

June 9, 2010



WORSHIP SERVICES



Sunday, June 13 ~ 10:30 a.m.

"Dancing to the Rhythms of the Earth"

Rev. Arline Conan Sutherland

Jean Anouil wrote, "Love is after all, the gift of oneself." We will celebrate the gifts that all of you bring to the life of this congregation. We will thank the Parish Board that was, install the Board that is to be, and recognize the members of our Search Committee. We will celebrate our recent Green Sanctuary certification and speak of how we can dance to the rhythms of the Earth. This Sunday will also be a "Giving Away the Plate" Sunday (see page 4 for details).

*Nursery care provided for infants and toddlers.
Sunday school for Preschool through Grade 8*

◆ *Ice cream sundaes in Parker Hall to celebrate
the end of a great year of Sunday school.*

Sunday, June 20 ~ 10:30 a.m.

Celebration Sunday! ~ Flower Communion

Rev. Arline Conan Sutherland

We will celebrate the longest day of the year with singing and dancing and have our annual Flower Communion. This will be Arline's last Sunday in our pulpit and we will mark the end of her Interim Ministry with the walking stick ceremony, symbolizing that she, and First Parish, are moving on. After the service we'll have a special cake and presentation for Arline, and then head next door for the annual church picnic.

*Nursery care provided for infants and toddlers
No Sunday school programming*

◆ *Church Picnic*



Remember...

~ Celebration Cabaret ~
Saturday, June 12, 6 p.m.

Our end-of-the year Cabaret will celebrate all that we have accomplished this past year, including the conclusion of a successful two-year interim ministry period and the calling of a new settled minister for First Parish. We'll celebrate with song, dance, talent acts and refreshments, as well as a light-hearted tribute to Arline.

Flower Communion ~ Sunday, June 20

Remember to **bring a flower** to the service for our annual Flower Communion.

Church Picnic ~ Sunday, June 20

Our annual church picnic will take place on the church lot after the service and the presentation of gifts to Arline. Please **bring picnic foods to share** (nothing for the grill, however; we won't be grilling) and **lawn games** if you like. Beverages and paper goods will be provided. Ruth and David Rose's Thursday evening covenant group will host the picnic.

Saying Farewell to Arline

In addition to the tribute at the Cabaret and the service on June 20, we will be presenting Arline with two congregational gifts, a **memory book** and a **donation to the UU Urban Ministry**, per her request. If you would like to contribute to the Urban Ministry gift, please make a check out to "First Parish" with "Arline's Gift" on the memo line and bring/mail it to the church office or give it to Dick LeSchack or Tom Griffiths. See page 4 for details on the memory book.



Musings

Rev. Arline Conan Sutherland, Interim Minister

Well, the time has come to say, "Good-bye."

No one likes saying good-bye. Interim Ministers are trained to say farewell but it doesn't mean we like it. I've done it so many times in my life that one might think I'd have acquired some skill at it.

What I *have* learned is that the requirements are simple:

1. Acknowledge your feelings, all of them: the regret, the sorrow, the attachment, the value of what has been, the anger, the laughter and tears.
2. Acknowledge the reality of the parting. This really is an ending. Nothing will be the same again.
3. Remember, this is the goal we have worked toward. Good things lie before us. Part of us is eagerly anticipating the future.

The requirements are simple, and they are really hard. Like all transitions. Like life.

In a way, this parting is like a graduation. It's recognizing hard work done well. It's remembering how much fun it has been, how painful it sometimes was, and how much has been mastered. It's saying, "You are ready to move on."

I have loved working and worshipping with you!

I am gratified to have been a witness to the hard good work you have done.

Go, and be blessed. Go, and be a blessing!

Arline

P.S. Sunday, June 20, will be my last Sunday in the pulpit at First Parish. I will have moved out of the minister's study by then and will be on call till the Rev. Peter C. Boullata takes up his ministry with you on August 15.



Board Notes

Tom Griffiths, Board Chair

Transition News

Rev Peter Boullata ("Peter" is my usual reference) will take up the ministerial reigns August 15. One of the things the Board did recently was to extend Arline's contract from August 1 through the 15. Arline will thus provide us transitional support (at the usual summer level) until Peter joins us in the fall. Although Peter joins us August 15, his formal installation service will be on Sunday, October 17 at 3 p.m. He is making many of the arrangements for the service, himself, but the remainder will be coordinated by Megan Ladd who has agreed to take responsibility for the party (er, reception) afterwards. What more can I say? Mark this on your calendars, now!

And I'll remind you, again, about our farewell gifts to Arline, two of which are the memory book, available in the church office, and the donation, in Arline's name, to the Urban Ministry. If you'd like to be part of the latter, please give Dick LeSchack, Cindie Umans, or me a check made out to First Parish, with a notation on the memo line that it's for Arline's gift.

Budget Transitions

I mentioned in the last *Focalpoint* that the FY2010-11 budget passed at the Semi-Annual Meeting, and you knew already that your pledges astounded me and moved the church forward dramatically. Here, I'd like, belatedly, to mention just three of the several things your generosity helped First Parish accomplish:

- ◆ pay our new minister a fair salary by UUA guidelines;
- ◆ increase pay and/or professional expenses for our professional staff, who had gone some time without an increase; and
- ◆ add a new paid cluster teacher for our Religious Growth and Learning program.

These are significant accomplishments.

I'd also mention that, although it didn't contribute to a budget increase, a significant budget rearrangement occurred to allow us to combine the positions of Sexton and part-time Maintenance Coordinator into a single full-time position of Maintenance Coordinator. The Board and the Buildings & Grounds Committee felt that this reorganization would allow us to improve operations and accomplish more than we could with the previous structure.

Let me end this column with the wish that you have a happy, enriching summer. Come back refreshed.



Lynne Weygint, Director of Religious Education

I nearly always get so choked up reading my portion of our annual Child Dedication service that I can barely get through it, and yesterday was no different! It's especially moving for me to dedicate our older children, as I have often had the opportunity to get to know them over the years. Yesterday we dedicated two of the French sisters, Melanie and Meredith. Arline made a special mention of their oldest sister, Molly, and gave her a rose, too.



Our annual Child Dedication service is one of several meaningful rituals that we observe at First Parish to mark the cycles of our lives, and I love having a part in these rituals. In this particular ritual, the congregation is asked to take responsibility for helping to raise the children we dedicate, by responding "we will" to the following litany:

"As we witness the dedication of these beautiful children, symbol of the promise yet to come, let us as a congregation acknowledge our responsibility to them and to all our children: to surround them with love, guidance and the principles of our ancient liberal religion. It is fitting that we take this opportunity to rededicate ourselves to life, to one another, and to our principles. Will you dedicate your hearts and minds to these children and to their parents? Will you love and cherish them and all our children and parents in times of struggle and times of gladness?"

The enthusiasm of the congregational response, "we will," also brought tears to my eyes. To witness your ongoing dedication to our children and youth is such a positive affirmation of my work with you. And of course, I know how much it means to the parents and families of those we dedicate. Thank you.

During coffee hour someone asked me what gift we gave our newly dedicated children. In addition to the rose, we give the following framed poem by Robert Kaufman, with the hope that it will become meaningful to the children and their families, maybe read at bedtime, or during a family meeting. Here it is:

A Prayer for our Children

We wish for you a storm or two
that you may enjoy the calm.
We wish for you tranquility in time of trial.
We wish you a cool breeze on a warm day,
and pale white clouds
that you may better appreciate the blueness of the sky.
We wish you darkness that you may see the stars.

We wish you anticipation of high adventure,
and we wish you the courage to avoid battle.
We wish you a sense of wonder
- and poetry - and music.
We wish you companionship
that you may appreciate solitude.

We wish you a friend who will understand you,
and understanding so that you may have a friend.
We wish that you may become all that you wish to be,
and more than you hope that you can be.

We wish you a flower to smell, a hand to touch,
a voice to cheer, a heart to gladden.
And we wish you someone to love,
as we love you.

Beautiful, yes? And with that, I bid you the happiest of summers: full of cool breezes, pale white clouds, a night sky full of brilliant stars, a time to wonder, a flower to smell, and a hand to touch. Enjoy the season that lies before us, and know that I am thinking about you and looking forward to the year ahead with gusto!

You're invited!
Annual Ice Cream Sundae Party!



Hosted by the RG&L Committee
to celebrate another awesome year of
religious education.

Sunday, June 13, during coffee hour,
in Parker Hall
Please join us!

First Parish Family

Congratulations to **Don** and **Lynne Yansen** on the birth of a new grandson, Kai Jones Takahashi, born May 31 at Mass General Hospital to Shana Yansen and Shoji Takahashi. Shana and Shoji were married at First Parish in July 2006 by Rev. Bill Clark.

Our loving thoughts are with **Nan Jefferys** who underwent successful surgery to remove a tumor on her kidney at the beginning of this week. She will have the results of the biopsy within a few days. Nan is at New England Baptist Hospital, and expects to be there for three to five days.

Our thoughts are also with **Larry Whipple** who is in fragile health and has moved from Waltham Crossings to Meadow Green Nursing Home in Waltham.

Giving Away the Plate

Thanks to all who contributed to the plate collection for Breaking Barriers at WATCH in Waltham. The \$675 we raised on May 16 has made language classes offered through Breaking Barriers more accessible to Latino families in Waltham by sponsoring 20 new scholars. In addition, three First Parish members have also joined the tutoring program at Breaking Barriers. (More tutors are always welcome; there will be another training program in the fall.) Thanks to everyone for your kindness and generosity.

This month First Parish will give away the plate collection to the Lexington Farmers' Market to support two of its outreach programs. Our gifts will help purchase produce for the kitchen of a shelter in Somerville, run by the Somerville Coalition for the Homeless. In addition, our gifts will also help fund the market's Double-Incentives Program for SNAP shoppers. (SNAP is the new name for the federally-funded food assistance program previously known as food stamps and serves as the first line of defense against hunger for low-income individuals and their families.) With our help, SNAP shoppers will be able to purchase twice the amount of fresh produce, making access to good, local food more affordable. The Lexington Farmers' Market is the only farmers' market in the Metro West area currently accepting SNAP benefits. Please give generously!



Friday Noon Concert Series

Our Friday Noon Concert Series continues this Friday with The Low Brass of the Lexington Symphony Orchestra playing selections from the Renaissance to contemporary times. Our 2010 series will continue through October 15 with a varied program of instrumental and choral music, including concerts featuring First Parish members Mary Neumann, Regie O'Hare Gibson and Suzanne Jubenville's Pisces Rising choral group. The concerts are about one-hour long and admission is free. Freewill donations are used for the maintenance of our three pianos and our Hutchings tracker organ. The concerts are also an important outreach effort and a gift to our community.



We are beginning to plan for our annual service to dedicate new bricks in the memorial garden. If you are interested in memorializing a loved one with an inscribed granite brick, please contact Sarah Matthews by July 31 so the brick can be ordered. Peter will conduct a short service after the regular worship service on October 3 to dedicate the new bricks that have been installed.

Memory Book for Arline

As most of you know, Arline's two-year interim ministry with us is coming to a close. With her guidance we have continued to grow stronger and move confidently toward creating the next chapter of our historic life as a congregation. As part of the ways the congregation will thank and say farewell to Arline, we will be putting together a Memory Book for her with pages filled with photos, notes, poems, drawings and memories from all of us. The pages of the book are 8½ x 11, so it's easiest if nothing is larger than that size. We'd love to have the book well filed with pages by June 20, Arline's last day in our pulpit. Please bring your contributions for the book to the church office.



Don't forget that Stop & Shop cards can be purchased in the church office during the summer months.

Great Fall Auction ~ Plan Now!

It's not too early! Save the date NOW for our Great Fall Auction on Saturday, November 20, starting at 7 p.m. It's *the* social event of the fall season! Following our usual format, we'll have delicious appetizers and beverages and bidding on silent auction items first. Live auctioning will begin at 7:45 p.m. Mark your calendar now and keep an eye out for great items for the auction during your summer travels and activities. Yes, we love vacation homes and gourmet meals and theatre and concert tickets as well as services like catering, babysitting, and transport to/from the airport. But we also love donations of art, flea market treasures, collectibles and antiques from special summer travel locales. The 2010 auction donation form is now available in the Members' section of our website, so download it now so you'll be ready when you find something fabulous. Forms should be returned to Debbie Weiner Soule, Auction Chair, or to the church office.



Unity Group Meeting

The Unity Group will hold its last meeting of the church year on Monday, June 14, beginning with a social hour at noon and then a brown bag lunch with dessert provided at 12:30 p.m. After the lunch, there will be an important business meeting and all members are urged to attend. Marion Sear will be our next president for next year.

Reminder: Annual reports for the church year just concluding will be due at the beginning of October in preparation for the Fall Semi-Annual Meeting. It's so much easier to write these reports now with the information fresh in your mind than it will be next October, particularly if your tenure is over. Be the first, and the smartest, and get your report in now!

Lexington Interfaith Garden

There will be opportunities over the summer to work in the Lexington Interfaith Garden next door. First Parish dates are Tuesday, June 15, 5-6 p.m.; Saturday, June 19, 8-9:30 a.m.; Tuesday, July 13, 5-6 p.m.; Saturday, July 17, 7:45 a.m. to harvest vegetables for an 8:30 a.m. delivery to the Lexington Food Pantry; Tuesday, August 17, 5-6 p.m.; and Saturday, August 21, 8-9:30 a.m. Call Marty Kvaal or Lynne Yansen to sign up.



Staff Summer Schedules

Arline: Arline's last Sunday in our pulpit will be Sunday, June 20. She will no longer be at the church after that date but will be on call until August 15.

Peter: Peter's tenure as our minister officially begins on August 15.

Suzanne: Suzanne will work through the end of June and then will be off for the summer.

Lynne: Lynne will be off during the summer. Her last day in the office will be June 25 and she will return to work on August 23.

Cindie: Beginning the week of June 21, Cindie will be in the office on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m and Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. She will be on vacation the weeks of June 27, July 25 and August 1, returning to the office on Tuesday, August 10. Lay ministers will monitor the phone during these times. She will resume regular office hours on Monday, August 30.

Dick: Dick will maintain his usual office schedule during the summer, except for the last week in August when he will be at Star Island.

Bob Coughlin: Bob will maintain his usual hours throughout the summer months.

This is the last *Focalpoint* of the 2009-10 church year. The deadline for the first issue of the new church year is Monday, August 30.

~ ~ ~

Our Summer Worship Services begin on June 27 and continue through September 5. Come hear Dan Fenn talk about guilt, that chronic disease we all have which may not be all that bad; hear Laura Tully talk about what covenant groups can do to support members in time of need; hear Marshall Wilensky bring to life the various quotes-- funny, poignant, deep -- that have been part of his life across the decades; and hear Drew Stein talk about what one does when life throws you such a steep curve you can never go back to the way things used to be. The complete schedule of speakers is included with this newsletter.

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Our Friday Noon Concerts take place in our sanctuary every from noon and continue through October 15.

~

Have a Wonderful Summer!

Summer Worship Services

with music by First Parish musicians and friends



First Parish in Lexington, Unitarian Universalist

Service at 10:30 a.m. ~ Coffee & refreshments after the service

Childcare provided for infants and toddlers

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| June 27 | "The Covenant Group"
Laura Tully |
| July 4 | "Zen and the Art of the Croquet Tournament"
Susi Chivas |
| July 11 | "Service Is Its Prayer"
Nan Jefferys and members of the congregation |
| July 18 | "Facing Adversity: Recognizing the New Normal"
Drew Stein |
| July 25 | "Paisley and Sunflowers"
Marshall Wilensky |
| August 1 | The First Parish 2008-10 Search Committee |
| August 8 | "Medicine, Fundraising, Organ Donation and UU Values"
John C. F. Hodges |
| August 15 | "Spirituality and Money"
Paul Brouillette |
| August 22 | "Gilt-Edged Guilt"
Dan Fenn |
| August 29 | TBA
Matt Meyer |
| Sept. 5 | "Dancing With the Universe "
Jeanne Weikert |

Please join us for our Ingathering Service on September 12.



9/11, Guantánamo, and the Rule of Law

Monday, June 21, 7:30 p.m.

First Parish sanctuary

A distinguished panel explores the issues of terrorism, justice, human rights, imprisonment, and the trials at Guantánamo Prison:

- ◆ Joshua Rubinstein, Director of the Northeast Region of Amnesty International USA, which is campaigning to "fight terror with justice."
- ◆ Joshua Jacobson, Litigation/Controversy Department of the law firm of Wilmer Hale, who represented six Bosnian-Algerian men wrongfully detained at Guantánamo Bay in the case *Boumediene v. Bush*.
- ◆ Terry Rockefeller, September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, which is working for trials for the 9/11 perpetrators that respect international law and the U.S. Constitution.

Jointly sponsored by Amnesty International Group 56 of Lexington,
and the First Parish Social Action Committee.

Calendar

Sunday, June 13

10:30 a.m. Worship Service
7 p.m. Youth groups

Monday, June 14

12 p.m. Unity Group

Tuesday, June 15

7:30 p.m. Finance Committee

Wednesday, June 16

7 p.m. Parish Board

Thursday, June 17

5 p.m. Lay Ministers
7:30 p.m. Choir
7:30 p.m. Building & Grounds

Friday, June 18

12 noon Friday Noon Concert series
Senior high youth group leaves for Nantucket

Sunday, June 20

10:30 a.m. Worship Service
12 p.m. Church Picnic

Monday, June 21

church office begins summer hours
7:30 p.m. Amnesty International Forum

Thursday, June 24

4 p.m. Meditation

Friday, June 25

12 noon Friday Noon Concert series