

FIRST RELIGIOUS SOCIETY

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NEIGHBOURS & FELLOW CREATURES

The First Religious Society in Carlisle

Unitarian Universalist
A Welcoming Congregation

Volume XXXI, No. 16

April 16, 2007



WE ARE LOCATED IN CARLISLE CENTER OPPOSITE THE COMMON, JUST OFF ROUTE 225 AROUND THE CORNER FROM THE ONLY ROTARY IN TOWN. A CLASSIC NEW ENGLAND MEETING HOUSE WITH THE TOWN CLOCK IN THE STEEPLE. COME AS YOU ARE. "LOVE IS THE DOCTRINE OF THIS CHURCH, THE QUEST FOR TRUTH IS OUR SACRAMENT AND SERVICE IS OUR PRAYER."

Newsletter for April 16, 2007

Church Service and Sunday School: Sunday at 10:30 a.m.
Coffee Hour following services.
Dates and details of church events on the Calendar on page 7 in this newsletter.
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Coffee Committee: Gio DiNicola, Anne Ketchen, Richard Ketchen, Tom Rourk,
Suzanne Whitney Smith, Jack O'Connor, Jenifer Bush
Union Hall Coffee House: Dian Cuccinello 978-278-5745,
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THE ECLECTIC CLERIC

"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood...."

By now I assume many of you have already heard the news that I have been designated as the Ministerial Candidate at the First Parish in Portland Maine. Assuming a positive congregational vote next month to affirm the choice of the Search Committee, I will be moving from Carlisle later this summer to begin my new ministry "Down East" in the fall.

Naturally, I am very excited about the professional opportunity offered by this ministry in Portland. Judging solely from the number of applicants, First Parish was the most sought-after pulpit in our denomination this past year, so I feel both greatly honored to have been selected in preference to so many of my talented ministerial colleagues, and also humbled by the demanding challenges I know await me there.

Notwithstanding my enthusiasm for the new ministry that awaits me, I am also a little sad that it means leaving my ministry in Carlisle just as I felt things were starting to get interesting here in Thoreau's "City in the Woods." I'm especially disappointed that I

will not be around next year to celebrate the 250th anniversary of this congregation's gathering, or to work with all of you as you continue to explore and implement the new initiatives identified at last February's all-church Visioning Retreat.

The Union Hall Coffeehouse, our building Small Group Ministries program, my work with the Carlisle Town Common Committee and the new "Livable Carlisle" group, not to mention Alison Saylor's plans to create an "Infinity Garden" behind the church, anticipation (finally) of receiving town approval for the proposed cellular antennae in our steeple, and rumors of an impending kitchen remodel at the parsonage.... After all we've gone through to get to this point, it is hard to think about packing up just as our shared labor is beginning to bear fruit. But I trust that you will carry on in good order, as you begin now the process of searching for *your* next settled minister.

The lives and work of parish ministers are often wrapped in moments of transition. The transition from single to couple represented by a wedding, or from couple to family when a child is dedicated. And, of course, the ultimate transition from life to death. Every year new people join the congregation, while

THE ECLECTIC CLERIC *(continued)*

others step back, or move on to other places, other priorities. Like the communities we serve, ministry is ultimately little more than a network of constantly evolving relationships: a long series of joyful hellos and sad goodbyes, each one a small birth, or a little death. This transition is no different. It simply seems a little more intense, because it means saying so many goodbyes all at once.

There are lots of things I'm going to miss about my four year sojourn here in Carlisle. My doctors, dentist, nutritionist and therapist, for example. My gym in Waltham, and my regular Monday/Wednesday night over-35 pick-up basketball games in Concord. The lunchtime sushi buffet at the Bamboo Restaurant in Westford, and breakfast meetings at Paul's...or Helen's...or the Riverview.... Not to mention Carlisle's relatively close proximity to both Harvard and Davis Squares: two of my most favorite places on the planet.

I'm going to miss my regular monthly lunch gatherings with Woody and several other local UU clergy at the First Parish in Chelmsford, and my easy access here to so many UU "pilgrimage" sites (like Emerson's

house and Walden Pond). Or the special treat as the weather grows warmer or simply walking with Parker down to Kimball's for an ice cream, and then back through the Green cemetery before pausing to watch a ball game at the bottom of the hill.

Mostly, though, I'm going to miss all of you, and the vision of a revitalized church I believe we would have created together had we simply continued to dream big dreams and to embrace that shared vision, then rolled up our sleeves and done the good, hard work of generous hospitality and selfless service I've seen so often here. Yet I also know that if these dreams are indeed destined to become true, they truly need to be YOUR dreams, and that you are perfectly capable of achieving them without me.

So of course I wish you well as I prepare now to move on to my own new priorities, leaving you here to walk the walk and carry on the good work that for a time we have walked and carried together. It has been a real privilege to serve this congregation for the past four years...the longest my restless soul has ever allowed me to serve a single congregation. I look forward to saying goodbye to many of you personally in these last few months I have remaining as your "sheepdog." And I look forward as well to hearing good news from my former "neighbours & fellow creatures," as you continue on your own path down the road in the woods that you have chosen.....twj

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Please view the FRS calendar on our website under "Calendar".

All are welcome to attend Parish Committee meetings, except in cases of executive sessions

FRS Committee meetings are open to any interested party. To address a committee on a specific issue please contact the committee chair.

Next Newsletter Deadline is April 23, 2007

If you would like to be added to or removed from the newsletter mailing list please call or email the church office.

SPEAKER UPDATE

On January 28 Steve Oleskey spoke to us about his experiences as lead counsel representing six Bosnian detainees at Guantanamo Prison in Cuba. Last week the American Bar Association announced that Steve has been selected to receive the ABA's 2007 Pro Bono Publico Award. Steve is being recognized for his lifetime dedication to providing legal service to the nation's poor and disadvantaged.

Since joining WilmerHale almost forty years ago, Steve has been dedicated to high profile pro bono cases of national and international importance as well as to smaller cases for indigent clients in local communities. He is deeply concerned with the delivery of legal services to the poor and committed to fostering the spirit of pro bono in future generations of attorneys. Steve has not only made pro bono representation a priority in his own career, but has also been an inspirational leader, encouraging others in the firm and legal community to become involved in pro bono services.

The First Religious Society in Carlisle is an inclusive community bound together in the Unitarian Universalist tradition of friendship, free inquiry and service to humanity.

We recognize our commonality as spiritual seekers, and welcome and celebrate the participation of all people, without regard to age, race, religious heritage, political opinion, gender identity, sexual or affectional orientation, socio-economic status, disability or ethnicity.

We are committed to continual learning and growth toward affirmation of the enriching diversity of humankind, and to working to create a more just, sustainable and loving world.

STAFF AND OFFICE SCHEDULE

Church Office Hours: The church office will be open between the hours of 8:00am and 1:30pm on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. The office will be closed on Tuesdays.

Minister Office Hours: Tim is generally available at church most mornings when the church office is open and other times by appointment. It is always a good idea to call in advance. You can reach him at 978-369-0284 (study or home), 503-816-2859 (cell) or by email at uucleric@mindspring.com.

Director of Religious Education: Molly Sorrows, DRE and Youth Advisor, can be reached by email (frs_re@comcast.net) or phone (church, 978-369-5180; home, 978-371-2217).

Music Rehearsals Schedule

The Choir
Wednesdays at 7:30-9:00pm
Sundays at 9:45am

KIDSKWIRE

Wednesdays 3:15-3:45

COMMUNITY ORGANIC AND LOCALLY GROWN POTLUCK

Come and participate in the upcoming **Community Organic and Locally Grown Potluck** on Tuesday April 24th at 6:30 pm. This event is sponsored by the FRS Environmental Action Committee and takes place in Union Hall at The First Religious Society in Carlisle, the historic white church located on the corner of School Street and Church Street and across from the Common.

See the new Carlisle website showcasing locally grown food and organic products. Do you have products, links and information to add to the web site?

Hear Ben Grosscup from the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA/Mass) talk about grass-root efforts to organize resolutions at annual Town Meetings opposing Genetic Engineering of food and agricultural crops.

Meet like-minded people interested in "Green" environmental issues.

Eat delicious locally grown or organic food made by your friends and neighbors.

Lend your voice to plan and create future educational "Green" forums and activities in Carlisle.

Potluck logistics - in the interest of simplicity may we suggest you bring a dish to feed 8-10 people. Use the following based upon the first letter of your last name:

A-C = appetizer or beverage (chips, fruit, cheese, etc) D-G = bread, H-M = salad or

vegetable, N-S = main dish, T- Z = dessert

Please try to bring enough for 10-12 servings of something that contains organic or locally grown ingredients. The Organic Police will not confiscate your dish at the door if it is not totally organic or locally grown, but do your best to have at least one ingredient that qualifies.

Questions? Contact Leslie Thomas (978) 287-0025 or Alison Saylor saylorfarm@comcast.net

Pledge Cards Mailed: The canvass letters and pledge cards for the 2007-8 pledge year have been mailed. If you haven't received yours, please contact me (cdavis@modavi.com or 978-371-2844).

PLEASE NOTE that some of the address labels on the return envelopes were printed with an extra digit in the zip code. Please make sure the zip code is correct (01741) before mailing in your pledge card. If you have already mailed in your pledge card and want to be sure that it was delivered correctly, contact me and I will let you know if I have received it.

Thanks for supporting FRS!

Charlie Davis

UU MASSACHUSETTS ACTION NETWORK

The Clara Barton District is Pleased to Announce the Launch of the UU Mass.

Action Network: UU Mass. Action is a new network seeking to help the 20,000 UUs in Massachusetts' 140 churches connect the social action work of our congregations and create an influential moral voice in our state. UU Mass. Action will help UUs communicate what they are already doing, and help Mass. UUs choose three issues to work on together at the state level. Using the power of the web, we will create a 'statewide UU social action bulletin board', to allow churches to post their social action programs and activities and give users the ability to search by issue, church, region and district for what interests them. All Are Invited to the First Annual UU Lobby Day on Thursday, May 3rd, 11:00-3:00 at the State House and neighboring UUA headquarters UUA President Bill Sinkford, Keynote Speaker UUs from across the state are invited to meet at UUA Headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, on May 3rd to listen to Bill Sinkford speak, and have lunch. Legislative fact sheets and training for lobby visits will be offered, and UUs will be urged to go next door to the State House to meet with their state Senators, Representatives, and their staff, to share their views on crucial issues facing our state.

EVENTS AROUND US

Horizons for Homeless Children will be training new volunteers to play with children living in homeless shelters on April 25 and 26 in Lowell and on April 28 in Boston. Please contact Sheila Carman at 978-557-2182 for more information.

An Invitation to "Spring Into Art": The Harvard Branch Alliance of the Unitarian-Universalist Church will sponsor "Spring Into Art" Friday, May 11 and Saturday, May 12. An opening reception will be held at the Fellowship Hall on Friday from 6 to 9 PM with music by Claire Rendinello and Maria Parker, playing flute and harp, respectively. The show continues Saturday, May 12 from 10 AM to 4 PM. Come and view the many lovely works of art, most of which will be for sale, and participate in the silent auction of creations donated by artists and artisans. Choose gifts now for Mother's Day and spring weddings, or just because you love it -- from among paintings, photography, pottery, jewelry, baskets, silver items, wood carvings, sewn items, baskets and other creations. As you face the UU Church, the Fellowship Hall is located off Elm Street on a narrow lane across a large boulder to the left of the Church. For more information contact Carol Panek-Clark at 978-456-8339.

FRS PROGRAM NEWS

Pastoral Concerns Committee: We serve as a means of outreach to people in our church who need our special support and friendship. We will arrange rides, visits, childcare, meals or anything else that lends a helping hand during short or long-term crises. If you are or know of anyone in need of this support, please contact Natalie Ives at 978-369-6581 during the month of April.

Union Hall Coffee House: April 28th at 7:30 PM: Powerful, emotionally-charged Bluegrass with classic heart-stopping harmonies and pulse-pounding Banjo and Mandolin solo work. "There's warmth and depth in a Southern Rail performance. The joy and talent in their music will make people happy for a long time." - Worcester Telegram & Gazette. Visit their web site at <http://www.southernrail.com>. Tickets at the door: \$15. For table reservations, call Dian at 978-287-5745 or email dianfrancesca@comcast.net.

Reminder: Don't forget to fill out the "Helping Hands Survey" that was enclosed in the last newsletter. With the information you provide we can update our database of those willing to help out. We also need your help in identifying people who may need special support on a short or long-term basis. If you no longer have your survey and would like to fill one out they are available in the church office or call Kathy (978-369-5180) and she will send one to you.

The planning meeting for next year's church events will be Thursday, April 26 at 7:30pm in Union Hall. Janice Kissinger, chair of the Activities Committee, runs this meeting. It would not be a good idea to choose three exciting FRS events to fall on the same weekend, now would it?. Does your committee plan to have some guest speakers, pot luck dinners or other special events next year? This being the 250th Celebration year makes the planning and coordinating even more necessary. We will be publishing the dates for events in an early September town-wide mailing, and it is very embarrassing if we must later change these dates. Coming to this planning meeting does not mean you will be dragged into organizing an event. We do need, however, a variety of people who can bring the Council on Aging calendar, school calendar, Congregational church calendar, and other calendars to the meeting to help us avoid major Carlisle event conflicts. Feel free to bring some dark chocolate to the meeting, and we can have a chocolate tasting event at the same time. Is Lindt better than Trader Joe's chocolate? Let's find out while we plan out next year's events!

Flowers for the pulpit table: If you would like to bring your personal touch to a morning worship service through flowers or artwork please contact Alison Saylor at 978-369-1809.