

FIRST RELIGIOUS SOCIETY

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NEIGHBOURS & FELLOW CRETURES

The First Religious Society in Carlisle

Unitarian Universalist
A Welcoming Congregation

Volume XXXI, No. 9

January 8, 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 January 8, 2007

CHURCH INFORMATION

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.

Church Office: 978-369-5180; Fax no. 978-369-1891

Web site: www.uucarlisle.org **E-mail address:** frs@uucarlisle.org

Church Mailing Address: [including minister and all business]
PO Box 817, Carlisle, MA 01741-0817

Minister: Tim Jensen (study and home) 978-369-0284, (cell) 503-816-2859,
Email: uucleric@mindspring.com

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Parish Committee Co-Chair: Suzanne Whitney Smith, 978-369-0922;
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Minister of Music: Marguerite Shaw, 978-501-4220; Email: frsmusic@comcast.net

Collector of Funds: Charlie Davis, 978-371-2844; Email: cdavis@modavi.com

Lay Minister: Sally Hayen, 978-369-7591

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Coffee Committee: Gio DiNicola, Anne Ketchen, Richard Ketchen, Tom Rourk, Suzanne Whitney Smith, Jack O'Connor, Jenifer Bush

THE ECLECTIC CLERIC

The beginning of a New Year is a traditional time for turning over a new leaf. Somewhere on the list of most popular New Years Resolutions, well below losing weight, getting in shape, quitting smoking and being more responsible about money, you'll find "Attend Church More Frequently."

There are all sorts of good reasons for NOT attending church. It feels good to sleep late on Sunday morning, to linger over coffee with the Sunday paper, or just to spend a little more time at home with the family. And besides, who needs to sing hymns or listen to a sermon when you can always feel inspired by reading poetry, or taking a long walk through the woods?

But notwithstanding all of these excellent excuses, here are five good reasons for attending church more regularly BESIDES listening to a sermon...

1) It's a great opportunity to catch up with your friends. Sure, there's always the transfer station. But how much time do you really want to spend socializing with your "neighbors and fellow creatures" while sorting through your garbage? Church is warm, dry, and out of the weather. Plus it smells better....

2) It's a great opportunity to let your friends catch up with you. Authentic Community is a two-way street. It's about mutual give and take. To have a friend you need to be a friend, and do unto others as you would have others do unto you. What better place to practice these important principles, if not at church?

3) It sets a good example for your children. And

your spouse. Church is traditionally one of civilization's most family-friendly activities. Don't let coming to church compete with quality family time. MAKE it quality family time!

4) There's free food. OK, maybe if losing weight is also one of your New Year's Resolutions, this isn't the most persuasive reason for attending church. But for what it's worth, there's free food.

5) It is a perfect, unquestionably socially-acceptable excuse for spending a little quality time "alone in the company of the solitude of your own thought." Just because someone is preaching a sermon doesn't mean you actually have to listen. Some of the most inspiring worship services I have ever attended were in churches where I couldn't even understand the language of the sermon, much less the message. Daydreaming in church is not only acceptable, it is a time-honored tradition both universally tolerated and widely encouraged (provided, of course, that you don't draw too much attention to the fact by disturbing the other daydreamers).

Most folks come to church already knowing the sermon they need to hear that day. Being in church simply gives you a chance to listen to your own thoughts. You can always go back and read the text of my sermon on-line later if you're so inclined. There are lots of churches where I doubt anyone would attend regularly if they actually paid close attention to what the preacher was saying. Why should a UU church be any different?

In her novel *The Color Purple*, Alice Walker has one

THE ECLECTIC CLERIC

of her characters say: "Be honest, have you ever found God in church? I haven't. I have only found a bunch of people hoping He would show himself to them. The only God I have ever felt in church I had brought along myself. I think other people do the same. They come to church to share God, not to find Him...."

I'll confess, as a preacher I like it when you attend church. When you're not there on Sunday morning, I miss you. And so does everyone else. It's really just as simple as that. Most of the time I'm too shy (or too polite) to call you up and ask you where you've been. And I certainly don't mean to embarrass anyone, or put you on the spot. But don't kid yourself. When you aren't in your seat on Sunday morning, people notice. And we're sad....

So do yourself and all your friends a favor, and resolve to come to church more regularly in 2007. You'll be happier for it. And so will all of us. You can read poetry or walk in the woods any old time. But Sunday Morning only happens once a week.

See you in church....twj

SHARING FOUNDATION/YAHOO CHALLENGE

Thanks so much to so many FRSers, for participating in the Sharing Foundation/ Yahoo Challenge on the internet last week. We have been officially notified we won! We had 755 individual donors, and raised over \$49,500, which they are now going to match.

The money will support all five of our schools for a year, and free up funds budgeted to go into the endowment we started in 2006 to ensure that the orphanage, HIV, schools and vocational programs never falter!

We have no idea, of course, whose donation brought us to success, but the 25 or so from FRS people were obviously vital. We were "the little guys" never expected to win against a well known west coast publisher, but the huge out pouring of donors--and it was donors, not dollars that counted, although the dollars piled up too, made us #1!

Thanks loads, Nancy Hendrie

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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

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

**ALL CHURCH VISIONING EVENT
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10**

**All Church Visioning Event, February 10,
Help plan for FRS in 2258!**

On Saturday, February 10, the Parish Committee is sponsoring an all church visioning event to explore your ideas for all that FRS needs and could provide going forward for the next 250 years. Whether you are a new visitor to FRS or a long standing member, part of our Youth Group or an occasional visitor, we hope you will participate in this event. Think about what brought you to FRS and what keeps you here. What do your friends say about the future and what they need in their lives. How can we help our community for another 250 years? We will gather the morning of February 10th to hear YOUR thoughts, forming a market place of ideas to be discussed in small groups. After a morning of these small group discussions, we will break for lunch and a summary of the group discussions. It is our hope that these ideas and conversations will produce a framework for the future inspiration, activities and budgetary planning of our congregations going forward. Save the date on your calendars NOW! Saturday, February 10th, 7:45AM to 2:00PM. We need to hear all your ideas!

The Parish Committee

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

Handbell Choir TBA

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

by Molly Sorrows

Marketplace 29 AD

During January and February, the children and youth will have the opportunity to learn about life in Jesus' time and to hear some of the stories he taught his followers. We will experience different aspects of life in a village and its Marketplace in the year 29 A.D. by visiting (and helping in) a variety of shops including the Bakery, the Spice and Herb shop, and the yard goods or clothing shop. We will meet people such as the scribe writer and the rope maker who will teach us some of their skills. We also plan to have some music and dance as well as a craft such as weaving or basket making.

We will use time during the children's worship in Union Hall and the Message for All Ages to share a variety of New Testament stories. I hope that everyone in the congregation will have time during coffee hour each week to look around for what shops were open in the Marketplace that day and to hear stories from the children and the adults who helped them. We will see clearly the important role of storytelling in Jesus' time and in ours, and will have the opportunity to explore our UU principles and our own ideas for living our faith.

We are still seeking volunteers to help with these activities. Some shops will be open for two or three weeks and others for just one, so there is room for volunteers with all types of schedules. And, if you decide to volunteer for the whole time, you won't have to miss a single shop!

KIDS KWIRE COMES TO FRS

There will soon be a new singing group at FRS called KIDS KWIRE. It will include 3rd through 6th grade. The plan is to meet at FRS on Wednesday afternoons right after school, at 3:05. Third and fourth graders will be escorted to the church by Alison Saylor, who has volunteered to do this. Fifth and sixth graders may remain at the school for homework club, or go to the library, and come to the church at 3:15. We will end at 4:00pm. The group will sing for church services every few weeks, and we'll also prepare to take part in our church's 250th anniversary celebration. Music has always been, and will continue to be, a really important part of our church life. To have a group of young people as representatives of FRS music will be exciting and wonderful during our celebration.

Please know that every child in these grades is welcome. You can sign up by speaking to Marguerite Shaw, Molly Sorrows, or Alison Saylor - or send an email to frsmusic@comcast.net. A minimum of ten is required for the group to get started – with the hope there will be many more. Further information will be forthcoming as soon as we have a list of at least ten names.

All the carpeting in the addition was cleaned over the holiday break. Check them out. Also the furnaces were successfully repaired!

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.

IMPORTANT CLIMATE CHANGE TALK

Important Climate Change Talk on January 23, 2007: Join us in hearing an exciting, compelling speaker about the need to dramatically reduce consumption of the earth's resources. **Lexington resident Dr. John Sterman**, the Jay W. Forrester Professor of Management and Director of the Systems Dynamics Group at the MIT Sloan School of Management will be speaking at **Cary Memorial Library on Tuesday, January 23 from 7:00-9:00PM.** Sponsored by Lexington Global Warming Action Coalition, the talk is titled: "Overcoming Public Complacency About Climate Change; Systems Thinking for Complex Policy Challenges"

One question we all have is: Why is the world so slow to address the risks posed by global warming?

Dr. Sterman will explain the simple systems thinking tools that can help overcome these problems, and explore implications for the education of our children, and for communication between scientists, policymakers and the public.

A number of us will be meeting in front of the FRS at either 6:15 for a direct carpool to the talk or at 5:00 for a carpool to a mutually agreeable restaurant before the talk.

Contact Ernie Huber at 978-369-6678 if you'd like to carpool.

AN EVENING OF FOLK MUSIC HERE AT FRS

An evening of Folk featuring Joe Jencks, Michelle Cummings and Matt Meyer! Join us on January 19th at 7pm for a Folk concert at the First Religious Society in Carlisle. A reception will follow the concert and donations for the performers will gratefully be accepted. Joe Jencks is a life-long folksinger, an international touring performer and award-winning songwriter. His career is based as much in ministering to the human spirit as it is in the performance of music.

"In these times, we need the singers who will do the homework and tell the stories! Joe Jencks is among the fine next generation singers who are ready to carry on the tradition as well as look into the future" - Holly Near, Ukiah, CA

"The key to the future is people joining in. The music of Joe Jencks captures this essential spirit. Joe is a fantastic singer who carries on the traditions." -Pete Seeger

Michelle Cummings will also be performing with percussionist Matt Meyer. Twenty-four year old Michelle Cummings is a new face on the songwriter scene with a fresh sound worth listening to. A Berklee College of Music graduate and Northeastern native, this woman has been catching audiences off - guard from Boston to Nashville with her unique brand of catchy piano-folk tunes and a heartbreaking voice to match. Matt Meyer brings a whole new dimension to the music with an impressive array of textures and grooves. Together, they make for an engaging musical experience you won't soon forget. Check out JoeJencks.com and MichelleCummingsMusic.com.

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 Anne Ketchen at 978-369-1661 during the month of January.

Circle Dinner Extravaganza - Saturday, January 27th: Join us on Saturday, January 27th for our annual Circle Dinner Extravaganza which starts at 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 throughout 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.

Knitting for the Homeless Continues: **Here are the dates, 7:30 in the conference room at FRS: January 17, February 13, March 13.** Thank you for your enthusiasm for this project, Linda and Lauren.

There are some lovely photos taken of the Christmas Pageant. Mike Saylor has put his photos on Smugmug where they can be viewed for free by all. Go to <http://uucarlisle.smugmug.com/>. You may view the photos as a slide show (button on top right hand corner), add your comments, or order prints and other items from Smugmug. Mike will upload any photos you send him for others to view on this site, or you may contact him to get instructions how to do this yourself. Contact Mike at Saylorfarm@comcast.net. Thank you all for making the Christmas Pageant this year so special.

Many thanks to Dollina Borella for all her hard work and organization of the Lowell families projects again this year at both Thanksgiving and Christmas. Four families with 17 kids received two gifts each this Christmas and each family also received \$50 Demoulas' gift certificates. Dollina's daughter Christina was once again the cheerful delivery assistant.

Many thanks, too, to Mary Hult, Nancy Hendrie and Julia and Helen Lyons for organizing the House of Hope Christmas stocking project and working with the Sunday School students to fill the stockings. The stockings were made by The Sharing Foundation sewing project people in Roteang. Helen delivered the 25 stockings for the children, 17 for the mothers and one for a dad. She also took along a Greens Sale gingerbread house made by Krista Stengrevics and Julia.