

FIRST RELIGIOUS SOCIETY

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NEIGHBOURS & FELLOW CREATURES

The First Religious Society in Carlisle

Unitarian Universalist
A Welcoming Congregation

Volume XXXI, No. 17

May 14, 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 May 14, 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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Web site: www.uucarlisle.org **E-mail address:** frs@uucarlisle.org
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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, Jack O'Connor, Jenifer Bush
Union Hall Coffee House: Dian Cuccinello 978-278-5745,
Email: dianfrancesca@comcast.net

THE ECLECTIC CLERIC

While I'm away on my candidating visit to Portland Maine, here is one of my all-time favorite columns ever, which I originally wrote (with a few slight differences) to appear in the Nantucket Inquirer and Mirror in 2002...

"The Top Five Things That You Can Do Right Now to Simplify Your Live, Improve Your Health, Increase Your Happiness, and Save the Planet."

1) Turn Off Your Television. Yes, I know, there are a lot of good things on TV. But are you really watching them? The amount of evidence concerning the deleterious effects of television viewing on human health and happiness is astounding, but you'll never see it covered on the nightly news. TV is a mindless, habit-forming activity which, like an addictive drug, makes us passive and lethargic, yet more prone to violence, lowers self-esteem, isolates us from our neighbors and family, encourages materialist values, reduces academic achievement, and robs us spent doing almost anything else. The typical American watches almost four hours of television a day, representing approximately 40% of our "free time," but at the end of the day what do we have to show for it?

If quitting TV "cold turkey" seems too difficult, why not first try cutting down to one or two days a week? Simply get yourself a TiVo, or learn to program that old VCR of yours to record the six hours of programming you feel is really worth watching each week, then pick an evening (or two) and watch it all at once. This way you can even fast-forward through

the commercials, saving even more time for "quality" TV viewing. My guess though is that, if we had to choose in advance, most of us would have a hard time finding six hours worth of quality television to watch each week. Instead, we tend to turn on the TV the moment we get home, and then sit on the couch for hours at a time surfing through hundreds of cable channels and wondering why there's nothing on that can hold our attention for longer than a few seconds. Why not save ourselves the frustration, and do something else instead? Turn Off the Tube, Tune Out the "commercial messages," Drop in to the library or bookstore, a cafe, a church group or community meeting, or any one of a hundred other places where you might actually find yourself face-to-face with real live people, rather than the flickering electronic images of superficial TV "celebrities."

2) Eat Lower on the Food Chain. We Americans are notoriously obsessed about our diets. I can't think of anyone else in human history who have worried so much about what we eat and at the same time eaten so poorly. Yet most of us could probably benefit tremendously simply by observing this one basic principle. Eat less fat and more fiber. Less meat and more fruits and grains and vegetables. Fewer processed foods, more natural foods. Less fast food packed in cardboard and passed to you through your automobile window; more home-cooked meals prepared yourself from local ingredients, and eaten with people you love around the kitchen table.

Again, if this seems like too radical a lifestyle change for you, try starting out slowly, perhaps

THE ECLECTIC CLERIC *(continued)*

with something so simple as eating fish on Fridays. Change the kinds of snacks you buy; drink cold water instead of sodas; gradually change the ratio of the portions on your plate; find a few vegetarian recipes you really, really like, and prepare one once a week. Eating well should be a pleasure, not a chore. Wholesome, healthy and delicious are a lot easier than you might think.

3) Walk, Don't Ride. This is the exercise portion of the equation. One of the nicest things about living on an island like Nantucket is that it truly is possible to walk just about everywhere you want to go. Not only is walking good for your health, it is also good for the environment. Just think, you can lose weight, strengthen your heart and improve your aerobic capacity, lower your blood pressure, conserve fossil fuels, combat global warming, save money (and probably time too, when you stop to add it all up), meet your neighbors and increase both the quality and the duration of your life, all just by taking the simple step of putting one foot in front of the other.

4) Put Your Assets Where Your Values Are. A Latin American theologian once observed that the reason most North Americans are so unhappy is because we are "materially rich but spiritually poor." Americans tend to define our self-worth by our net-worth, and thus inevitably end up feeling like we are always a dollar short. Scripture reminds us that "the love of money is the root of all evil," and also that "where your treasure is, there shall your heart be also." Rather than allowing money to rule our lives, we need constantly to be looking for

ways to use our wealth to serve a higher purpose. This principle remains true regardless of one's level of affluence. Invest in socially responsible companies, buy locally from merchants you know and trust, stop "recreational" shopping in the hopeless attempt to fill the emptiness at the center of your soul with worthless possessions, and instead give generously to charities which assist those less fortunate than yourself. Learn, like Thoreau, to measure your riches in proportion to the number of things which you "can afford to let alone." And remember always that the best and most important things in life really and truly are free.

5) Stop Thinking Like a Consumer, and Start Thinking Like an Activist. Consumers are defined by what they consume. Activists are defined by how they act. Learn to be a doer and not a user. The entire planet will be grateful for your efforts....twj

May 20: Rev. David Pohl, guest minister
May 27: Flower Communion
Rev. Jensen
June 3: Blessing of the Animals
June 10: RE Sunday
June 17: Fathers Day and last service
of church year/ Jazz Trio

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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 May 21, 2007

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

VARIOUS ITEMS

Learn About Partakers: Partakers was founded ten years ago. Its mission is to reduce prisoner recidivism through education and civic engagement. The group's work focuses on two areas: 1) education--preparing, sponsoring and mentoring prisoners in their pursuit of a higher education and 2) advocacy--working toward state-level criminal justice reform. Margie King Saphier, who was ordained by our congregation and who is now Associate Minister for Pastoral Care at First Parish, Concord, has been on the board of Partakers for five years. She and her husband Jon are hosting a wine and hors d'oeuvres event at their home at 56 Bellows Hill Road on Saturday, May 20 from 5 to 7 p.m. It is a fundraising event that will give people an opportunity to learn more about Partakers. Contact Margie at mksaphier@comcast.net or at 369-4467 for more information on the organization. Please let Margie know if you plan to attend.

Tutoring at UU Urban Ministry: Bill McCormick, now a Belmont resident, has been tutoring at the UU Urban Ministry in Roxbury. He is enthusiastic about the program and asks if any FRSers would like to join. He suggests that the tutors could join him for dinner after working with the students. Please e-mail Bill at bartfarm@aol.com if you have any questions or think you would like to take part in the program.

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

KIDS KWIRE
Wednesdays 3:15-3:45

Handbell Choir
TBA

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPORT WIND POWER

Given our concern over global climate change arising from the burning of fossil fuels, the FRS Environmental Action Committee (EAC) encourages buying carbon offsets (renewable energy certificates) to fund the development of renewable energy sources. The easiest way to buy carbon offsets is to donate to an organization such as the New England Wind Fund (NEWF), which supports new local wind energy projects (excluding Cape Wind). For all donations we make to the NEWF, the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC) will generously provide matching funds to the town of Carlisle to spend on clean energy programs/ projects (goods and services) of our choice. Additionally, if enough contributions are made by March 2008, the MTC will provide Carlisle with a free 2kW solar (photovoltaic) panel for one of our town buildings. (Lexington is currently working to acquire its second solar panel.) The NEWF, abiding by rigorous standards relative to information disclosure, pricing, and consumer protection, is the only option approved for all communities in Massachusetts for these grants.

As an increased incentive, the EAC will match FRS parishioner's contributions to the NEWF through June 15 of this year, up to our budgeted \$180. Please send donations directly to the Fund online at www.NewEnglandWind.org, or call 800-287-3950. Then call the FRS office, or send an email to frs@uucarlisle.org, with the amount of your contribution for EAC matching purposes. As a guideline for donations, the average household in New England uses 500 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity per month, generating 500 lbs. of CO2 emissions. A donation of \$25/month (or about 25% of your bill) is needed to offset this fully. Including your emissions from natural gas, oil, and automobile use would more than triple this amount. All donations to the NEWF are fully tax deductible. Don't miss out on this unique gift-matching opportunity, for donations of any amount! For more information, see www.cleanenergychoice.org or contact Dan Scholten or Art Milliken.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY by George Bishop

On April 21 FRS finally got the chance to work at the Governors Street site in Reading where Habitat is building two houses. We have been limited to working only every other month because of the strong volunteer turnout. We did work in October, but were cancelled out in December and February due to inspection or scheduling glitches.

To compensate for our waiting, we were blessed with a beautiful sunny spring day in the mid 60's. We had a bigger than normal crew: Alison Saylor, Tom and Drew Lockwood, Dik Dagavarian, Chris Christy, Donna Carter, Mark Barrow, and George Bishop. In addition to the FRS folks there were people from a group called "Engineers without Borders".

We started work at 8:30. There was a coffee break at 10:30. A little after 10:00 Sue Kirk arrived with a delicious lunch, prepared by she and Wendy Barrow (Wendy's lemon Squares were terrific).

Construction is nearly complete. The work inside was painting an installing interior trim; outside we cleaned up the yards in preparation for landscaping. Dik, Donna and Mark worked inside on the trim. Alison, who will plan and oversee the landscaping, supervised the rest of us in the clean-up and prep work. We hauled branches and other natural materials to the adjoining woods and construction debris and trash to the dumpster.

A contractor will bring in top soil and rough grade the site. In preparation for that we staked out a 3 foot buffer around the foundation which will be covered in gravel to absorb runoff from the roof and to indicate that bushes and shrubs should be spaced away from the house. Finally Alison met with the two couples who were working on their future homes to talk to them about the landscaping and to see what they would like.

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.

PLEDGE DRIVE UPDATE FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Our goal this year is to raise \$94,000 from 86 pledges. As of May 6 we have received 64 pledges totaling \$64,596 for the 2007-8 church year. If you haven't made your pledge yet, please return your card as soon as possible. Pledges represent nearly half of our operating budget and making your pledge now will allow us to prepare a balanced budget for the Annual Meeting on May 20.

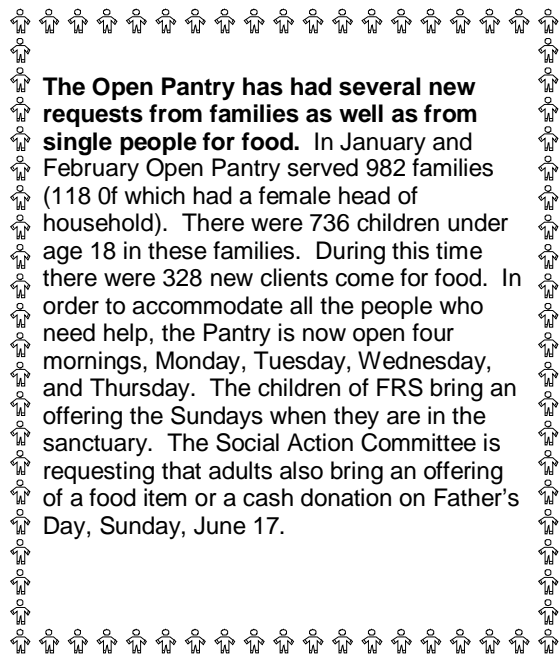
We'd like to acknowledge those who have already pledged. Thank you for supporting FRS!

- Anonymous
- John & Ann Ballantine
- Donna & James Carter
- Eric & Margaret Darling
- Ken & Marilyn Harte
- Tim & Mary Hult
- John & Ann James
- Lenny & Marjorie Johnson
- Richard & Anne Ketchen
- Steve & Sue Kirk
- Janice & Kerry Kissinger
- Tom Lockwood & Family
- Art Milliken
- Judy Munroe
- Gordon & Hannalore Munson
- Karen Rigg
- Jonathan & Margaret Saphier
- Alison & Mike Saylor
- Jackie & Jeff Schaefer
- Nancy Shohet West
- Suzanne Whitney Smith
- Sylvia Willard
- Bob & Sally Zielinski

The FRS Ramblers will meet at the church at 7:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 19. We will have breakfast at the Riverview then walk in Carlisle. Please call the Emmonses (369-7921) or the Hubers (369-6678) if you'd like to join us or if you have questions.

BUDGET PLANNING UPDATE

As all of you who have attended the May 6 after-church meeting are aware, the church will be making important decisions over the next few weeks on how we move forward through the upcoming interim year. Many of these decisions, such as whether to hire an interim minister, are key to planning the '07-'08 budget. We are also facing minister search expenses next year as well as the need to undertake some urgent parsonage repairs. The Finance and Parish Committees are working closely together to complete a budget plan as we approach Annual Meeting. By necessity, much of this planning activity is taking place under a tight time schedule. Questions and comments on the budget from members of the congregation have been very valuable, and we want to keep hearing from you! Please send in your pledge card if you haven't done so already. Your pledge support is essential for the coming year. Lenny Johnson for the Finance Committee



The Open Pantry has had several new requests from families as well as from single people for food. In January and February Open Pantry served 982 families (118 of which had a female head of household). There were 736 children under age 18 in these families. During this time there were 328 new clients come for food. In order to accommodate all the people who need help, the Pantry is now open four mornings, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The children of FRS bring an offering the Sundays when they are in the sanctuary. The Social Action Committee is requesting that adults also bring an offering of a food item or a cash donation on Father's Day, Sunday, June 17.

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 Judy Munroe at 978-369-5621 during the month of May.

Walk or Bike to Church! Our Small Group Ministry is organizing Walk or Bike to Church Day on Sunday, May 20th. The purpose of this event is to raise awareness of ways we can all reduce our dependence on automobiles, and get a little exercise and fresh air in the process. If you are able and willing to walk or bike to church that day, please consider doing so. If you are unable to walk or bike, but would like to participate, you could consider carpooling with a neighbor. Some of you may want to drive part way, park in the driveway of a friend who is near the center, and walk the last leg of the trip. (Nancy and Rick West have offered their driveway as a place to park--it's a lovely walk from there to church) Anything goes, the point is to have fewer cars in the parking lot at church! Participation in this event is completely optional. Please do whatever is most comfortable for you and your family. If you walk to church, but develop a killer blister (or something) and would like a ride home, Joe Jancek will be providing van service for anyone opting out of the return trip. Questions, contact Kathy Varney, or any group member: Ellen and Ernie Huber, Helen Lyons, Mary Grant, Joe Jancek, Sue Stengrevics, Paul Morrison, or Marilyn Harte.

Memorial Day Luncheon: Do join your friends and neighbors at the ham and bean luncheon in Union Hall after the parade on Memorial Day, Monday, May 28. The FRS will be hosting the meal which, along with the ham and beans, will include potato and tossed salads, home baked rolls, coffee and tea, and fruit crisp for dessert. Pizza will be available for the young folk if they prefer it. The ham and bean lunch will be \$6 and the pizza lunch, including a chocolate chip cookie and drink, will be \$3. Reservations are not necessary. If you would prefer a reservation, please contact Kathy in the church office at 978-369-5180.

Union Hall Coffee House Changes: Thanks, again, to all who came out on Saturday night, only to be pleasantly swept up and away by the jubilant and genuine music that is Southern Rail. I can honestly say that I have never seen so many smiling faces, or toes tapping at the same time, in any one place. It was magic, pure and simple. I want to apologize, openly, for any confusion regarding the seating. With every new venture, there are certain bugs that always need to be worked out, and so, we came to the conclusion on Saturday, that in fairness to all, from now on, folks will be able to reserve tickets, but not tables, or seats. It will be on a first-come-first-serve basis. Get there early enough, and you can have the table and seats of your choice, and frankly set it up any way you want to. We aim to please, and we take your requests seriously. After all, we're doing this so that we can all enjoy the music, the food, and our friends and family. *Dian C.*

**ALL CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING
As been moved to
Sunday, June 10
4:00pm
Union Hall**

All-Church Potluck Lunch & Send Off for Tim - June 10th: Join us for a potluck lunch after the service on Sunday, June 10th to wish Tim well. If the weather permits, we'll set up some tables outside. Bring your favorite church picnic dish and the membership committee will supply lemonade and cake. Any questions, contact Sue Kirk 978-371-0176 or sukirk@aol.com.