

**FIRST RELIGIOUS SOCIETY**

P.O. Box 817  
Carlisle, MA 01741

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**NEIGHBOURS & FELLOW CREATURES**

The First Religious Society in Carlisle  
Unitarian Universalist  
A Welcoming Congregation

Volume XXXIII No. 11

February 9, 2009



WE ARE LOCATED AT 27 SCHOOL STREET 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 February 9, 2009**

**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, cell: 617-851-8222 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 Hayden, 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

The financial crisis of the nation, of the globe, coats everything. High unemployment, sharply dropping net worth, home values dropping, investments earning very little or losing value massively, minimal job security. Everybody is talking about it. I'm good at denial, so that was how I handled the question of how this has affected me personally. I had mentally estimated the hit my retirement funds would show. Money is not a highly ranked interest of mine, but then again, I also know that money affects our options, personally of course, as a congregation, as a nation. So when my year end statements arrived, I had to finally look.

Frankly, it was even worse than I expected. I mean, I'm the sort of person who fished the pennies out of the wastebaskets (which was where my kids casually tossed them when they were cleaning out their pockets.) I looked at the amount lost and mulled over all the things I could have done instead, and rued my choices. But then, since money isn't a priority of mine, I gradually lost interest in the regret.

What does stay with me is the sense of loss. I am experiencing great personal loss and grief after my father's death, and there are many losses among members of the congregation which I feel deeply. The plummeting numbers tagged on to the existing loss. This is the territory of human concern that I do know something about. The reality of our mortal

condition is that eventually we lose everything we love. Coming to terms with this, and learning to live fully, lovingly, happily, despite our temporal existence, this is what faith is about, core to the message of both western and eastern religious traditions. *Consider the lilies....*

Last week I attended a program at Gleason Library with speakers discussing ways to negotiate these difficult financial times. I came back with a collection of handouts, brochures, and information on a wide range of topics. Some of the information is geared toward seniors, but much is available to people of all ages. The information is now collected in a notebook on the table outside my office. May we remember that we are all in this together, and we can be resources to one another.

Diane Miller

## GREETINGS TO ALL

I wish to thank all of you who have sent cards, gifts, dinners and telephoned me with your good wishes. It has kept me in good spirits all of the time I have been away from you. Although I have been away, you have always been in my thoughts.

Some of you may have heard that earlier this week I ventured out and visited the pipe organ and played for about 10 or 15 minutes. It felt wonderful.

Many heartfelt thanks from your friend and I hope soon to be your active Music Director again.



Marguerite

Marguerite is in need of a high “bar” stool with a back. If anyone has one and would loan it to her for a bit, please contact the church office (frs@uucarlisle.org, 978-369-5180)

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## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

*By Molly Sorrows*

Two weeks ago I saw a unique and moving film at the Stow/Acton church with Carolyn and Dick Shohet and my daughter Katherine. *The Dhamma Brothers* documents a project that introduced 36 prisoners at a maximum security prison in Alabama to Vipassana silent meditation. The intensive 10 day Vipassana silent retreat combined physical, emotional and spiritual challenges for each of the men and created amazing bonds of support between members of the group.

The film provided flashbacks and recollections of some of the crimes that the men had committed. For many, the silent meditation seemed to force them to face on a deeper, spiritual level what they did and why they were there. With 10 days and nights of structured focus, they could not escape the harsh thoughts.

One of the things both Katherine and I commented on was the incredibly strong bonds they developed with one another having completed such a challenging process together. Many of the men came to really appreciate the role meditation could play in their lives, and they continued to meet as a group for morning or evening meditation when they could. It was heartbreaking to see the consequences of the meditation group being forbidden or the transfer of inmates to other prisons where no one else had been in the program with them. They found it hard to meditate consistently on their own once they were back in the regular prison routine, or they were surrounded by people who didn't understand the experience they had with Vipassana.

Most importantly, perhaps, the process helped them focus on the future and on what they want to do with their lives. Because of their convictions with life sentences, their choices are much more limited than ours, but the spiritual retreat helped each of them examine himself more closely and the film brought out their personal stories in an amazing way.

## CHURCH CALENDAR

February 11	8:30am	Religious Education Committee in stone wall room
February 11	7:30pm	Choir Rehearsal in Sanctuary
February 12	8:30am	By-laws Committee in conference room
	7:00pm	Parish Committee meeting in Union Hall
	7:00pm	Membership Committee meeting conference room
February 13	7:00pm	Womenspirit meeting in conference room
February 15	6:00pm	No OWL meeting—school vacation begins
February 18	7:30pm	Choir Rehearsal in Sanctuary
February 22	6:00pm	OWL in Union Hall
February 24	7:30pm	Knitting in the conference room
February 25	7:30pm	Choir Rehearsal in Sanctuary
February 26	7:00pm	Finance Committee in conference room
February 28	5:00pm	Soup and Games in Union Hall
March 1	6:00pm	OWL in Union Hall
March 3	7:00pm	Music and Worship Committee in conference room

**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 on medical leave. Our music program continues in her absence. Call the minister or the church office if you have any questions.

Next Newsletter Deadline is February 23. 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.

## KITCHEN GUIDELINES REMINDER

We have a lovely kitchen facility here at FRS!

Please help keep it clean and tidy for the next people who use it:

- All leftover foods or open beverages must be taken home or discarded after the event.



- Food placed in the refrigerator or freezer for upcoming events must be clearly marked with name of event and date to be used. There is tape and a marker in the far left drawer under the microwave. If not, please let the church office know.



- All dishes and utensils must be washed and put back.



## UPCOMING SERVICES

### Sunday, February 15

Diane Miller preaching  
“Black Foundations of the White House” a sermon for Black History month

### Sunday, February 22

Diane Miller preaching  
“Living with Uncertainty”

### Sunday, March 1

A Visit from Eleanor Roosevelt

For the service on February 22, I would welcome your thoughts on the subject of living with uncertainty. Please send me your thoughts and experiences.

For upcoming services in March, please let me know if you have some experience with Improv Theatre and would like to participate in a service with improv elements.

## HABITAT REMINDER

We have signed up to work at the farm house on March 21 and April 18. The other group working on both days is Bentley College.



If you would like to participate please contact Ernie Huber at 978-369-6678 or George Bishop at 978-369-5080. Sign up early, we have only 5 slots in March and 4 in April.

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.

## SAVE THE DATE

The Second Annual Three Church Pot Luck and Sing-along will be at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 28 at the Carlisle Congregational Church. Last year about 140 people from the three churches attended and a good time was had by all. After dinner choir members from the churches sang a couple of pieces and then Pastor Steve Weibley led a spirited sing-along. He is superb at this.



This year, once again, a collection will be taken to benefit the Carlisle Fuel Assistance program.

A sign-up list will be put out at coffee hour beginning the first of March.

## WIDER UU COMMUNITY



**Habitat Gala Event:** The Lowell Habitat is having a Gala Event to raise funds for its ongoing building in Bedford, Dracut and the other communities it serves. Please join them for a good cause. The theme this year is "Green Energy Efficient Construction:." They will be recognizing those who have supported our cause. March 7 from 6:30 to 11:00pm at Vesper Country Club, 185 Pawtucket Blvd., Tyngsboro, MA. There will be dinner, dancing, silent and live auction and entertainment. Cost is \$75 a person. For ticket information call 978-692-0927.

**PFLAG Meeting at Trinity Episcopal Church**  
The Minuteman Chapter of PFLAG - Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbian, And Gay (including Transgender & Bisexual) - will meet on Sunday, February 15, and on the 3rd Sunday of every month, from 7 to 9 PM in the library of the Trinity Episcopal Church, 81 Elm Street, Concord, MA. For information, call (866) 427-3524 (toll-free), or email [bobandbeth@comcast.net](mailto:bobandbeth@comcast.net).

**The Spring Conference and Annual Meeting of the Clara Barton District will be held on April 4, 2009 at Nichols College in Dudley, MA.** Registration check-in, worship, and our keynote speaker will fill the morning. Workshops with the theme of *Healthy Congregations* will be offered after the Annual Meeting in the afternoon. More information to follow. Registration packet will be mailed to all CBD households shortly. Please hold the date and be part of this important conference.

**UUA Social Action of the Month for February: BGLT Equality: Standing on the side of love.** The UUA Office for Congregational Advocacy and Witness encourages individual UUs and congregations to work together each month on a particular social justice topic. For February, the staff writes, "Join UUs across the nation in lobbying for BGLT (bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgender) equality. Visit your representative or senator's district or national office and ask [him or her] to support BGLT equality by working on the following issues: repealing 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,' [and] supporting the Employment Nondiscrimination Act, marriage equality, and stricter hate crimes enforcement. UUs have a long history of supporting BGLT equality and we hope you will continue to offer your support." Info about the legislation and advice on successful lobbying are at [www.uua.org/socialjustice/actioncenter/123791.shtml](http://www.uua.org/socialjustice/actioncenter/123791.shtml)

**Our Congregation is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA):** The UUA offers a variety of resources. The UUA publishes a magazine called The UU World which contains a variety of spiritual essays and articles on many issues. The online version is at <http://www.uuworld.org/>. Another resource from the UUA is the monthly mailing to congregations. This is a collection of announcements and updates from the staff groups and committees of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) of Congregations, and from the Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF). When we receive these packets in the church office we distribute them to the appropriate committees. You can access these packets online at <http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/>

## CARLISLE HAPPENINGS

**The Pastoral Concerns Committee** is looking for people to add to our Helping Hands list. If you are able to make an occasional dinner for a church friend who is in need of help, or perhaps run an errand, we would love to hear from you. Please email the Church office or call Sally Hayen at 978-369-7591.



**The Coffee Committee** provides refreshments for the lovely coffee hours that follow the Sunday morning worship services. If you would like to help out by bringing in a snack (cookies, crackers, pastry, etc.) please contact a member of the Coffee Committee: Anne Ketchen, Richard Ketchen, Gio DiNicola, Tom Rourk, Suzanne Whitney Smith.



**Greeters:** It is always nice to have someone in the front entryway of the church on Sunday mornings to say good morning, hand out programs and direct visitors to the guest book and the sanctuary. If you would like to greet on Sunday morning, please contact Tom or Lee Lockwood at 978-369-8690.

**Flowers for the pulpit:** The flower arrangements that are on the pulpit table Sunday mornings are given by members and friends of the church. If you would like to give flowers in memory of a family member or friend, have a green thumb and would like to display an arrangement, or have fresh cut flowers from your garden please get in touch with Nina Benkley (978-371-1367) or sign up on the flower sheet in Union Hall.



**Make Your Case Against Hunger:** The winter weather is harsh, and the economy is even harsher. As a result the number of people needing a weekly bag of basic food products from Open Pantry in Lowell has increased dramatically. They especially need nourishing foods such as pasta, rice, tomato sauces, hearty soups, stews and whole grain cereals (i.e., no Cocoa Puffs or Lucky Charms). Canned products are better than those in glass. You are encouraged to bring a case of food to FRS during the month of February. Please deposit your donation in the wooden cabinet in Union Hall. Go Green! Cash is readily accepted if you are unable to carry a case of food. We will make buy and deliver cases of food with all donations. For further information please call Paul Morrison (978-369-6282) or Michael Dundorf (978-390-9505)

**Soup and Games Night:** Saturday, February 28 from 5:00-7:00pm. The church community is invited for amazing homemade soups and intergenerational games in Union Hall. Come join us for the warmth, fun and community. Sign up at coffee hour and the church office so we know how many to expect. Sponsored by the RE Committee.

**Mark your calendars for the next Coffeehouse:** March 14, 2009 Don't miss Rani Arbo and daisy mayhem when they come to the coffeehouse with their BIG OLD LIFE TOUR. Opening Act: Dietrich Strause.

**The Rev. Keith Greer** has retired from his long term ministry at the Carlisle Congregational Church. Our best wishes go to Keith and Bonnie Greer as they continue ministry in new directions. Pastor Steven James Weibley will be installed to the senior pastorate on Sunday, February 22, 6:30-8:00 PM, 147 School Street.