

FIRST RELIGIOUS SOCIETY

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Carlisle, MA 01741

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NEIGHBOURS & FELLOW CREATURES

The First Religious Society in Carlisle

Unitarian Universalist
A Welcoming Congregation

Volume XXXIII No. 7

December 8, 2008



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 December 8, 2008

Church Service and Sunday School: Sunday at 10:00 a.m. Coffee Hour following services.
Church Office: 978-369-5180; Fax no. 978-369-1891, www.uucarlisle.org, frs@uucarlisle.org
Church Mailing Address: PO Box 817, Carlisle, MA 01741-0817
Minister: Diane Miller (study) 978-369-0284, Diane_Miller@comcast.net
Office Administrator: Kathy Varney, 978-369-5180
Religious Education Director: Molly Sorrows, 978-371-2217, frs_re@comcast.net
Minister of Music: Marguerite Shaw, 978-501-4220; frsmusic@comcast.net

Minister Emeritus: Dr. Eugene R. Widrick
Parish Committee Co-Chair: Suzanne Whitney Smith, 978-369-0922; Suzanne_w-s@comcast.net
Parish Committee Co-Chair: Lisa Sama, 978-692-6592, LMSama@comcast.net
Collector of Funds: Charlie Davis, 978-371-2844; cdavis@modavi.com
Lay Minister: Sally Hayen, 978-369-7591
Membership Contact: Sue Kirk, 978-371-0176
Coffee Committee: Gio DiNicola, Anne Ketchen, Richard Ketchen, Tom Rourk, Suzanne Whitney Smith, Cindy Jaquith
Union Hall Coffee House: Dian Cuccinello 978-287-5745, dianfrancesca@comcast.net

What Would Jesus Buy?

You may have heard of Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping Now. Rev. Billy and his Stop Shopping Gospel Choir delivered their message down the road in Bedford a few years ago. They piled into a couple buses and did a cross country revival tour, delivering Jeremiads about the shopocalypse.

Rev. Billy will make you laugh. He says he puts the "odd" back in God. He tells people to "back away from the product." He has an old-style confessional booth where people can come to confess their shopping sins. Rev. Billy is both charming and ridiculous in his character role, even when he is being arrested and hauled out of the Mall of America.

Rev. Billy, the stage name of activist actor Bill Talen, started preaching against consumerism in 1996 in Times Square, when Disney Corporation opened a large retail store. Rev. Billy advocates local economies and human scale commerce which preserve and enhance the local "commons" in community life.

The other day I downloaded a film by Morgan Spurlock titled "What Would Jesus Buy?" It is a documentary about Billy and his cause. The gospel was funny. It was also prescient, detailing the way our culture has gone from

producing and creating to consuming and destroying. His argument is in part an economic one, that Americans are trapped by credit card debt run up consuming things we don't need. It is in part a message to feel and experience directly, not through things. It is in part about the unsustainable levels of energy and material consumption that we have modeled for the developing world to aspire to and copy, a disaster in the era of climate change. Rev. Billy talks about the violence that corporations are doing throughout the entire life cycle of a product – extracting, manufacturing, exploiting, transporting, and finally disposing.

This year the violence was tragically tangible. Jdimytai Damour, a Wal-Mart employee in Nassau County, New York, died after being trampled to death by a mob of shoppers on Friday, the traditional first day of the holiday shopping season. The 34-year-old worker was killed when a crowd of 2,000 broke down store doors and ran over him shortly before the store's scheduled 5 a.m. opening.

The Spurlock film has footage of scenes of similar store stampedes, when shoppers knocked people down trying to claim the loss leader specials designed to lure people into the stores.

I'm not going to take a holier than thou stance on my role in the shopocalypse. I observed Buy

WHAT WOULD JESUS BUY?

(continued)

Nothing Day on the 28th, but that was because I was busy with other things. But this year I've done a fair amount of consuming. I justify my purchases because of moving and wanting to fill in furnishing gaps, or because I need winter wear for this climate. I shop on line for most things. In fact, I'll confess that I even did so in the midst of writing this column. There is a mall at my fingertips. Save us, Rev. Billy, with your laughter, your mercies, and your message, lest we forget what this season is all about.

– Diane Miller

UPCOMING SERVICES

Sunday, December 14:

“Formula for Happiness”

Rev. Diane Miller preaching

Sunday, December 21:

Christmas Pageant during the morning worship service.

Christmas Eve Services:

3:00pm A Service for All Ages

5:00pm The Christmas Story
in Lessons and Carols.

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

By Molly Sorrows

MARKET PLACE SHOPS OPENING SOON!!!

The Religious Education Program will help us travel back in time to reflect on what life was like when Jesus was teaching. During the months of January and February, our Marketplace 29AD projects will help us to explore both the Bible stories and the way of life 2000 years ago.

This was very energizing and successful two years ago. This year our 9 workshops will include some repeat topics and some new ones. We have project suggestions for many areas and welcome yours as well. Adults help groups of kids on three different Sundays with the project they select.

What You Can Do

Would you help with baking, carpentry, pottery or clay, metalwork, music, dance, herbs & spices, or something else? To be ready at the beginning of January means we need adults to step forward and tell us now what they can help us offer.

Please find a friend and talk to Molly about leading a Shop in the Marketplace!

CHURCH CALENDAR

| | | |
|-------------|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| December 10 | 8:45am | RE Committee in stone wall room. |
| December 10 | 7:30pm | Choir Rehearsal |
| December 11 | 9:00am | Staff meeting conference room |
| December 11 | 7:00pm | Membership Committee conference room. |
| December 14 | 10:00am | Christmas Pageant practice and Stocking Stuffing for House of Hope |
| December 14 | 6:00pm | OWL class in Union Hall. |
| December 16 | 7:30pm | Knitting in conference room. |
| December 17 | 7:30pm | Choir Rehearsal |
| December 18 | 9:00am | Staff meeting conference room |
| December 18 | 7:00pm | Parish Committee in conference room. |
| December 19 | 5:00pm | Christmas Caroling, cookies and cocoa beginning in Union Hall. |
| December 21 | 8:30am | Christmas Pageant Walk Through in Union Hall. |
| December 21 | 10:00am | Christmas Pageant during morning worship service. |
| December 24 | 3:00pm | Christmas Eve Service for All Ages |
| | 5:00pm | The Christmas Story in Lessons and Carols |
| December 25 | 4:00pm | Community Christmas Dinner in Union Hall. |
| January 3 | 7:00am | Men's Group meets at FRS. |
| January 4 | 6:00pm | OWL in Union Hall. |

- **Church Office Hours:** The church office is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday between 8:00am and 2:00pm. The office is closed on Wednesday. Email: frs@uucarlisle.org or phone: 978-369-5180.
- **Minister:** Rev. Diane Miller is available weekdays in the office on Monday, Wednesday & Thursday. Tuesday is her day off and Friday and Saturday are usually blocked out as service preparation time. Call the study at 978-369-0284 to set an appointment or to confirm that the minister is in.
- **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).
- **Minister of Music:** Marguerite Shaw is usually available at the church weekdays 10:00 –3:00.
- Telephone 978-369-5180 or cell 978-501-4220; email frsmusic@comcast.net.

Next Newsletter Deadline is December 15. If you would like to be added to or removed from the newsletter mailing list please call or email the church office.

For a complete calendar of meetings and activities here at The First Religious Society please go to the church calendar on the website: <http://www.uucarlisle.org/calendar.html>
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.

CIRCLE DINNER EXTRAVAGANZA

Join us on Saturday, January 31st for our annual Circle Dinner Extravaganza which starts in Union Hall at 5:30 where we'll have appetizers together. After appetizers we'll head out to our hosts' homes for dinner.



The hosts provide the main course, and guests bring the salad, bread, wine or dessert. It's a wonderful way to enjoy the company of old friends and meet new ones even during the cold wintry weather. Feel free to invite a neighbor, or someone you've met through a town activity or a colleague from work. The Membership Committee will make sure you are assigned to the same host. It's a great way to meet some new people. Sign-up sheets will be available at Coffee Hour beginning in January. If you'd like to sign-up by phone or email or have any questions, please contact Sue Kirk at 978-371-0176 or sukirk@aol.com.

CARLISLE COUNCIL ON AGING THANKS FRS

On November 5th FRS hosted the second of the Carlisle Council on Aging's newest senior dining venture sponsored by Minuteman Home Care, The Inn at Robbins Brook, and three churches in Carlisle who offered a place to dine and also recruited volunteers to run this program. The Carlisle COA would like to sincerely thank FRS and all the volunteers who helped make this another wonderful dining experience for Carlisle seniors. Your welcome and friendly service was greatly appreciated and enjoyed by all who attended! We look forward to returning again to such enthusiastic volunteers and community spirit. Thank you for embracing the newest of COA's programs to engage seniors in the community.

In appreciation, Kathy Mull, Director

CARLISLE HOLIDAY PROGRAMS

Reserve now for Christmas Day Dinner

in Union Hall, gathering at 4:00pm. The cost for this catered dinner is \$20 per person. Reservations and payment must be made by Monday, December 15 with the church office (978-369-5180 or frs@uucarlisle.org). This event is offered to the wider Carlisle Community, and has a limit of 30 seats.



Christmas Pageant:

Come join us during the morning worship service on December 21 at 10:00am when we will present a multigenerational and lively retelling of the Christmas story with costumes, drama and music.



Stuff Stockings for the House of Hope:

On December 14 in coordination with the small group pageant practice, we will have our annual project to fill stockings for the families at the House of Hope in Lowell. Adults and children are encouraged to bring \$5 to \$10 for donation to cover the costs of the stockings and gifts for each parent and child at the House of Hope. Children will do this during RE, and adults during coffee hour.



Christmas Caroling:

We're Christmas caroling this year on **Friday night, December 19th from 5 to 7**, so be sure to invite your family and friends. We'll meet in Union Hall to warm up our voices and assemble plates of cookies to share with our audience, and then head over to Carlisle Village Court to sing. Afterwards, we'll return to the church for cookies and cider. A little snow makes the evening magical, but rain cancels. If you can, please bring a plate of cookies to share. Questions? Contact Jane Mosier at 978-371-2844 or janemosier@modavi.com



FRS Anniversary Note Cards:

We have fewer than 20 sets left of the 250th anniversary commemorative note cards featuring the fall water color painting of the church. They would make excellent Christmas cards for 2008, since their small size reflects the prevailing zeitgeist, and because their purchase will bring income to the FRS instead of to Hallmark. Ten cards and envelopes for \$10. They will be on sale in Union Hall for the next two Sundays or until they're gone. -Roger Goulet



Winter Weather Policy: We will have a service every Sunday. If you can't get out of your driveway or don't feel safe on the roads, by all means stay home. If you can make it, by all means come. If you have a responsibility such as greeter, RE teacher or coffee hour provider, if at all possible, let someone know and those who can make it will adapt.



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.

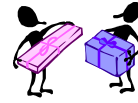
We are committed to continual learning and growth toward affirmation of the enriching diversity of humankind, and to working to create a more just, sustainable and loving world.

CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS RATINGS

The Social Action Committee has once again ordered the publication of the American Institute of Philanthropy which rates how well non-profit organizations will spend your donation. When it arrives we will let you know and post it on the social action bulletin board. You may also get much of the same information from two web sites--www.charitynavigator.org and www.guidestar.org. Both services are free but the latter requires that you register first. We hope these sites will help you in making your holiday and end-of-the-year donations.

FRS SOCIAL ACTION CHRISTMAS PROJECT

The Social Action Committee is pleased to have a new school and new contact for the Thanksgiving and Christmas project, as described below. Ellen Huber, Barbara Ritz, Max Barber, Nadine Bishop and Dollina Borella went to the Butler Middle School in Lowell to meet with Social Worker, Amanda Hosmer. We were warmly greeted, received a tour of the school and its programs, met the Principal and the Assistant Principal, and were given some background information on our needy families for the Thanksgiving and Christmas projects as described below.



The Social Action Committee is once again asking for Christmas gifts for specific children of needy families of Lowell as identified through our new contact (see above paragraph). There will be a sign up list with specific suggestions and monetary guidelines. The list will be available after Sunday service or by telephone. (Also, if you hate to shop, but want to participate, let Dollina know.) The contact for this project is Dollina Borella, 978.371.0149.

Members of the Social Action Committee shopped and delivered groceries for a Thanksgiving Dinner for five families, the same families as mentioned above for the Christmas gift sign-up. Special thanks to Ellen Huber, George and Nadine Bishop, and Donna Carter who shopped and delivered the groceries with me.

Many, many thanks go out to the Congregation from the Social Action Committee for the generosity and support of these projects during the Holidays. It couldn't happen without your compassionate spirit and monetary donations.

“MUSIC IN THE USA: A DOCUMENTARY COMPANION”

This is an innovation for our newsletter, and I hope it starts a trend. A friend of mine, a music scholar at Northeastern University, has just published a must-have book for anyone interested in the history of American music, from psalmody to hip-hop. It is *Music in the USA: A Documentary Companion*, edited by Judith Tick with Paul Beaudoin (New York, Oxford University Press, 2008, 881 pp.).

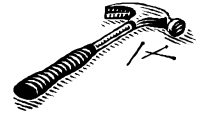
The depth and breadth of knowledge reflected in this volume demonstrate Judy's scholarship, but what makes it such fun to read are the selections she includes. Here are four out of 150: Ben Franklin advises his brother on how to write a ballad (keep it simple and non-Handelian), pages on slave songs that will make you weep, Stephen Sondheim on writing theater lyrics, and a description by Oscar Peterson (yes, him, he was just starting out) of how exacting Ella Fitzgerald was in performance.

American classical, folk, pop, rock, jazz, blues and country -- they're all here in all their raucous iconoclastic glory, drawing on Europe, Africa and Latin America to make the music of our country the music of the world and then, in a magical feedback loop, to make their music ours.

In music as in the visual arts, we started out tentative and pseudo-European, but with people like Ives and Joplin, Armstrong and Gershwin, and Ellington, Guthrie and Dylan we created a new world. *Music in the USA* shows how we did it. -Roger Goulet

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

FRS worked at Habitat's Bedford site on Saturday, November 15. Participating in the work were Ann James, Ernie Huber, Donna Carter, and George Bishop. The site at 130 North Road will eventually have 8 units of affordable housing. Currently work is proceeding on remodeling the turn-of-the-century (19th to 20th) farm house, while Habitat is raising money for a loop road to provide access to sites for 7 new units. The remodeling is currently focused on strengthening the frame of the house, including replacing or reinforcing the sills.



Ann and Ernie worked on the north side of the house where the sill had been replaced. They first removed a wide sheathing board to expose the point where the wall studs met the sill and then proceeded to reinforce the stud to sill joints with metal brackets. In some cases they had to add extensions to the studs.

On the other side of the house the old sill was strengthened by adding a plank to the sill. The work crew had a busy day and installed tiles in the bathroom and the front entry. They finished everything but the grouting which the next crew of volunteers will do.

The sill was a 6x6 beam. The bolts were 9" long and fabricated from a 3/4" stainless steel threaded rod. This is where Donna and George came in. Our job was to cut the rod to the proper length using a hand-held portable banksaw (who knew such a thing existed). Sounds simple, but we first had to screw the large stainless steel nuts, 4", onto the rod. This took a lot of turning. Why put the bolts on the rod before cutting it? Because cutting the rod damages the threads at the end, and screwing in the bolts off the rod rethreads it. Anyway, that was our job and it took all morning (lots of bolts).

The weather was reasonable compared to what it has been lately. There was coffee cake provided by Whole Foods for the morning coffee break. Lunch was pizza, the coffee cake and coffee and cola. Not what your mother would approve of, but it tasted good.

Our next work day on the Bedford farm house will be Saturday, January 10. Hopefully by that time the house will be closed in so that space heaters will make interior work comfortable. We have signed up for 5 workers. If you would like to help, please contact Ernie Huber at 978-369-6678 or George Bishop at 978-369-5080.

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 Sally Naumann at 978-369-3314 from December 1 through December 16 and Natalie Ives at 978-369-581 from December 17 through December 31.