories as a community straddle time and eternity, and connect the living and the dead. I wish you a wonderful season of reflection and joy!

Yours,
Terry

Annual Church Retreat: Deepening Our Conversation With God, Friday, March 7th after dinner through Sunday, March 9th after lunch. This retreat will give people a chance to explore spiritual practices such as meditation, poetry and other approaches.

~Facilitated by: Rev. Terry Burke and Rev. Carl Scovel

~Location: Campion Renewal Center, Weston.

~Cost: \$200 per person, including all meals and private, simple room

Please contact Mary Brady if you are interested or have any questions or would like a ride to and from the retreat. Mbrady1983@aol.com, 524-8918.

Greetings from Andrée, Director of Religious Education

Dear RE Families and Friends:

For the first time in a number of years, we are seeing growth in the program, with classes that have 10-12 kids enrolled. The preschool group is especially promising, with a dozen kids on the list (though it's often hard for families to attend regularly at this stage in life!) Much credit for this burst of energy is due to publicity from the JP Forum (thanks Chuck!) and to the recovenanting process of last year that strengthened our community. But I feel that the RE Committee and myself can also be proud of the work we've done to create a more cohesive program: focusing on space improvement, our spiritual and educational goals for the children, and looking for curricula that really work. Please continue to tell your friends about our church and its programs—the more the merrier!

I almost had an anxiety attack looking at the spring calendar just now—so much is happening. **March 9th is our next JP Songfest**—join us for a few songs right after coffee hour (1pm); the acoustics in the Parish Hall are so good that everyone sounds fantastic! **Easter (Mar.23) is a family service**, with everyone in the sanctuary, followed by the renowned **Graveyard Egg Hunt** (bring your baskets!)

We then switch to our third term in RE, and teachers are still needed—please contact Andrée if you can teach even a few lessons. Our next **Five-Senses Sunday (April 20)** will be a celebration of Earth Day, with an intergenerational service for all ages.

There has also been talk of RE/church participation in the **Wake Up the Earth Parade, May 3**. One-time organizers are needed to work with the kids on banners and puppets for the parade (again, please contact me directly if you are interested.)

And just a quick bit of self-promotion: I am preaching on March 9 and the topic is “*Mega Church JP*”—come find out what in the world that could be!

Blessings to all,

Andree Zaleska, Zaleska@aczaleska.com

Coming Up at First Church

Lenten Musical Meditation: On Sunday, March 9, at 7:00PM, an hour for prayer and reflection, with organ and voice, planned for those in the prayer class or retreat, and for the rest of us, too.

Calling all wind players!! Do you play a wind instrument? Or, even a string instrument might work! If so, would you be interested in getting together and playing a trio or quartet, etc, for the annual "Big Show" here at church coming up on April 13? It would be really fun to get something together for the show and to play with others in the congregation who don't get to do so very often! This is designed to be fun and no stress! Please call Betsy McDowell if you are interested!

New Class: Making a Memory Box, Spirit House, or Shrine

5 Wednesday evenings at 7:30, starting April 2.

Taught by Rev. Terry Burke and Ellen McGuire

Memory box: remembering a person, place, event, etc.

Spirit house: creating a focus for meditation.



My Uncle Bub, memory box by Ellen McGuire

As part of our current church focus on various kinds of prayer, we invite you to learn about the ways that “houses” or shrines are used in various religions traditions, both to remember and to pray. Each class member will also make a memory box or spirit house to take home. There is an estimated cost of \$10 for materials.

For more information, contact ellenmcguire9@gmail.com

The Big Show is coming! On Sunday, April 13 at 4, we will repeat our (very successful) Amateur Variety Show. Last year, we enjoyed singing, skits, poetry & drama, and a live haiku contest. Free admission! Afterwards, we all ate lasagna together. Would you like to join the fun? If you would like to sign up, or find out more, email Ellen McGuire at ETut53@aol.com

First Church Trust and UU Niagara Trip

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 for 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 directly contact Vauntina Franklin, 617-434-4627, the Trust administrator at Bank of America, or you may speak with any Trustee. The Trustees are: George Wardle, Penny Wells, Theo Colburn, Gerry Culver, and Judith Garfunkel.

Join UUs from around the country in Niagara Falls, July 20-23, 2008

Come experience the wonder of Niagara Falls including some great educational opportunities while being taken care of like royalty. The UU Church of Niagara is conducting a four day UU Niagara Experience that is a lifetime opportunity to encounter the Falls up close from every perspective. Spend four days with us exploring the rich history and natural beauty around the Falls. For information visit our website: <http://www.uunex.net/> You don't have to be UU to join us.

March Birthdays!

Libba Ingram 11

Joel Peterson 11

Anne Rogers 21

Lucinda Toppin 27

March Calendar Follows!

March Calendar

1	Saturday	Fellowship Dinner 7:00pm
2	Sunday	Sunday Service: <i>Prayer</i> 11:00am JP Forum: <i>Water</i> , Maud Barlow speaking 7:00pm
3	Monday	Building Committee Mtg. 7:30PM
4	Tuesday	Book Group 7:30PM
5	Wednesday	Adult RE group: Prayer 7:30PM
6	Thursday	Suzy Saul's Memorial Service 10:30AM
7-9	Friday-Sunday	Retreat at Campion Center 7:00PM
9	Sunday	Newcomers Coffee w/George Wardle 9:30AM Andree Zaleska preaching 11:00AM Social Justice Committee Mtg. 12:30PM Lenten Musical Meditation 7:00PM
12	Wednesday	Adult RE Group: Prayer 7:30PM
13	Thursday	Choir Rehearsal 8:00PM
14	Friday	JP Forum: King Corn documentary, potluck & discussion 6:30PM
16	Sunday	RE Committee Mtg. 9:30AM Palm Sunday 11:00PM Capital Campaign Mtg. 12:30pm
18	Tuesday	Standing Committee Mtg. 7:00PM
19	Wednesday	Anniversary of the Start of Iraq War
20	Thursday	Maundy Thursday Service 7:00PM Choir Rehearsal 8:00pm
21	Friday	Good Friday Tenebrae Service 7:00PM
23	Sunday	Parish Graveyard Easter Service 7:00AM Easter Service 11:00AM
28	Friday	Youth Night
29	Saturday	Blue Jeans Saturday
30	Sunday	Service: Lucia Joyce preaching 11:00AM