



## Sundays in February

### February 7 Holy Obligations!

The Rev. Parisa Parsa

What are our holy obligations, and how do we meet them, individually and collectively? The month of January saw many members of our congregation engaged in listening circles discussing what was holy and how we respond to it. This morning we will reflect on some of the collective answers that emerged and how they might inform how we think of giving as we launch our Annual Budget Drive.

### February 14 What Does Love Require Of Us?

The Rev. Parisa Parsa

As we mark our annual Evolution Sunday, we will ask ourselves how and why, biologically, philosophically and spiritually, we are called to love. We will join in supporting our denominational campaign "Standing on the Side of Love" by contributing

Continued on page 3

## From the Parish Committee

By *Jim May, Treasurer*

Before I joined First Parish almost 20 years ago, I used to refer to the congregation, including my friends who attended, as the "chicken atheists." The people I knew who attended didn't strike me as particularly religious, certainly not in any sense I had known. In fact they were down right secular. I couldn't figure out what they were doing going to church.

But here it is almost two decades later, and I've become one of them. Why? Good question. Like many of you, I first started attending because of my kids, but now that they've been out of the religious education program for years, I'm still coming, and more active than ever. Why? Another good question.

It's such a compelling question in fact that the Parish Committee decided two years ago that we could provide better leadership, and the congregation would be stronger if we all understood more about why people join us and why they stay; so for two years we've been exploring the question of what it means to be a member of First Parish.

We want to know why people keep walking in the door, why they keep teaching religious education classes, why they sing in the choir, why they work so hard on committees. We're finding that there are many reasons, and that each person has particular rea-

sons for being a part of our community, that each person has particular needs that our community meets.

This church year, we're continuing our efforts; but we have sharpened our focus to concentrate on the covenantal relationship that defines our community. Several sermons have addressed the issue of religious covenants and their centrality in our church tradition. In January, listening circles, similar to those offered last year, have provided an opportunity for members and friends of First Parish to discuss what it is that binds us together. In February, we'll start identifying the strands of these discussions. We expect the outcome to be a written covenant, weaving the threads together. More important than the words, though, will be a deepened commitment to one another and to the good we can do together in the world.

In February we turn our attention to our annual budget drive. Our financial commitment is an important element of our overall commitment to one another. In our tradition, each congregation is responsible for supporting itself. So we on the Parish Committee encourage all of you, members and friends of First Parish, to consider the important role this congregation plays in your lives and make the most generous commitment you can in support of our religious community.

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*Jim can be reached at 617.6986.2895 or  
treasurer@fpmilton.org*

## REFLECTIONS FROM THE MINISTER PARISA PARSA



Not long after January's devastating earthquake in Haiti, I found myself in conversation with a woman of another faith about the unbelievable loss. She mentioned that her pastor had held a memorial service for the 150,000 souls the Haitian government reported dead. It was a service he was offering because they had not had the chance for a proper burial, and they deserved at least to be remembered and honored, even by people who had never seen their faces. Then she said something that has stayed with me. "All this bad stuff happening around the world and right here in America. Makes you realize you need to get right with God. Need to get right with God because your day will come any time. You can't put that stuff off."

For her, getting right with God had something to do with confessing personal sins, making amends for the wrongs of her life, and living as connected to God as possible. As take-away theological messages from disasters go, this is a pretty good one. What, I wonder, would it look like for us Unitarian Universalists to 'get right with God'? without a worry about being damned, what would it mean for us to consider how we might live more in tune with God's presence and call? How might we sense our kinship with humanity, and live the call to healing and wholeness more fully?

Immediately upon hearing the news of the tragically deadly quake, it was impossible not to feel a desire to reach out, to help, to be of service in some way. The way most of us have to be of help is through financial giving, and this congregation gave generously to Mercy Corps on the Sunday after the earthquake. Yet there is an ache to do more. We can't witness the kind of loss and anguish we hear of through

the news without feeling a human connection and wanting to make that connection real through some tangible aid.

We know that while it was natural events of the shift of a fault line that caused the moment of this disaster, so much of the pain and vulnerability of Haiti has to do with human-created issues to which there is no easy solution; no simple aid. If we take seriously the need to reach out, to follow through on the compassion we feel when we see the news reports, it's important that we learn to reach out not only immediately after a disaster. We need to build relationships of solidarity and support that help us relate with the global through local connections as well.

I pray that in the weeks and months ahead, we may find ways to get right with the source of all life. Let us not forget the people or the many causes of this disaster. Let us live into the truth of our connection by reaching out, risking some of our own safety and comfort, knowing the reward will be greater than we can even imagine.

*Parisa*

### Minister's office hours:

Mondays off  
Tuesdays 9am-5pm  
Wednesdays 11am-5pm  
Thursdays 9am-5pm  
Fridays 9am-4pm (usually writing from home)  
Sundays 8am-4pm

## Winter Dance Celebration

**Saturday  
February 6th  
6:30pm  
in the Parish Hall.**

Come celebrate the kick-off of the annual budget drive with a night of dinner, dancing and drinks. Great Times Entertainment featuring Rich and Wallie Ellis will provide the music, the finance committee is providing the food and drinks. Please RSVP to the church office at [office@fpmilton.org](mailto:office@fpmilton.org) or 617.698.6329. Any questions please contact Laurie McCorry at 617.696.1854 or [lmccorry@bhcc.mass.edu](mailto:lmccorry@bhcc.mass.edu)

Like to be part of the Celebration? The finance committee needs a few people to make desserts, appetizers and help with set-up. If you are interested please email Denise Strang for more information [ddstrang@yahoo.com](mailto:ddstrang@yahoo.com)



Sundays.... Continued

the morning's offering to neighbors in need.

## February 21 Youth Sunday

Join our youth who are taking the Our Whole Lives curriculum for reflections on self-respect, healthy relationships, and meaningful connections.

## February 28 Is Confession Good for the Soul?

The Rev. Parisa Parsa

Many faith traditions acknowledge the human need to offer up our transgressions and seek forgiveness. In the age of problem-solving talk shows and social networking there are also a million non-religious ways to offer confessions. How can we make sense of the human need for confession? What practices open paths to healing, and which compound the sin?

## Meetinghouse Choir in January

By *Carrie Lamont*

The Meetinghouse Choir in January sang a remarkable diversity of music spanning over one hundred and fifty years! In the beginning of January, we sang "The Shepherds' Farewell" from *L'Enfance du Christ*, by Hector Berlioz, written c. 1850. This lovely piece depicts shepherds saying "farewell" to the infant Jesus and his family as they prepare to flee to Egypt.

Some of the music in January was improvised, never heard before that very instant: the soulful and frenzied drumming of drummer Matt Meyer who returned as a guest musician on January 17 to lead the congregation in an exciting worship ceremony. Isn't it wonderfully interesting how music can be written down and persist for centuries and at the same time flow out of a person and be heard for the first time ever?

Later in January, we sang the world premier of Carrie Lamont's setting of *The Williams Covenant* (found as #471 in the grey hymnal) with trumpets and organ, composed in fall 2009! This work was inspired by all the talk of covenanting that's been going on this year. We were joined by several guest singers from Milton High School and UMass Boston as well as Raymond

Fallon Sr. and Raymond Fallon Jr. on trumpet, for an uplifting performance, and wish to thank all our guest musicians!

Finally, on a sadder note, the choir and congregation must say "farewell" to Leslie Kittel, who has been with First Parish Milton as a Hunsaker soloist, first as alto and then as soprano, for quite some time. She has graced the Meetinghouse with countless beautiful solos over the years and been a backbone of the soprano section. Leslie will be relocating to her native Colorado, and we wish her all the very best. She sang a lovely piece on January 31, during which service she was formally recognized by The Rev. Parisa Parsa.

As always, we remind you: *you don't need to know how to sing to be in the choir!* Just show up at 8:45 am on Sunday and somebody-or-other will show you the ropes, help you learn your part, get you a cup of coffee, and make you feel welcome. Some of us have a lot of training, but some of us have none, and it's the fellowship of being together and making music that makes our choir so much fun!

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*Contact the Music Director, Emma Jean Moulton at 617.698.6329 or [emmadon@aol.com](mailto:emmadon@aol.com)*

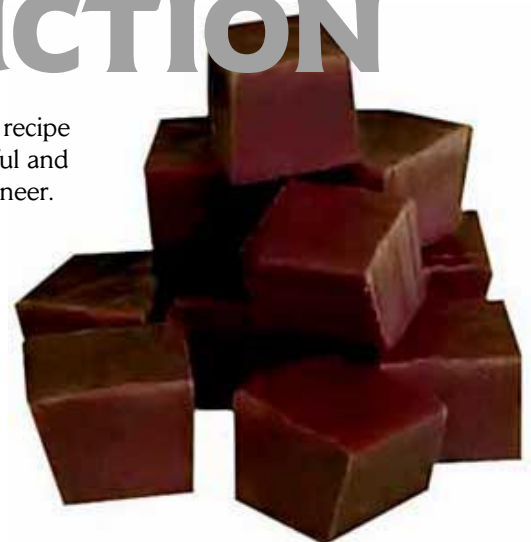
# CHOCOLATE AUCTION

## The Chocolate Auction is on Sunday, February 7th,

immediately following church in the Parish Hall, ALL members of the congregation are encouraged to bring some goodie of substance for the auction - Chocolate is the essential ingredient. Items should be attractively presented and ready to be carried home (meaning - don't expect to get the plate or dish back). A small card or label identifying the item - and any information (ingredients (especially whether there are

nuts or nut oils), name of maker, recipe history if any) - will be very helpful and much appreciated by your auctioneer.

Items to be auctioned are brought to the Parish Hall before church on the morning of the auction, where they will be on display before the service and immediately after, before the auction starts. Any questions, please email Chris Pitt at [cspitt@comcast.net](mailto:cspitt@comcast.net)



## From the Caring Committee

Have you sent in your recipe yet? The Caring Committee is hoping to have enough recipes to publish a First Parish Cookbook. You can pick up a form on the Bulletin Board or just write out your recipe and leave it in the blue box in the kitchen. Or you can email it to: gmflorida@comcast.net. We need your name, title of recipe, ingredients and method.

PLEASE take a few minutes to share one of your favorite dishes. Many thanks to those who have already contributed! Deadline: February 14.

## COMMON HEARTH

**“We are connected, in mystery and miracle, to one another.”**

**Wednesday, February 10th**

**6:00-8:30 pm**

**6:00 pm: Community dinner begins**

**6:45 pm-8:30 pm: workshop**

### **“This I Believe”: A Multigenerational Credo-Writing Workshop**

Led by Robin Barraza and Parisa Parsa

A congregational covenant can be a love story if all participants in the creation of it know where their own life stories and beliefs fit within it. People of all ages can write a belief statement. We witness this every year as we listen to our second graders present their ideas in our Passages program, our teenagers celebrate their Coming of Age with credo statements delivered from the pulpit, and when our parishioners share a small piece of what First Parish means to them before we give the offering in the Meetinghouse. In this interactive and fun workshop, children, youth and adults will learn skills to create a credo statement for themselves. At the end of the workshop, each participant will have begun an individualized belief statement that serves to answer the question “Who am I and what do I set my heart to?” Childcare will be available for younger children upon request.

*RSVP to the e-vite or contact Robin Barraza at dre@fpmilton.org or 617.698.6329*



Tokyo Rosenthal

## Cafe Blue Hills

Returns on Saturday,  
February 13th At 7:30 pm

with

# TOKYO ROSENTHAL

and Special Guest

Proceeds to benefit the Milton Resident's Fuel Assistance Fund  
For more information visit [cafebluehills.org](http://cafebluehills.org)

## From the Director of Religious Education

Dear First Parish friends,

There are lots of things happening at First Parish this month to ward off the February gloom! Back by popular demand, we will have a multigenerational Common Hearth in which children, youth and adults will create "This I Believe" statements together. I am looking forward to this workshop, and hope you will bring your families for yummy food and good conversation.

We will begin the month in Religious Education with a children's church service on February 7<sup>th</sup>. February 14<sup>th</sup> will be another exciting workshop rotation week, in which children can choose between a variety of workshops on spiritual practices and stewardship. Religious education classes

will resume for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders on February 21<sup>st</sup>. Classes resume for 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> graders on Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup> (3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> graders will be invited to attend the youth service in the Meetinghouse on the 21<sup>st</sup>). There are still teaching slots available in the older classrooms! Please see me if you are interested in teaching in the 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade.

Also this month, the youth group will be representing our church at the Mass Bay District's Youth Social Action Conference February 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>. They will be presenting the vision and ministry of the Our Whole Lives program for junior high and senior high youth in their annual youth service on February 21<sup>st</sup>. Finally, they will also be doing significant work and reflection during their City Reach field trip in which they will help Ecclesia ministries feed and clothe the homeless population of Boston on February 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>.

Are you wondering how you can support the youth group in their important ministries within our congregation?

They need adults to fill in as advisors in their meetings and at events as we say goodbye to youth advisors Jefferson and Laura Ryder. They also need to raise a great deal of funds to pay for their trips to the Social Action Conference and City Reach. Buy a raffle ticket for a catered dinner for six or a baked good from them at social hour, or see me for other ways you can help.

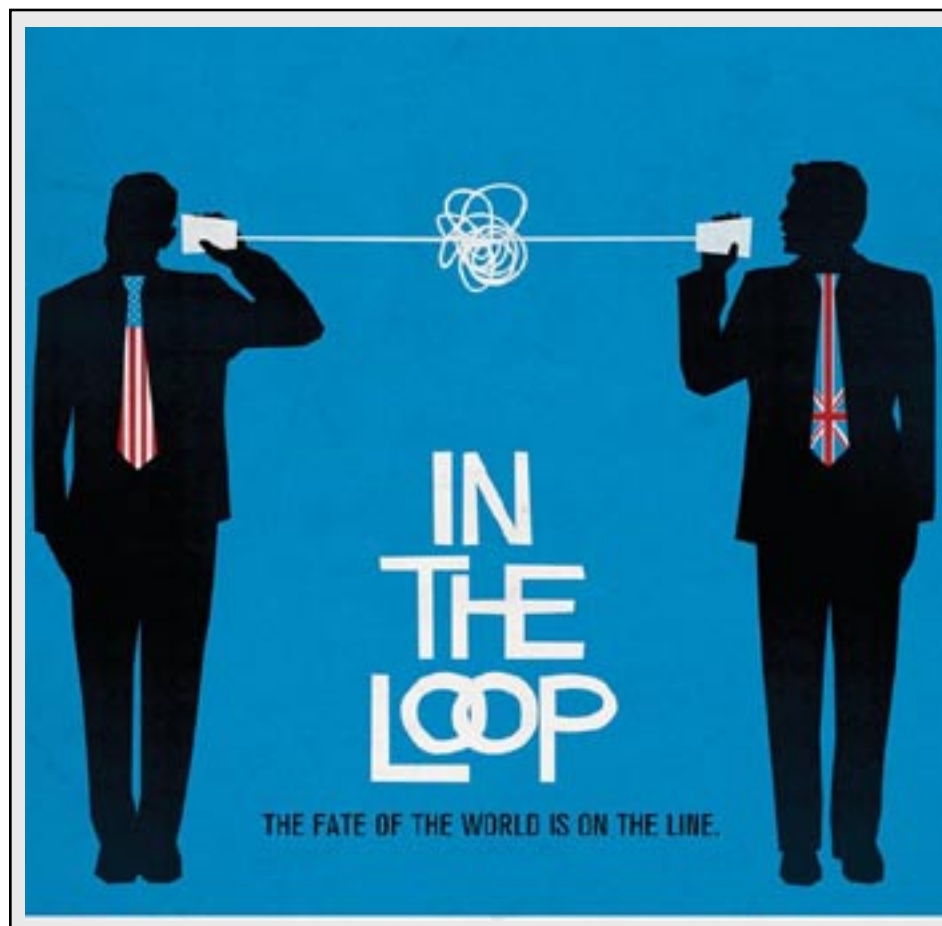
Stay warm and dry.

See you in church,

Robin

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



## Friday Film

Adapted from a BBC series, 2009's *In the Loop* is political satire of the most highly barbed variety. Set during the run-up to the war in Iraq, it follows a British diplomatic staff on their mission to the United States to confer with their counterparts and build a case for the invasion. James Gandolfini (*The Sopranos*) stars as a U.S. general who is slow to rush to war. Peter Capaldi, as the prime minister's communications director, is "brilliantly vulgar" in the words of *Chicago Reader* critic J. R. Jones. "Cowardice and incompetence are endlessly ripe subjects for comedy," Jones continues, "and the movie mercilessly indicts the careerists on both sides of the Atlantic who let the Iraq war happen."

The screening will be on Friday, February 5 at 7 pm in the Parish Hall.

## **ALL SUNDAYS**

8:45 am – Meetinghouse Choir Rehearsal

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

10:30 am – Worship

11:30 am - Social Hour in the Parish Hall

11:45 am - Children’s Choir Rehearsal, CC

## Special Events

### **Friday Film**

Friday, 2/5 @ 7pm in the Parish Hall

### **ABD Party**

Saturday, 2/6 @ 7pm in the Parish Hall

### **The Chocolate Auction**

Sunday, 2/7 @ 12 in the Parish Hall

### **Common Hearth**

Wednesday, 2/10 @ 6pm in the Parish Hall

### **Cafe Blue Hills**

Saturday, 2/13 @ 7:30 in the Parish Hall

## Sunday

**7**

10:30 am, **Children’s Church, Children’s Church**

Noon, **The Chocolate Auction, Parish Hall**

**14**

### **VALENTINE’S DAY**

9:00 am, **Buildings & Grounds Meeting, Library**

12:00 noon, **Religious Education Committee, Library**

**21**

**28**

12:15 pm, **Parish Committee, Chase Parlor**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 7:00 pm, <b>Social Action, Library</b> 7:15 pm, <b>Yoga, Parish Hall</b>	<b>2</b> 6:30 pm, <b>JR OWL , Youth Room</b>	<b>3</b> 7:00 pm, <b>YAC, Youth Room</b>	<b>4</b> 6:30 pm, <b>SR OWL , Youth Room</b> 7:00 pm, <b>Membership, Library</b>	<b>5</b> 7:00, <b>Friday Film, Parish Hall</b>	<b>6</b> 7:00pm, <b>ABD Party, Parish Hall</b>
<b>8</b> 7:15 pm, <b>Yoga, Parish Hall</b>	<b>9</b> 6:30 pm, <b>JR OWL , Youth Room</b>	<b>10</b> 6:00 pm, <b>Common Hearth, Parish Hall</b>	<b>11</b> 6:30 pm, <b>SR OWL , Youth Room</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 7:30pm, <b>Cafe Blue Hills, Parish Hall</b>
<b>15</b> <b>PRESIDENT'S DAY - Office Closed</b> 7:15 pm, <b>Yoga, Parish Hall</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 7:00 pm, <b>Caring Committee, Library</b> 7:30 pm, <b>Worship Committee, Activity Room</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>22</b> 7:15 pm, <b>Yoga, Parish Hall</b>	<b>23</b> 6:30 pm, <b>JR OWL , Youth Room</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 6:30 pm, <b>SR OWL , Youth Room</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>



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## From The Planner

U = Usher  
C = Chalice Lighter  
F = Flowers  
H = Host Team  
A = Announcements

### AT BAT

#### February 7

C: Emma Allen  
F: Tom & Ellen White  
U: Emma & Alyson Allen  
H: June Scott, Tom & Ellen White,  
Ann Hallet & Ann White  
A: Brian Kelley

#### February 14

C: Isabella Scott  
F: June & Randy Scott  
U: Julie Baker & Rosine Afshar  
H: Brigitte Miller, Laura Sauter,  
Melinda & Harris Collins  
A: Charlie Franich

#### February 21

C: TBA  
F: Frank Malefatto  
U: Pat & Leah Gallivan  
H: Chris Clifford, Terry Dsida,  
Terry & Julie Shields  
A: Lisa White

#### February 28

C: TBA  
F: Lynne Stack  
U: Lynne Stack & Andrew Maloney  
H: Pat & Leah Gallivan,  
Kimberly Perez-Gern & Kent Gern  
A: Mark Ostrem

### ON DECK

#### March 7

C: TBA  
F: Pam Dorsey  
U: Ruth Hannon & Charlie Franich  
H: Susan Monack, JB & Dana Clancy  
A: Melinda Collins

#### March 14

C: TBA  
F: TBA  
U: TBA  
H: Tracey Robinson, Marsha Maurer,  
Ruth Heiden  
A: TBA

#### March 21

C: TBA  
F: Cousineau Family  
U: Allison Zippay, Patricia Gill  
H: Laurie & Tat McCorry,  
Brian & Marianne Cummings  
A: Jim May

#### March 28

C: TBA  
F: Emma Jean & Donald Moulton  
U: Donna Malliaros & Janet Ferone  
H: Joe & Christa Ayoub,  
Claudia Wellington & Bill Flynn  
A: Mike Grant