



MEETINGHOUSE

THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST UNITARIAN

A Welcoming Community of Spirit and Service

Gathered in 1653

Volume 36 No. 1

September

2010

Welcome back!

From the Standing Committee

Although the church did not hold worship services during the summer months, the Standing Committee and Pastor Pickens have been preparing for the church year resuming on Sept. 12. The most significant recent accomplishment was a Ministry Startup Workshop, expertly facilitated by Doug Zelinski of the UUA. Members of the Standing Committee participated, along with Pastor Pickens and available representatives from the various church committees.

To help Pastor Pickens get a strong start for her limited time with us, we reviewed the previous ministry and prioritized our needs going forward. At the top of the list of needs is transition work to help us prepare for our next called minister. Although we have started collecting ideas for the timing of when we will be ready to call another minister, we do not feel that we should consider calling a minister during the current church year. We will look for ways to share lessons learned from the workshop, and welcome suggestions for times and formats for continuing the communications between leadership, Pastor Pickens and the entire congregation. We are hopeful that this is a large first step that will lead to the revitalization of the First Church of Christ, Unitarian in Lancaster.

As busy as the Standing Committee was, the Building and Grounds Committee was busier. I want to commend Tom Mazzola and his committee for the extraordinary frugality and resourcefulness that they have exhibited.

With our reduced numbers, each person's contributions of time and ideas have a significant impact on the church. This is a rare opportunity for anyone who wants to be a significant part of the future of a church with over three centuries of history. With the continued support of the First Parish of Weston, both the professional staff and lay leadership, we have the skills and experience needed to accomplish great things; the only thing lacking is people. I am convinced that there is a significant number of people in our larger community who long for the type of liberal Christian fellowship that we have to offer – more than enough to

fill our pews and committees and to carry us long into the future. We need to be sure to welcome each newcomer so that they know they are valued for their unique gifts.

I end this message with a prayer for love, peace and prosperity for everyone in our community and all of those whom we hold dear.

**Fondly,
Wil Pelletier
Standing Committee Chairman**

From Pastor Kelly, our consulting minister

Just like healthy eating, relaxation, and healthy emotional well-being are important, so too is our spiritual life. Many people – and perhaps you are one of them – have a regular practice that helps keep them balanced in the everyday. And consistency in such a practice is important, of course. But every now and then it's a good idea to mix things up and offer a "jump start" to what may be becoming mundane or far too regular.

When I was a child, I used to enjoy spinning the family globe in our living room and letting my index finger land wherever it might. I would then decide that the newfound location would be the place of my next vacation! Well, I haven't managed to fit all those adventures into life quite yet, but the method is one that I've retained in spiritual practice. Every now and again, I diverge from my normal study and pattern of scriptural reading and open the text to wherever the pages may land. This past week I landed in *Proverbs 1* and read the following: "for attaining wisdom and discipline; for understanding words of insight; for acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair." And I stopped there and just let those words sink in. Those words are precisely why a spiritual discipline is right. Those words speak to the meaning of worship and, for that matter, fellowship and communion with one another. Those words are a big part of what church is about. They are not the final word, and they are not absolute, but they sure are important!

Sometimes I have to dig deeper for meaning and reason in scripture. But other times it's pretty clear and fewer words say more.

As we prepare for a new church year, may we all bring to the table our own sense of purpose, place, and goodness in life.

Blessings,
Kelly

Pastoral assistance:

The number to call in the event of a need for pastoral care, or to inform us of congregational needs for assistance, is (508) 981-7230. Our Consulting Minister, Pastor Kelly Cummins Pickens, will monitor the line and respond. The pastor's office hours will be 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays, or by appointment.

Worship services

- Sept. 5 No service
- Sept. 12 "Bee'ginning Again in Love" Kelly Cummins Pickens
- Sept. 19 "A Foundation for All" Kelly Cummins Pickens
- Sept. 25 "Is Your Light Under a Bushel?" Wil Pelletier
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Note: An Ice Cream Social will be held after the first service of the new church year, Sept. 12, sponsored by the membership group.

If anyone in the church community wants to organize a Sunday service, or set up a speaker with a topic of special interest, send an e-mail to Karen in the office and/or contact Sue Billings.

Committees

Worship

Anyone who would like to serve on the committee please contact any committee member: Wil Pelletier, Sue Billings, Martha Moore, Sarah Spencer or Joanne Foster. The committee meets the second Tuesday of each month, in the Parlor. During the winter, members meet at Sue Billings' house. The committee is interested in feedback, input and suggestions. Speak to us directly or use the suggestion boxes. If members are interested in speaking, sharing a sermon or assisting with readings, please let the committee, or Kelly, know.

September's meeting will be held on Tuesday Sept. 14 at 7 p.m. Anyone with suggestions is welcome to e-mail Sue Billings.

Building and Grounds

During the summer the building and grounds committee, led by Tom Mazzola, replaced the stove pipes in our sanctuary with new material. Kudos to all for a dirty job well done. Work continues. A newly gilded weathervane will be mounted, and fresh paint will be applied to the belfry/cupola area.

Service Committee:

This committee meets at the home of Sue Billings, on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 7:15 p.m.

The September meeting will be held there on Sept. 22. Members are Natasha Finnerty, Sarah Spencer, Nina Kilbourn and Sue Billings. If anyone is interested in joining, please contact a committee member for information or call Sue Billings. The committee will continue to collect donations for WHEAT and the Battered Women's shelter, in baskets under the table outside the classrooms. For September, the group is seeking donations of cereal for WHEAT. For the women's shelter, donations of tooth brushes, tooth paste, soaps, shampoos, personal hygiene and makeup are helpful.

Caring Network:

The Caring Network includes Martha Moore, Dave Bartlett, Jessica Fish, Nancy Stell-Kiely and Judy Leger. Anyone who would like to join in, even in an informal way, is invited to do so. Contact any of the committee members.

Religious Education

The RE Committee is looking forward to an exciting new year of Religious Education. Director Jessica Fish says, "Our curriculum this year is titled 'Spirit of Adventure'. It is an activity-based program that explores what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist through physical movement and adventure. We will be introduced to famous Unitarian Universalists throughout history. People from our community will be welcomed to share their professions/hobbies/and life experiences." Contact Jessica Fish if you are interested in becoming involved with the youth of our church.

Jessica will be available in the church on Wednesdays, 9 a.m. to noon.

Activities

HSF Pie baking, crafts and tea – Keep Oct. 2 available!

On your mark; get set ... The Horseshed Fair will be held the first Saturday in October. Please plan to assist in whatever way you can. Your efforts at baking; helping to provide supplies or donating money for their purchase; committing in advance to help out that day, or other contributions, are all needed.

The next HSF committee meeting will be in the parlor at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 14. All summer, members have juried craft applications; they report that new fundraising activities and a variety of new craft booths will be presented, ranging from painted glass windows and mirrors to batik items and beautifully knitted clothing.

Sign-up sheets are posted in the hall. PLEASE INDICATE WHERE OR HOW YOU WILL HELP!! With over 100 pies to bake, there's some work to do. Pie baking is scheduled on three days: Sunday, Sept. 26 after church – crust-

making; Thursday, Sept. 30, all day long – pie baking; Friday afternoon and evening – pie baking. Previous experience is not required! Help in making pies is always welcome! Contributions of flour, frozen blueberries and peaches, cherry pie mix, pumpkin or squash pie filling are all welcome. Bring them to church any Sunday.

Questions, or to offer assistance, e-mail Sarah Spencer, or Ann Frantz.

Helping Pakistan:

UUSC is accepting donations to provide aid to the people affected by the massive flooding in Pakistan.

If you would like to **donate by check**, please make it payable to "UUSC-UUA Pakistan Flood Relief Fund" and mail it to UUSC, PO Box 844001, Boston, MA 02284-4001.

The Bulfinch Fund presents ...



On Sept. 26, Joseph Cornish will present Preserving New England Homes: Historic New England's Stewardship Program.

All are welcome to attend this latest in a series of presentations sponsored by the Bulfinch Fund. For more information, e-mail info@thebulfinchfund.org.

You can donate electronically, via a DONATE NOW button on the website, <http://www.thebulfinchfund.org>, where you can also learn about upcoming events. Work continues to restore and preserve the belfry, under the cupola, where the Paul Revere bell hangs.

Book Group

Summer reading to be discussed: *Summer Empress Orchid* by Anchee Ming. Anyone interested in joining is invited. The first meeting will be held at Sue Billings' house on Sept. 9, 7:30 p.m. Members will select books for 2010-11 year, so please bring at least one suggested book from those you have read.

Please call Sue Billings if you have questions or need information.

Wachusett Music Series Concerts

First Church of Christ hosts a series of concerts by Wachusett Music. Shows start at 7:30 p.m., with doors open at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are available on the spot or in advance. For more information, contact Denise or Jean at (978) 365-2043 or deehurley@hotmail.com. The web site is www.wachusettmusic.com.

Sept. 18 - Wachusett Showcase, featuring local performers including Dave Jensen of Clinton, Daniel and Faith Senie of Bolton and Agona Hardison of Lunenburg. This is a benefit show for the Item appeal. \$8 advance, \$10 at the door. Folk series volunteers and the service committee will jointly provide baked goods to sell. Call Sue Billings if you will bake.

Oct. 23 – Les Sampou

Nov. 20 – Jimmy Lafave

Joys and Sorrows

"I wish to thank all the members of the First Church who sent me so many beautiful cards and notes of sympathy on the death of my dear friend, Lou (Louis G. Morin). God bless you all. Sincerely, Cecilia Thurlow"

Many of us share happiness and pain during the candle lighting each Sunday. If you would like others to read here of illness, death or celebrations in your life, let us know.

In other 'bee'z-ness

A gigantic bee colony of over 100,000 was removed from the church roof area in August, garnering significant press coverage, thanks to Martha Moore. The crew working on the church belfry loaned its equipment for use in reaching the hive, and it became a full-day project because of its massive size. The bees were removed to an area beekeeper's hives, and the honey ... Well, the honey became an elbow-deep project in Martha's kitchen, where Martha, Nina Kilbourn, Sandra Ruth and Sue Billings discovered a solar method to process the honey from the combs. The resulting nectar was bottled into 40 jars, 4-ounce and 8-ounce size, available for \$10 and \$20 from Martha. Any surplus will be sold at the Horse Shed Fair, Saturday, Oct. 2.

Habitat for Humanity was accidentally locked out of a meeting at Town Hall in June. Their quick request to use a room at our church was accepted, and the group met in the parlor while church members were using the hall. We were glad to help, and they thanked us.

A fundraiser: George Maloof reports his congregation is holding an event that may interest church members. It's the second annual Leaf Peeper Weekend, Oct. 8-10, to be held at the Starr King Unitarian Fellowship, 101 Fairgrounds Road, Plymouth, N.H. The event includes a Saturday evening dance (7-10 p.m.), outdoor activities, line and swing lessons, refreshments. Cost is \$75 per couple, per night, or \$50 for one evening. Dance ONLY is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children, with a \$25 maximum family cost. For details, call (603) 536-1179 or e-mail maloof@mail.plymouth.edu. Web site is www.starrkingfellowship.org.

Church calendar on the Web: In an effort to allow greater access to information about the use of First Church of Christ to both church members and the community at large, there is now a more comprehensive calendar on the church website. Browse www.FirstChurchLancasterMA.org under "Events" to see what's going on. Feel free to look at the church calendar before scheduling events with the office to see what's available. Of course, you can always contact the office for additional information, help, or to schedule events. The calendar will be updated on a regular basis to reflect all of the events, meetings and rentals going on at First Church of Christ!

Also, Karen Plaskon keeps Standing Committee minutes in binders in the Hall and the Parlor. If anyone wants to have minutes sent electronically as they become available, please let her know.

Volunteers for the Month

Date	Coffee	Flowers
Sept. 12	Relig. Ed and Membership	
Sept. 19		
Sept. 26		
Oct. 3	Post-Horseshed Fair	
		SIGN UP!

There hasn't been an opportunity to sign up, with no services being held. Please call or e-mail the church office to volunteer for September or coming months. Thanks.

Also, sign-up sheets are to the right of the church hall entry. 978-365-2427

Flowers or coffee hour can be as simple or ornate as you'd like. Your help is appreciated.

Newsletter Deadline

Meetinghouse Newsletter Deadlines – 2010/2011

Summer	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April
6/21	8/23	9/20	10/18	11/15	12/13	1/17	2/14	3/21

Please submit your information via e-mail to newsletter@FirstChurchLancasterMA.org or to the bin in the parlor on or before the deadline date. You are also welcome to e-mail items to Ann Frantz directly.

Staff

Kelly Cummins Pickens, Consulting Minister; Karen Plaskon, Office Administrator

Christine Couture, Sexton; Robert Malin, Music Director

Office hours: The church office is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. through 1 p.m. (978) 365-2427 (office@firstchurchlancasterma.org)

Standing Committee: Ann Mazzola, Martha Moore, Wil Pelletier (chairman), Frank Streeter, Tina Duffy, Martha Moore. Clerk of the church: David James.

Mailing address: PO Box 66, Lancaster MA 01523

Telephone: (978) 365-2427, FAX: (978) 368-0194

office@FirstChurchLancasterMA.org ; www.FirstChurchLancasterMA.org