



## From the Parish Committee

By Mark Ostrem,  
Parish Committee Chair

Members of the Parish Committee are looking forward to the coming church year and to engagement of the congregation in an exciting process of shared conversation, study and commitment. At the May 2009 annual meeting, the Parish Committee was charged with reconsidering our church covenant and exploring the use of symbols in our meeting house, determining whether our current covenant ("In the love of truth and in the spirit of Jesus Christ, we unite for the worship of God and the service of all") best represents our individual and shared philosophical perspective in 2009 of how we live as a church community at First Parish Unitarian Universalist, Milton. We were asked to lead a process that could arrive at a decision about the covenant by the May, 2010, annual meeting.

Our June Parish Committee retreat gave us the opportunity to understand the covenantal nature of Unitarian-Universalist congregations and to learn that it is not the words of any particular covenant that are important but rather the process of continuous reappraisal and renewal of the covenant that provides the opportunity for growth in faith, spirituality and shared goals as a religious community. The Parish Committee has not established a goal of rewriting the covenant, but instead, sees the conversations that lie ahead of

us as a continuation of the "meaningful membership" process that began last year with listening circles. Whether we retain the current covenant and the current symbols in the Meetinghouse is less important to us as a congregation than what we learn about ourselves and each other during the process that we have laid out for the year.

The Parish Committee formulated an agreement for itself and for the congregation which is summarized in the following words:

**The goal of the covenant and symbolism project is to strengthen our community and its role in the world by engaging in a process to define how we live in covenant with each other.**

We have designed a model for the project that progresses from one that is open and free-flowing to one that focuses options and then leads to a phase of decision-making, ending by late April of 2010 so that the congregation can make a formal vote at the annual meeting in May.

The fall will be rich with educational opportunities that will include: **Sermons** discussing the history of Unitarian-Universalism, the role of a covenant in a UU congregation, the historic origin of our own covenant as well as symbolism, past and present, in our meeting house; **small group ministries and Common Hearth** offering opportunities for exploration of our attitudes and beliefs, e.g., "This I Believe" video or audio statements; spiritual art projects for self exploration and for sharing with the congregation; and deeper educational experiences

about specific topics in UU history and religious culture.

December will be a time of seasonal celebration, reflection on the fall's activities and an opportunity for building enthusiasm for further exploration in the new year. Sign-up for January listening circles and opportunities for other exploration will be initiated.

January will offer a chance for participants to share their thoughts in the safety of listening circles, coordinated by trained facilitators. Other events will be developed which will offer a chance for further shared reflection.

February, a month in the church year when the annual Budget Drive is front and center, will be a period of behind-the-scenes work by the listening circle facilitators, the Parish Committee and designated teams to generate specific covenant choices and symbolism options that can be presented to the congregation during March Sunday worship services and at other gatherings. We will experiment as a church community with the options that have been generated, enjoying the fruits of the congregation's work over the prior several months.

In April, the process will be focused, narrowing the options with the hope that preferences will emerge so that a special church gathering, just prior to the annual meeting in May, can resolve the year's work. The congregation will approve a covenant, either a newly written one or the historical covenant quoted above, and move toward decisions about choices of uses

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## REFLECTIONS FROM THE MINISTER PARISA PARSÀ



*"...now that I am about to leave this world, I realize there is nothing more astonishing than a human face...It has something to do with incarnation. You feel your obligation to a child when you have seen it and held it. Any human face is a claim on you, because you can't help but understand the singularity of it, the courage and loneliness of it. But this is truest of the face of an infant. I consider that to be one kind of vision, as mystical as any."*

(From *Gilead* by Marilynne Robinson)

By the time you read this, I hope to be deep in the exploration of the face of my newborn son, a magical and mystical time many of you know intimately. Contemplating the mystery of the curves and dimples of cheeks, the miracle of tiny fingers and toes and even tinier finger- and toenails, there is no time more devoted to our singularity and our preciousness than the newborn time. How quickly we forget to honor that preciousness in one another. We arm ourselves with tough talk or quick wit, and turn our gaze a little too quickly from each other's faces.

As you return to church this month, I hope that we might be on parallel journeys. My joyful duty this month is to acquaint myself intimately with this one little being we are welcoming into our family. I will also miss this September church time of re-forming our church family, gazing upon each of your faces, some of you now very familiar to me and others brand new. The children and youth have grown their requisite amounts, their faces changing shape as their journeys through life have. You adults, too, will have been through many journeys of heart and mind and spirit. They will show on your faces as well.

I pray that you all will welcome one another back to church this month

with the great spirit and excitement you always do. May you turn to one another and attend to the mystical vision, the courage and loneliness, in each face you encounter. Take special care with the newest faces among you, those making their first tentative steps into a new community. That takes a special kind of courage. Make space for the grace that can unfold between and among you. Remind yourselves of the claim you have on one another. Celebrate the incarnation of the holy in each person you meet. Know that as you do so, my heart is with you.

*Parisa*

### Announcing Darius Joaquin Parsa Silva



Born August 21, 3:00pm  
8lbs, 20 inches  
All are doing fine.

Love,  
Parisa, Enrique, Kian & Darius

## Sundays in September

### September 13: Welcome, Rejoice and Come in

Through song, story, and ritual we kick-off another church year, welcoming in the spirit and each other. Worship will be led by Eric Dawson and Robin Barraza.

### September 20: The Messiah Among Us

Unitarian Universalism is a covenantal rather than a creedal tradition; we put our faith in one another rather than a set of specific beliefs. This Sunday we will explore our shared responsibility to hold up that which is uniquely divine in each of us and to hold together that which we share in common. Eric Dawson is leading worship.

### September 27: Our Shared Journey

Each Sunday we gather – with our aspirations and shortcomings, our hopes and our fears – to worship together. Through word and song we will explore how we build an honest and whole community and what happens when we fall short.

Worship will be led by the  
Worship Committee.

### October 4: Radical Hospitality

As we continue our exploration of covenant, what might it look like to expand our sense of shared responsibility to the broader world? And how might this expansive commitment help shape our connection to one another? Eric Dawson is leading worship.

## News from the Caring Committee

By Tasha Bello,  
Caring Committee Co-Chair

We recently heard from Kristen, Alison Barry's daughter, that her mother has made a wonderfully easy adjustment to her new life at a senior care facility located near Kristen's home. According to her daughter, Alison is now fully acclimated and very much enjoying a busy social life in her new surroundings. Kristen added that she could not have imagined just how happy her mother would be with her new friends, her beloved dog, and her family living close by. All who knew and/or drove Alison to church celebrate this good news.

The Caring Committee is already involved in plans to support the Parsa-Silva family once the new baby makes his appearance. Tasha Bello is looking for volunteer cooks who will be able to make and deliver a simple meal at a convenient date of their choosing. Just email Tasha ([tashakistler@hotmail.com](mailto:tashakistler@hotmail.com)) to be added to the meal team. Later on, you'll be directed to a web site with an easy-to-understand sign-up procedure. Our list is growing, but the more volunteers we sign up, the better!

The Caring Committee will hold its first meeting of the new church year on Thursday, September 17th at 7:00. All Caring Committee members should soon be receiving a reminder via email. We are also planning to host our second annual "Empty Nesters" meeting on Friday, October 16th from 5:00 to 7:00 in the Parish Hall. We encourage all of you

# Intern-al Musings.....



## I've Got Mail

I'm obsessive about email. This came into focus for me earlier this week when Xochitl's crying woke me up a little after midnight. After putting her back to bed, my next thought was: I should check my email. Now I realize that I'm not that important that I'm getting urgent emails at midnight, particularly when the majority of my email comes from Nigerian heiresses and people with names like Alexxxa Passions. But unconsciously I'm drawn to the sense of possibility and purpose that email provides: potential good news, clear problems to solve.

I'm not complaining. I love email. It is a great, easy way to communicate. I can take care of quick correspondence in a matter of minutes and get answers back. But it has its drawbacks. How many of us have been part of an email back-and-forth and finally thought, this is ridiculous, and picked up the phone? How many of us have written an email in anger, expressing harshness we would never use in-person?

I read a story recently about a "no-email-for-a-day" campaign, where people promised to turn off their

computers and phones in order to connect with people in person. It sounds nice, but I don't think a day unplugged from our computer screen is the answer. See for me, email itself isn't the problem. It has to do with my larger relationship with work, with how I respond to urgency, and how I prioritize. The problem is I treat each blink of my Blackberry as demanding my immediate attention, putting aside whatever activity I'm in the middle of, and focusing on whatever is screaming for my attention.

And if we build our days around the urgency of our in-boxes, whether real or metaphoric, we neglect the essential work of reflecting, writing, dreaming and connecting. How do we schedule THIS time into our calendars?

As we enter into the fullness of fall, how do we open space to enjoy the unexpected, to linger over a cup of coffee after service, or to sit with a crossword puzzle? How do we separate out the important from the urgent? And how do we not allow the loudest voice to push out the other voices that need to be heard and attended to?

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*Eric can be reached at 617.698.6329 or  
[intern@fpmilton.org](mailto:intern@fpmilton.org)*

who might be seeing a child off to college this fall (as well as those of you who have experienced this big transition already!) to attend. Several church members have told us how much they enjoyed (and how much they learned) from last year's gathering. Light snacks will be provided.

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*The Caring Committee can be reached  
at [caring@fpmilton.org](mailto:caring@fpmilton.org)*

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*Tasha Bello can be reached at  
781.961.5872 or [tashakinstler@hotmail.com](mailto:tashakinstler@hotmail.com)*

# Religious Education

## Meet Jeannine Heynes, our new RE Assistant and Membership Coordinator!

Jeannine grew up in a small town just outside of Rochester NY. She is the second of five children and loves being part of a large family.

Growing up in a conservative Baptist church, religion was always a vital part of Jeannine's childhood and family life. Nevertheless, Jeannine always managed to find ways to think outside the box within her religious community. Her personal, professional and academic pursuits have often sought a balance between acknowledging the power of religion and challenging it.

At the age of 18 Jeannine left small town life in NY and headed for adventurous Philadelphia where she attended Eastern University and earned her BA in Communications and Women's Studies. Upon graduating, Jeannine was hired as the Coordinator of Eastern University's Center for Christian Women in Leadership. During her time at the Women's Center, Jeannine came to value the process of mentoring, small group communion, spiritual quests, and the power of social action.

Eager to gain a more global perspective on religious and social issues, Jeannine moved to Manchester England and attended The University of Manchester where she received her Masters in Social and Pastoral Theology. While in Manchester she met the love of her life, Oliver Heynes, and decided to stay at The University of Manchester to pursue both Oliver and her PhD in Women's Studies. Jeannine and Oliver



were married in 2005.

During her doctoral studies, Jeannine enjoyed teaching Sociology courses on Social Class, Education, Gender, Race and Religion. Her research on gender and education allowed her to work with, and learn from, high school girls taking Religious Education within Britain's school system. Listening to young people talk about their experiences of religion and belief renewed Jeannine's interest in the diversity and creativity that religion and spirituality can evoke.

While Jeannine enjoyed studying and teaching within the UK, her homesickness for family and friends (and American food!) brought her back to the US after graduating in December 2008. Jeannine and Oliver moved to Brookline, MA in January 2009 during a horrendous blizzard, yet somehow managed to survive the snow, as well as the Boston drivers!

Jeannine applied for the position at First Parish as Religious Education and Membership Development Coordinator when she saw how well it fit with her interests in Religious Education, and her systems of belief in social justice, equity, community and lifelong learning.

Jeannine is excited to have the opportunity to work for, and care about, First Parish's community, to meet new people, engage with diverse ideas, and be present during exiting changes within the church. She has felt extremely welcomed by staff and parishioners during her summer orientation and looks forward to making others feel welcomed within this growing community.

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*Jeannine can be reached at 617.698.6329 or [reassistant@fpmilton.org](mailto:reassistant@fpmilton.org) and [membership@fpmilton.org](mailto:membership@fpmilton.org)*

## Teacher Development Workshop with Sally Patton

All fall and spring teachers are required to attend. All congregants who are interested are welcomed to attend!

**Wednesday and Thursday, September 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009, 6:30-9:00 pm**

Dinner and childcare included

Please RSVP to Jeannine Heynes, by September 10, 2009: [reassistant@fpmilton.org](mailto:reassistant@fpmilton.org); (617) 698-6329

## Welcoming All Children and Youth into Our Faith Communities

First Parish is delighted to welcome back trainer Sally Patton! The purpose of this Involve workshop is to train teachers to minister to children with special challenges and insure their successful inclusion into the life of our UU congregations. The Involve workshop includes 4 hours of training. This two night training will incorporate teaching strategies, behavioral modification, sensitivity training, hands-on training activities, and discussions concerning pastoral and congregational care.

## SPIRIT PLAY TRAINING

Spirit Play is an Adaptation of Godly Play For Unitarian Universalist Congregations

**Saturday, September 26, 2009  
9 am to 5 pm  
in the Parish Hall**

Cost: \$125 per person includes lunch and materials

Tuition assistance available upon request.

Contact Robin Barraza to inquire at 617.698.6329 or [dre@fpmilton.org](mailto:dre@fpmilton.org)

Registration Deadline: Sept. 15, 2009

# Notes from the Organ Loft



*By Emma Jean Moulton,  
Credentialed Music Leader*

What a joy it is for me to be starting a new year at First Parish with you after a summer of wonderfully inspiring music conferences. My organ student, John Baublitz, fellow UU musician Giny Grimes and I took the "T" into Boston the first of July to attend the American Guild of Organists regional convention. How inspiring it was to hear many of the great organs and organists in the city!

Every summer the Mass. Chapter of the American Choral Directors' Association (ACDA) holds a mini conference at Gordon College in Wenham. This summer the guest presenters were Dr. Anton Armstrong, choral director of the world famous St. Olaf's College Choir (MN) and Dr. Andre Thomas of Florida State University. Both are internationally famous conductors/composers/arrangers, and were inspiring role models for directing classical choral music and spirituals.

The biggest moment of all was walking down the aisle at General Assembly in Salt Lake City to be recognized as a UUA Credentialed Music Leader. As you probably know, this marked the culmination of three years of specialized study of music as ministry, integration of music with worship, UU history, ethical situations, and various other aspects of leading music in a UU congregation in a curriculum created by the UU Musicians' Network and newly approved by the UUA. I hope and pray that through participation in this program approved by the UUA and UU musicians, my musical leadership and ministry with the choir and the congregation at First Parish will continue to be strengthened as together we follow the paths of our spiritual journeys.

Central in the life of the church is the Sunday morning worship service, and the heart and breath of our UU worship service is our music. "[Music in the service] isn't entertainment. It is there to bring us into a sacred time and place, to heal our wounds, to strengthen our resolve, to remind us of our values and to bring us joy." -*Music and Dynamic Worship*, The Rev. Dennis Hamilton UUA, Singing the Journey website. Used with permission.

A very special "Thank you" goes to all the people who contributed to the summer worship music. Tim Steele, Joel Recane, Claudia Wellington, Garrett Pavlicek, Miguel Rodriguez, Jenny Mulqueen, Robin Barraza and family, Carrie Lamont, Nancy and Emma Killoran, Ray Fallon, (etc.)

Meetinghouse Choir begins September 11 with a potluck supper at the home of Mark and Patricia Ostrem. Then on Sunday morning, 9/13, the choir is invited to have pancakes early (8:30AM) and at 9:00 adjourn to the Meetinghouse for choir rehearsal for the first Morning Worship of the new season. Would you like to join us? If so, please contact me (617-698-3200 or [emmadon@aol.com](mailto:emmadon@aol.com)). We would love to have you sing with us. Regular rehearsal time is Sunday mornings, 8:45 – 10:00AM.

Great opportunity for singing children: Every other year a Children's Choir is formed to sing at General Assembly (GA). Next year GA is in Minneapolis, June 23-27. Seventy-five young UU singers will come together from all over the country under the direction of Janeal Crabb Krehbiel, exploring music and the arts through special workshops and strengthening their identity as UU's through participation in General Assembly. Singers who will be 10, 11, or 12 years of age during

GA, and active in the church's music program. There is also a need for 15 adult chaperones. Adults will receive full room and board but must pay their own travel expenses. The Children's Choir and chaperones will live and rehearse at the campus of Macalester College in St. Paul, MN. Please contact Music Director Emma Jean Moulton for further information and application form. Former Milton UU young people who have participated in the GA Children's Choir in other cities: Robin O'Brien (Louisville, KY), Clara Heiden, Elisabeth Devine, and Emma Killoran (Boston, MA), and Nancy Killoran (St. Louis, MO).

Emma Jean can be reached at  
617.698.6329 or [emmadon@aol.com](mailto:emmadon@aol.com)

## Parish Committee from page 1

covenant quoted above, and move toward decisions about choices of uses of symbols in the meeting house.

We look forward to your enthusiastic participation in the next phase of our shared spiritual journey, and we welcome your thoughts and feedback now and over the next several months as we work together. Please be in touch with me or any member of the Parish Committee to offer guidance, criticisms or suggestions.

Mark Ostrem can be reached at  
617.696.4186 or  
[parishcommittee@fpmilton.org](mailto:parishcommittee@fpmilton.org)

## ALL SUNDAYS

8:45 am – Meetinghouse Choir Rehearsal

9:00 am – Silent Prayer & Meditation: Children's Church

10:30 am – Worship

### Meetinghouse Choir Events

Friday, Sept. 11 Meetinghouse Choir Pot-luck  
at home of Mark & Patricia Ostrem, 7pm

Sunday, Sept. 13 First Meetinghouse Choir Rehearsal  
of the season 9am

Sunday, Sept. 20 Meetinghouse Choir Rehearsal  
8:45am (returns to normal rehearsal time)

## Special Events

### Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, September 13th at 9am in the Parish Hall  
Return to normal worship time (10:30am in the Meetinghouse)

### Teacher Training

Wednesday & Thursday, September 16th and 17th at 6:30pm  
in the Parish Hall on the 16th and activity room on the 17th.

### All Church Council

Friday, September 19th at 6:30 in the Parsih Hall

### Spirit Play Training

Saturday, September 26th in the Activity Room (Spirit Play Room)

### Religious Education Classes Begin

Sunday, September 20th at 10:30 am

### Save The Date

**Common Hearth, October 7th**

**Contra Dance, October 17th**

## Sunday

6

NO WORSHIP SERVICES

13

9 am, Pancake Breakfast, Parish Hall

10:30 am, Worship, Meetinghouse

20

Religious Education classes begin

27

12:15 pm, Parish Committee,  
Chase Parlor

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5
7 <u>LABOR DAY</u> 7:15 pm, Yoga, Parish Hall	8	9	10	11 7:00 pm, Meetinghouse Choir Potluck, <u>Ostrem's home</u>	12
14 7:15 pm, Yoga, <u>Parish Hall</u>	15	16 6:30 pm, Teacher Training, <u>Parish Hall</u>	17 6:30 pm, Teacher Training, <u>Activity Room</u> 7:00 pm, Caring Circle, <u>Library</u> 7:30 pm, Worship Committee, <u>Meetinghouse</u>	18 6:30 pm, All Church Council, <u>Parish Hall</u>	19
21 7:15 pm, Yoga, <u>Parish Hall</u>	22 7:00 pm, Membership Committee, <u>Library</u>	23	24	25	26 9 am, Spirit PlayTraining, <u>Parish Hall</u>
28 7:15 pm, Yoga, <u>Parish Hall</u>	29	30			



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## From The Planner

U = Usher, C = Chalice Lighter, F = Flowers  
H = Host Team, A = Parish Com. Announcer

### AT BAT

#### September 13

C: Henry Anderson  
F: Mike LaFleur  
U: Amy Norton, Marie-Laure Brown  
H: Denise Strang, Andy Strang,  
Dianna Wilson  
A: Mark Ostrem

#### September 20

C: TBA  
F: Ann White  
U: Nancy Devine, Elizabeth Devine  
U: Nancy Devine, Jen D'Alessandro,  
Lisa Coover  
A: Melinda Collins

#### September 27

C: Alex Malmstrom  
F: Tracey Robinson  
U: Laurie Macintosh, Mallory Digges  
U: Elizabeth Menne, Timothy Steele,  
Tom Hess, Libby Wasilewski  
A: Jim May

### ON DECK

#### October 4

C: Andre Allen  
F: Karin Mylod  
U: Elaine Craghead, Dianna Wilson  
H: Bridget Mastandrea, Renee van  
Gestel, Diane Fallon-Johnson,  
Wayne Johnson  
A: Mike Grant

#### October 11

C: TBA  
F: Karin Mylod  
U: Patrick Jones, Karen Weiss Jones

H: Amy Norton, Julie Blackburn,  
Sheldon Blackburn  
A: Christa Ayoub

#### October 18

C: Brian Bauer  
F: Karin Mylod  
U: Amy Kavadlo, Dale Golembeski  
H: Kathy Fagan, Martin Bauer,  
Susan Batson, Paul Casaz  
A: Diane Fallon-Johnson

#### October 25

C: TBA  
F: Denise Strang, Andy Strang  
U: Denise Strang, Andy Strang  
H: Liz O'Rourke, Mark Whall,  
John Schaberg, Jane Schaberg  
A: Chris Pitt