



# The Herald

A Publication of the First Church in Salem, Unitarian

*The Ames Covenant  
In the love of truth  
and the spirit of Jesus,  
we unite for the worship of God  
and the service of humankind.*

FEBRUARY 2011

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## Minister's Musings

Once read an observation about people who win the lottery: the newfound money amplifies and enhances who they already are. Suddenly people with restricted options have many more opportunities and their core principles can be more readily seen in the decisions they make. Power brings our values and interests into starker relief.

I have had this thought in my back of my mind in the last few weeks. As I write this, wide scale political protests are breaking out across the Arab world, first in Tunisia and now in Egypt, Yemen and elsewhere. Long time, strongman dictators (who have been long supported by our country) are being challenged and brought down by widespread popular protests. A new generation in Egypt and elsewhere is clamoring for freedom and they are employing social networking technology to communicate and organize themselves. Just yesterday it was reported that the Egyptian government tried to “turn off” the Internet so as to prevent some of these groups from communicating with one another. Who would have thought ten years ago that wireless networks and text messages would play such a pivotal role in a historic political movement in the most populous country in the Middle East? Times they are a changing.

There is another side to our newfound powers, one that I saw in a local story this month. Last week it was reported that a group of teenagers from Marblehead and Swampscott were arrested after (what was described as) a “bloody brawl” occurred one recent weekday afternoon, involving baseball bats and metal pipes. This was apparently the culmination of series of posts and counter posts on Facebook during which these teens from each town increasingly taunted their rivals. In a story that echoes the plot of *West Side Story* (or *Romeo and Juliet*), the mocking insults escalated into the challenge of a gang fight, a suburban “rumble.” Quite often these sorts of aggressive postings stay in cyberspace, but this time the aggression became violent and could have had tragic consequences.

Technology is changing our world, many times for the better but sometimes for the worse. Our powers have increased. We fly through the air, race across the land and now communicate with hundreds (or millions) with the click of a keyboard. What has not changed is the human condition and our values. Even so, with our newfound powers everything we do is potentially amplified, forcing individuals, organizations and even countries to come to terms with what they stand for. In the age of Wikileaks and Twitter “revolutions, who we are and who we choose to be has real impacts and implications. What a fascinating time to be alive. What a great time to be part of a healthy and progressive minded church.

We have a great month planned here at the First Church including our now very popular *Chocolate Sunday* on Feb 13. I hope you can join us.

~ See you in church.



## From the Standing Committee

A snowy greeting to all!

As I mentioned last month, the Standing Committee is actively engaged in evaluating whether now is the time to jump forward with the visionary master plan adopted by all of you in 2009! We recognize this as a potentially defining moment in the Church's history.

While we had hoped to make a decision in January, at the January meeting we got the difficult but perhaps inevitable news that the projected costs will be higher than expected. This created a need for further analysis. During the next few weeks, MPIC and other ad hoc committees will attempt to come up with a variety of revenue, expense and financing scenarios for consideration at the March 9 Standing Committee meeting.

Since I am deeply involved in the creation of revenue projections, I'd like to take advantage of this column to seek anyone in the congregation who has experience researching private sector grants. If this is you, are you willing to make a short-term commitment (about a month) to help us identify potential prospective grantors? If yes, please get in touch with me.

Thank you, and I'll see you in Church.

**Nicole McLaughlin, Chair**

## Chocolate Sunday

February 13 will be our much loved annual Chocolate Sunday, an event that enables our First Church Religious Education students to raise funds for their chosen social justice cause. This year it is no coincidence that Chocolate Sunday falls one day before Valentines Day, so plan to participate by baking an item to donate and by purchasing a delicious treat for your some one special. The students will be circulating the Sunday before with information about their social justice cause. You may be surprised and amazed by the passion and dedication our young people have for a worthy cause. So please show your support by participating!

## February Schedule of Events

### Tuesday, February 1

- ⤴ Alliance Luncheon, noon
- ⤴ Spirit Journey, 7 pm

### Friday, February 4

- ⤴ Family Fun Night, 6:30- pm

### Sunday, February 6

- ⤴ Sunday Service, 10:30 am
- ⤴ Youth Group meets, 7-8:30 pm

### Tuesday, February 8

- ⤴ Alliance Luncheon, noon

### Wednesday, February 9

- ⤴ Lifebridge (Salem Mission) Dinner, 4:45 pm
- ⤴ Standing Committee, 7:15 pm

### Thursday, February 10

- ⤴ Becoming a Welcoming Congregation Workshop, 7:30 pm

### Sunday, February 13

- ⤴ Sunday Service, 10:30 am, followed by Chocolate Sunday
- ⤴ Youth Group meets, 7-8:30 pm

### Tuesday, February 15

- ⤴ Alliance Luncheon, noon

### Wednesday, February 16

- ⤴ Holistic Moms Network Film Screening: Kilowatt Ours, 7 pm

### Sunday, February 20

- ⤴ Choir rehearsal, 9 am
- ⤴ Sunday Service, 10:30 am,
- ⤴ Youth Group meets, 7-8:30 pm

### Tuesday, February 22

- ⤴ Alliance Luncheon, noon

### Wednesday, February 23

- ⤴ MPIC, 6:30 pm

### Thursday, February 24

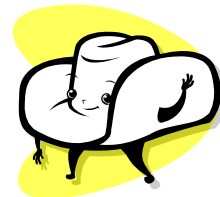
- ⤴ WCC meeting, 7:30 pm

### Saturday, February 26

- ⤴ Lifebridge (Salem Mission) Dinner, 4:45 pm

### Sunday, February 27

- ⤴ Sunday Service, 10:30 am
- ⤴ Youth Group, 7-8:30 pm



FEBRUARY 2011

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Sunday Services at 10:30 am		1 - Alliance, noon - Spirit Journey, 7pm	2	3	4 - Family Fun Night, 6-8:30pm	5
6 - Sunday Service - Youth Group, 7-8:30pm	7	8 - Alliance, noon	9 - Salem Mission dinner, 4:45pm - Standing Cmte, 7:15pm	10 - Welcoming Congregation Workshop, 7:30pm	11	12
13 - Sunday Service, followed by Chocolate Sunday - Youth Group, 7-8:30pm	14	15 - Alliance lunch-and- learn series, noon	16 - HMN Film Screening: <i>Kilowatt Ours</i> , 7pm	17	18	19
20 - Choir rehearsal, 9am - Sunday Service, with choir - Youth Group, 7-8:30pm	21	22 - Alliance, noon	23 - MPIC, 6:30pm	24 - Welcoming Congregation Cmte, 7:30pm	25	26 - Salem Mission dinner, 4:45pm
27 - Sunday Service, 10:30am - Youth Group, 7-8:30pm	28					



**Around the Parish**

Our condolences and prayers go out to **Jim Ognibene** on the loss of his mother, Dorothy Jean Van Liew Ognibene. She was 86 years old. A graduate of Skidmore College, she lived a long and healthy life with her husband and family. She leaves behind six children and 12 grandchildren. A memorial service was held in January in Warrenton, Virginia.

Our condolences and prayers are also with **Mike and Donna Fritz** on the passing of his grandfather, **Vincent Peluso**, of Salem. He was 96 years old and by all accounts in very good health until quite recently. He leaves behind 2 daughters, 2 grandsons and three great-

grandchildren: **Jake, Sophia and Jacqueline**, familiar little faces here on Sundays.

A funeral service was held here on Saturday, January 22 for Ipswich resident, **Roger Edmonds**, longtime member of King's Chapel and Professor of Physics at Middlesex College. **Carl Scovel**, Minister Emeritus of King's Chapel, co-officiated.

Jaime Tanch was snowmobiling up in northern Maine recently, which begs the question: why go so far?!

Did you know that the church's snow blower has been out of commission for the last month? Those perfectly chiseled paths were hand dug by our own **Joe Perron**.



## From Religious Education

### Kids Making a Difference

Recently, our 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade Navigator class studied 12 year old Craig Kielburger, a youth who founded an international service organization of young people helping other young people called *Free the Children*. Learning about how Craig turned his passion for helping other kids into action, our students have been inspired to become activists and leaders for good in the world, despite their youth.

The students worked as a group to research several social justice topics that are close to their hearts. The top two issues were presented to all the Religious Education students by the Navigators and a democratic vote was held. The issue that our young people decided to learn about and advocate for this year is animal rights, focusing on the quality of life for animals within the factory farming industry, the health of the animals and of the people who consume them, and the impact of factory farming on the environment.

Surprised? So was I! These are 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students who came up with this complex topic and presented it to the rest of their peers for vote. Sometimes we forget our young students are intelligent and capable people

## From Henny Penny

We had a fun-filled January that included two days of pajamas and pancakes, a trip outdoors to paint the snow with liquid watercolors, giggles and laughs with storyteller Erik Rodenhiser, gym with Miss Joan, and three snow days! This doesn't even begin to touch upon all of the projects, writing, counting and reading that were incorporated throughout the month. While we are certainly missing the company of Mr. St. Pierre, we'll all be thrilled when he returns in February after some time to recuperate and regain his energy.

This is the time of year when we begin our student assessments and schedule parent conferences. This gives Barbara and me the opportunity to meet with the parents of our young people to discuss their progress, both socially and academically.

who are just a bit, well, young. So let's support and applaud the efforts of our compassionate and brave kids who don't shy away from a cause they feel strongly about just because it is difficult. Ready or not we are all about to learn just how that chicken in the supermarket got there. Kudos to the kids!

This month Religious Education hosts two very special events; Family Fun Night on February 4<sup>th</sup>, and Chocolate Sunday on February 13<sup>th</sup>. Family Fun Night is our first ever First Church Hoedown. Crafts, games, pizza and chili are some of the highlights planned for this evening. This event is a community event and all ages are welcome. Please come.

Chocolate Sunday! Boutique worthy confections baked by our friends and members, just in time for Valentine's Day, and all for a good cause, what more do I need say? The quantity and quality of goods that are donated each year just keeps getting better. I think we have some very talented bakers in our congregation – and maybe some friendly competition too! Please be sure to bake something special and to purchase a baked goody or two. All proceeds (100%) will go to the Social Justice project mentioned above.

**Deb DiGiulio, Religious Education Director**

The chair refinishing project is now complete! We had many Henny Penny families participate in sponsoring a chair or two. St. Pierre and Son, here in Salem, took on the chore and did a fabulous job refinishing the original chairs of our school; they really do look terrific. Over the next month or so, we'll be coming up with a way to acknowledge and thank all of those families who generously donated to this project.

As I type this, the calendar notes just 60 days until Springtime! Best wishes for a February filled with friends and fun and fewer flakes.

**Kerry Martin, Director of Henny Penny Nursery School, and Barbara Hermann**



## From the Stewardship Committee

### 2011 Pledge Campaign

*“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”*

– Winston Churchill

In the same envelope with your 2010 contribution statement, you will find materials related to our annual pledge appeal for 2011. Please take a few minutes to read the information provided and then prayerfully consider how The First Church has made an impact on your life, the lives of those you love and the life of the community and make a pledge to support that important work. One-third of the church’s operating budget comes from member/friend giving. Without your pledge of support, it is impossible for the church to plan its budget for the year. As an added incentive for returning pledge cards this year, please see the information on this page about a raffle for all pledge cards that are received by March 1!



Stewardship Educates Our Children

### 2010 Giving Results and Contribution Statements

Well, the results are in, and the members and friends of First Church contributed \$85,000 to the church last year! While this is slightly lower than the \$87,500 contributed in 2009 and lower than the 2010 giving goal of \$100,000, considering the economy and how it has impacted everyone in our community, we are still pleased with the results. A HUGE THANK YOU to everyone who gave and especially to those who were able to pledge and meet that pledge by the end of the year.

All members and friends who made a monetary contribution to the church in 2010 should have received an annual contribution statement in the mail. If you have not received a statement, or have a question about the one you did receive after reviewing it, please contact Jim Singletary, the church administrator, at 978-744-1551 or firstchurch@nii.net.

## The First Annual First Church Pledge Raffle!

Submit your pledge card by March 1, 2011 to be entered in a raffle to win one of the following:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize:** A Wine Basket
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize:** Green Tea Yoga Gift Card
- 1<sup>st</sup> Prize:** Your Choice of Pew on Christmas Eve!

## Becoming a Welcoming Congregation Workshops

January's Welcoming Congregation Committee workshop was sparsely attended (due to weather, I'm sure) but very interesting nonetheless. We began with an interesting visualization exercise led by Mike Mascolo, where we live in a world of homosexuals but ourselves feel straight. The ideas of family, peer and social pressure; needing to hide feelings and relationships; pretending to care for others in a way that doesn't feel natural to you were all very thought-provoking, deep and visceral. Attendees who are gay agreed that the story accurately reflected their experiences, more or less.

We defined the terms sexism, homophobia and heterosexism, and compared these ideas to racism, ideas of religious superiority, and other ways that society finds to put one class of people above another. The question came up as to why humans feel a need to do this: even in Japan, we learned, where the society to us might seem monoculture, ways are found to establish a hierarchy.

We also discussed the importance of noticing the differences between people, because that is what makes us individual, but how to respect that difference and not assume superiority (or inferiority) because of it seems to



*Imagine you've been adopted by a gay couple. Your siblings are gay. And they all expect you to be gay, too.*

be the conundrum for some. Thomas Mac Donald relayed a story of being asked how his hotel company should "deal with" gay guests, what types of staff training might be necessary. He made the point that gay guests want the same as straight- a clean bed, warm meal, and a clean pool to swim in. No training needed, just treat them as any other guest! So the ideas of respecting the differences but treating the same seems a fine line.

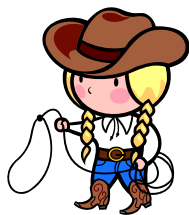
We ended on a wonderful segue into our next workshop- discussing many of our own discomforts/biases around transgender individuals. Personal stories were told about interactions with transgender people, and how the biases were overcome, or at least dealt with. Our initial survey had found many congregants most uncomfortable with transgender people, and so our next workshop we have invited guests from NAGLY to share their stories about being transgender. We do hope you'll join us on February 10th for more interesting discussions!

**UPCOMING WORKSHOP:** The next Becoming a Welcoming Congregation Workshop will take place on **Thursday, February 10, at 7:15 pm.** The topic: A transgender meet-and-greet.

— Jessica Kane

## Family Fun Night

Although it might be late by the time you read this, Friday the 4th is the Family Fun Night Wild West Hoedown. The event begins at 6:00 pm and goes until 8:30. We anticipate tons of fun with games, crafts, songs around the campfire, and even a performance by the First Church Players. Of course we will have some special surprises too! Pizza, chili, salads and desserts will be served. You do not need to be a child or to have a child to have a great time at this



## Flowers

Sign up to provide flowers for our services. Special wording can be placed in our weekly Order of Service in honor or memory of a loved one, or to commemorate an important event. You can use the church florist for a cost of \$45, or bring your own creation. Arrangements can be simple or elaborate — the choice is yours! See the sign up sheet in The Barnard Room on Sundays during Fellowship, or contact the church office.



## Meet the New Members

**Mike Gibson** grew up in the Atlanta suburbs and has spent time in Washington DC and Austin Texas. But he has lived around Boston for almost 20 years and considers it home. Mike attended many different churches and chose the Episcopal Church during college but now finds the Unitarian tradition more in line with his beliefs. He holds a BA and MA from Jacksonville State University and a Master's Certificate from NYU. After working in advertising and fundraising, Mike began an information technology career in 1995, working first at Boston College and now with the National Park Service in Boston. He likes reading, travel, music, and old movies.

**Denise Kent** was born and raised in Salem, then moved to Hamilton to raise her son, Matthew, who is now serving in the Navy. Her religious background was largely Catholic, with some Jehovah's Witness studies thrown in for good measure. She is a graduate of Gordon College and Mass School of Law. She has a law practice in Salem that specializes in Estate Planning, Elder Law, and Family Law. She enjoys reading and spending time with family and friends.

**Mike and Denise** both enjoy attending to the needs of their three spoiled cats and a pound pooch named Chichi. They plan to marry at the First Church in the spring.

**Tiffany Magnolia** has lived in Lynn since 2004. She was born in Washington DC but has lived in Florida, San Francisco, Vermont and Cape Cod. She ended up in Massachusetts for her husband and graduate school. She teaches writing and Literature at North Shore Community College. She grew up Catholic along with a few years of Evangelical Christianity with her Southern grandparents. When she is not teaching, Tiffany enjoys working in her garden, sewing, and volunteering for political causes.

See the March issue of *The Herald* for more information on new First Church members.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### Fellowship



Thanks to all those who hosted Fellowship in January:

January 2: *Joan Hannah*

January 9: *The Schultz family and Claire Donaldson*

January 16: *Mary Krigbaum and Tricia Pini*

January 23: *The Brandenburg family*

January 30: *The Kane and Anderson families*

Hosts are still needed for February and beyond. Be sure to sign in the Barnard Room. Feel free to team up with another individual, couple, or family.

### Lifebridge

Thanks to the following who signed up to volunteer to shop or to serve at Lifebridge in January :

*Jeanne Otto, Larry Fine, Alan Hanscom, Peter LeBlanc, Tim Knowels, Richard l'Heureux, Betty Nichols, George and Ellen Brandenburg, Steve Santell.*

Volunteers are needed on a monthly basis at Lifebridge. Members and friends of the First Church serve dinner twice a month—on the second Wednesday and on the fourth Saturday, 4:45–6:45 pm. To volunteer, see the sign up sheet in the Barnard Room during Fellowship hour.

### Readers and Chalice Lighters

Thanks to those who served as Reader and Chalice Lighter during our Services in January:

January 9: *Chris Finn*

January 16: *Nicole McLaughlin*

January 23: *Chris Granniss*

January 30: *Don Glover*

# THE HERALD



A Publication of  
**The First Church in Salem, Unitarian**  
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ONE OF THE OLDEST PROTESTANT CHURCHES  
GATHERED IN NORTH AMERICA, SINCE 1629

## Mystic Chorale Concert

One of greater Boston's favorite community choruses, the 250-voice strong Mystic Chorale presents its eagerly anticipated annual Gospel concert on **Saturday, February 26 at 8 pm and Sunday, February 27 at 3:30 pm** at Converse Hall, Tremont Temple (88 Tremont St., Boston). This year features an eclectic mix of music rooted in the African American gospel tradition, including classic freedom songs popularized by such artists as Bruce Springsteen and Mavis Staples. Please join us for this uplifting program of spirituals, traditional and contemporary gospel music conducted by award-winning Gospel director Jonathan Singleton.



Tickets are \$18 adults; \$12 students and seniors, but order tickets from Lynn Taggart (or any other member of the Chorale) before February 24 for a \$3 discount per ticket.

## Book Collections for Prisoners

The Prison Book Program, located in Quincy, MA, is a charitable organization run by volunteers who seek donations of paperback books, packaging supplies, and financial contributions in their effort to deliver reading material to the incarcerated around the United States. First Church will be collecting books in a bin in the Cleveland Room over the coming weeks.



Dictionaries are the most frequently requested book and also the most useful and important. Other types of books that are in high demand are GED materials, Spanish-English dictionaries and related materials, African-American history, and novels of all sorts, the most popular usually being thriller, suspense, westerns, and science fiction. To learn more about the program, its history, how to contribute, and about prison issues in general, visit [www.prisonbookprogram.org](http://www.prisonbookprogram.org). You can also read letters and other writings from prisoners that have been posted on the site.