



# The Clapboardtree Spire

News From First Parish of Westwood, United Church  
340 Clapboardtree St., Westwood, MA 02090

## JANUARY, 2008

### Annual Meeting Slated for January 27<sup>th</sup>

First Parish's Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 27<sup>th</sup> in the Meetinghouse immediately following the morning worship service. In the past, holding this important meeting early in the day has made it possible for more members of the congregation to attend, and we hope this will be true again this year.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the meeting. Copies of the 2007 Annual Report will be available in the Meetinghouse narthex prior to the meeting.

**Ministry Chairpersons are reminded that annual reports are needed in the office by Monday, January 14<sup>th</sup>.**

### Team Sought For Church Directory

Moderator Doug Hyde is forming a team to produce a pictorial directory for First Parish. It has been over 10 years since our last directory! A new directory would help everyone get to know each other – and the latest technology will help us keep our directory up to date in the future.

Team tasks would be as follows:

- Collect digital photos or photos to scan from church families and individuals.
- Arrange in-house photo sessions, if needed for those who are unable to provide a photo.
- Compile the directory

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### Be a Secret Valentine

First Parish's Senior High Youth Fellowship is sponsoring a Valentine's Day extravaganza which will begin in early January and culminate on Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>. Here's how it will work:

- "Big Valentines" and "Little Valentines" are invited to sign up to participate in the program (sign up sheets will be posted in the Parish Hall)
- "Big" and "Little" valentines will be anonymously paired up, and will exchange letters and small gifts throughout the program via special mailboxes in the Parish Hall.
- Identities will be revealed on Sunday, Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> at a Valentines Day party during Coffee Hour.

Sign up in the Parish Hall. If you have questions, please contact Josh Gray, David Aldinger, Amy Bean or Julia Kane

### Pot Luck Dinner!

Save Sunday, January 27<sup>th</sup> for a fellowship event "just for fun"! Come to the Parish Hall at 5:30 PM – and bring some food to share.

R.S.V.P. to the church office.

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

### Birthdays

January 1	Robert Smith
January 2	Isaiah Ritchey
January 3	Matthew Anderson Jack McCorkell Donna Schock
January 4	Matthew Hichar Sophia Tempesta
January 5	Samuel Jacobson, Steven Larch
January 7	Shelley Reeve, Karen Wagner Alexander Adourian Katie Holbrook
January 8	Shelby McKim
January 9	Jake Liebrock, Kelly Porter Megan Porter, Megan Rees
January 10	Annika Mollor
January 11	MaryAnn Archambo
January 13	Alex Archambo, Jim Ritchey
January 14	Kristin McDonough
January 15	Emily Werth
January 17	Brian Bayer, Ava Connaughton Christine McCorkell
January 19	Emily Christian, Gladys Dunsford Emily Wright
January 21	Bradford Rutan, Billy Storey IV
January 22	Katherine Millos
January 23	Elvin Fowell, Will Vaccaro
January 24	James Christian
January 25	Wyatt Ritchey
January 25	Stephen Werth Rebecca Whalen
January 27	Drew Pfaff
January 28	Alexandra Brind, Lindsey Hall Derek Peterson
January 30	Michael Peterson
January 31	Matt McClellan

### Anniversaries

January 1	Sebastian & Susan Bonaiuto
January 20	Charlie & Louise Domina



## Lifetimes

### Email Address Updates:

- *Steve & Ingegerd Larch:*  
larchski@verizon.net

### Baptisms:

- On Sunday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>: *Charlotte Marie Hurley*, daughter of Joy-Marie (Howland) & Jeffrey Hurley; and *William Vernon Forde*, son of Lindsay (Tisdale) & Jarlath Forde.

### Membership Transfers:

- *Bob & Carol Gracia*, to Roslindale Congregational Church, Roslindale, MA.

### Deaths:

- On November 27<sup>th</sup>, *Norma Simoni*. A funeral service was held at First Parish on Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## The Clapboardtree Spire

The Clapboardtree Spire is published monthly, September - June by and for The First Parish of Westwood, United Church. Material should be submitted to the church office by the third Friday of the prior month.

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## Graceful Rhythms

### From Our Pastor



The poetry of the Book of Ecclesiastes speaks of life's rhythms:

*For everything there is a season, and a time to every matter under heaven:*

*a time to be born, and a time to die;  
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;  
a time to kill, and a time to heal;  
a time to break down, and a time to build up;  
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;  
a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;  
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;  
a time to seek, and a time to lose;  
a time to keep, and time to cast away;  
a time to rend, and a time to sew;  
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;  
a time to love, and a time to hate;  
a time for war, and a time for peace*

Life does have its rhythms, and certain important events, like buying a home, getting married, giving birth or grieving a loss, measure the beats that establish our rhythms. Philosophers and sages, both ancient and modern, disagree about whether the rhythms are meaningful. Some insist that life's events are nothing more than necessary and inevitable, while others see them as momentous turning points.

Whatever the meaning we give to life's rhythms, they are the basis for our common humanity. All of us know what it's like to plumb life's depths or scale life's heights. We've experienced times of birth and times of death, times of holding tightly and times of letting go.

Churches, like people, are not exempt from these experiences. There are periods of time for a church to laugh and dance. Conversely, there are times for weeping and letting go. For the last year and a half, First Parish has been in a "saying goodbye and letting go" cycle. In addition to the personal losses each of us has endured, we have, as a church, said goodbye to a senior pastor who served at First Parish for twelve years. After such a significant change, we are now poised and ready for a cycle of saying "hello" and for entering an exciting new ministry together. After months of careful, deliberate work, our Search Committee will consider many qualified candidates for senior pastor in the next few months. What an exciting time to be a member of First Parish of Westwood! I am convinced that you will be in for a time of unprecedented spiritual growth with a new senior pastor leading both the congregation and the professional and administrative staff.

With Ecclesiastes, I believe that the grace of God is at work in all the rhythms of life. As Nietzsche put it, "Only where there are deaths can there be resurrection." I do not believe God "causes" the deaths or the endings. But I believe that God is at work in the rhythms of life, bringing about our redemption, both as a church and as individuals. Life in its fullness, its ups and downs, its brightness and darkness, is the rhythm of grace.

Peace,  
*Rev. David Stryker*

using new software program

- Determine a plan for publishing the directory, develop a budget and devise ways to fund it.
- Disband after the directory is published.

Team members should have strong organizational skills, be comfortable with computers, willing to communicate with First Parish members and friends, and interested in investigating creative solutions to the problem. If this sounds like you, please contact Doug Hyde.

### Usher Schedule

**Sunday, Jan. 6:**  
Dix & Dianne Howard (C)  
Steve & Ingegard Larch  
Ron & Joy Sudduth

**Sunday, Jan. 20:**  
Bill Holbrook (C)  
Sheldon Blaney  
Don Friedl  
Lee Adourian

**Sunday, Jan. 13:**  
Bob Kadehjian (C)  
Bob Robertson  
Jim & Linda McKenzie  
Tom Underhill

**Sunday, Jan. 27:**  
Dave Blomquist (C)  
Chris Pfaff  
Dan & Karen Wagner

### Rosie's Place Volunteers Monday, January 21

**Please bring donations to the Parish Hall by 9:30 PM.**

**Drivers:** B. Jorgensen & T. Bruno

**Chips (2 large bags):** B. Jorgensen & T. Bruno

**Cookies (2 dozen):**  
R. Dettbarn D. Lassen S. Dobra  
C. Getman B. Macdonald

**Sandwiches: (1 dozen)**  
R. Dettbarn D. Lassen T. Bruno  
S. DeFeo B. Jorgensen S. Reeve  
J. Marsh M. Higgins P. Sullivan

### Altar Flowers

**Jan. 6:**  
Given by all the children in the Clapboardtree Nursery School, in appreciation of our wonderful facilities.

**Jan. 13:**  
Given by the Dorey Family, through the Endowed Memorial Flower Fund, in memory of Pearl & William Klingenberg.

**Jan. 20:**  
Given by Jim & Betsey Dakin, in memory of loved ones.

**Jan. 27:**  
Given by Louise Donovan and family, in memory of Robin Asselstine.

### Coffee Volunteers

Thank you to the following volunteers for providing the food and serving as hosts at Coffee Hour.

If a date is blank, and you can help, please contact the church office and we'll put you on the schedule!

**Jan. 6:** ????????????

**Jan. 13:** The Rows

**Jan. 20:** The Holbrooks

**Jan. 27:** ????????????





Sunday School

**Donna Bertazzoni**  
Church School  
Administrator

I hope everyone is having a safe and happy Christmastide, basking in the glow of gifts given and received and vacations enjoyed or anticipated. In the Spirit of giving that continues through Epiphany with the visit of the Magi, during a recent K-8 multi age lesson, the children of the Church School prepared a year-long mission calendar for the offerings that are collected in the classrooms. The children voted that the weekly church school offerings from September through December 2007 will be sent to farmer Joe Major to benefit the Medfield 4-H program that raises the sheep we enjoy so much each December. Their mission project choices for the rest of the year are:

January	Westwood Community Chest
February	Heifer Project
March	One Great Hour of Sharing
April	Dedham Animal Rescue League and towel drive
May	Project Bread, Mini-Walk for Hunger and food drive
June	Turkeys for America

The January Mission focus, Westwood Community Chest (WCC), is a private non-profit organization dedicated to helping Westwood residents in need of temporary financial assistance. According to the town website, WCC assists residents by paying bills for basic needs such as food, clothing, school supplies or essential utilities. WCC also helps families by sending children to summer camps and providing other resources to get back on track. WCC works in partnership with the schools, the Council on Aging, public safety officials and Westwood Youth and Family services, receiving funds from private donors, town organizations and local businesses and distributing them through a confidential application process. We are proud to support this needed, practical mission of "*Neighbors Helping Neighbors*".

Extra boxes of children's offering envelopes are available in the classrooms, the Christian Education office, and on the hospitality table in the Meetinghouse.

Happy New Year!

*Donna Bertazzoni*

### **3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Classroom Changes**

On Sunday, January 27 we will begin our annual winter shift in classroom assignments.

- ◆ The Communion education unit taught by our award-winning teacher, Jeannie Germano, will begin on that date for anyone presently in the third grade. Older students who have not taken it previously are also welcome. Classrooms will be reassigned through the end of March to accommodate the Communion unit.
- ◆ 4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades will meet as a single class during this time. All four grades are expected to remain in the Cottage.
- ◆ To avoid confusion, classrooms will be re-labeled to reflect the temporary move.

## Church School Calendar January-June 2008

### Jan

6 Classes  
9:15 Teacher Meeting/communion  
13 Classes  
20 K-8 Adventure  
27 Classes/ 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Communion Unit begins

Epiphany  
  
21 *MLK*

### Feb

3 Classes  
Teacher Meeting/communion  
10 Classes  
17 K-8 Adventure  
24 Classes

5 *Ash Wednesday*  
  
Lent begins  
18-22 *vacation*

### Mar

2 Classes / OGHS month  
Teacher Meeting/communion  
9 Classes  
16 Classes for PS – Gr.2 only/ Palm Sunday  
23 EASTER / Intergenerational  
30 Classes

21 *Good Friday*

### April

6 Intergenerational  
13 Classes  
20 K-8 Adventure  
27 Classes

3<sup>rd</sup> grade communion  
  
21-25 *vacation*

### May

4 Mini-Walk  
Teacher Meeting/communion  
11 Classes / Pentecost  
18 Classes  
25 K-8 Adventure

*Mother's Day*  
  
26 *Memorial Day*

### June

1 Classes  
Teacher Meeting/communion  
8 Classes  
15 Classes  
22 Last Day - Church School celebration  
29 Intergenerational

*Father's Day*  
23 180th day

### Intergenerational Worship -

Families worship together on these Sundays. Church School is not scheduled. The Nursery is available for children through age 5.

### K-8 Adventure -

Children of the church school meet as a single group for a multi-age lesson in the Parish Hall. The Nursery is available for children through age 5.

## Nursery Volunteers Are Needed

Nursery Volunteers are needed for 2008. Please sign up on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall for Sundays beginning in January. We would like to have 2 adults (or an adult & teenager) in the nursery each Sunday.

If you have any questions, please contact Cathy Ellis, 781-326-5796

## Senior Moments

The Senior Moments Fellowship Group will meet on Thursday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 11:30 AM in the Parish Hall. All seniors are invited to bring a bag lunch – coffee and dessert are provided.

This is a great opportunity to gather together, just because it's fun! The group meets on the first Thursday of every month in the Parish Hall, unless otherwise noted. If you did not receive a postcard with the yearly schedule, please contact the church office and one will be mailed to you.

## Fox Hill Bible Study

On Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, at 10:30 AM, Rev. David Stryker will lead a Bible study group at Fox Hill Village.

If you do not live at Fox Hill and would like to attend the meeting, please contact Rev. Stryker at 781-326-0135 for details.

From  
Faith Community Nurse  
Margery Eramo

The New Year is the time we make resolutions so I thought this would be a good time to share some thoughts about forgiving others and ourselves excerpted from an article from the Mayo Clinic.

### Fly Forgiveness Air – Guaranteed to Lose Your Baggage

Do you find yourself entering this New Year carrying around some extra baggage? Perhaps a large grudge or two, a load of resentment, a parcel of bitterness? On top of spiritual benefits, unloading these bad feelings with forgiveness could help you unload some health issues as well. How would you like to reduce...

- Your blood pressure
- Your heart rate
- Your stress
- Your hostility
- Your risk of alcohol or substance abuse
- Your symptoms of depression and anxiety
- Your chronic pain

These health benefits may be yours by practicing forgiveness. Forgiveness can also help you acquire better anger management skills, gain more friendships, have healthier relationships, and improve your psychological well-being. **When someone you care about hurts you, you can hold on to anger, resentment and thoughts of revenge or embrace forgiveness and move forward.**

Nearly everyone has been hurt by the actions or words of another. Your mother criticized your parenting skills. Your friend gossiped about you. Your partner had an affair. These wounds can leave you with lasting feelings of anger, bitterness and even vengeance. But when you don't practice forgiveness, you may be the one who pays most dearly. By embracing forgiveness, you embrace peace, hope, gratitude and joy.

In general, forgiveness is a decision to let go of resentments and thoughts of revenge. Forgiveness is the act of untying yourself from thoughts and feelings that bind you to the offense committed against you. This can reduce the power these feelings otherwise have over you, so that you can live freer and happier life in the present. Forgiveness can even lead to feelings of understanding, empathy and compassion for the one who hurt you.

When we hold on to pain, old grudges, bitterness and even hatred, many areas of our lives can suffer. When we're unforgiving, it's we who pay the price over and over. We may bring our anger and bitterness into every relationship and new experience. Our lives may be so wrapped up in the wrong that we can't enjoy the present. The bottom line is that you may often feel miserable in your current life.

Forgiveness is a commitment to a process of change. It can be difficult and it can take time. Everyone moves toward forgiveness a little differently. One step is to recognize the value of forgiveness and its importance in our lives at a given time. Another is to reflect on the facts of the situation, how we've reacted, and how this combination has affected our lives, our health and our well-being. Then, as we are ready, we can actively choose to forgive the one who has offended us. In this way, we move away from our role as a victim and release the control and power the offending person and situation have had in our lives.

Forgiveness does not always guarantee reconciliation. In some cases, reconciliation may be impossible because the offender has died. In other cases, reconciliation may not be appropriate, especially if you were attacked or assaulted. But even in those cases, forgiveness is still possible, even if reconciliation isn't.

On the other hand, if the hurtful event involved a family member or friend whose relationship you otherwise value, forgiveness may lead to reconciliation. This may not happen quickly, as you both may need time to re-establish trust. But in the end, your relationship may very well be one that is rich and fulfilling.

Forgiveness brings a kind of peace that helps you go on with life. The offense is no longer front and center in

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**Forgiveness**  
*(Continued from page 7)*

your thoughts or feelings. Your hostility, resentment and misery have made way for compassion, kindness and peace.

Also, remember that forgiveness often isn't a one-time thing. It begins with a decision, but because memories or another set of words or actions may trigger old feelings, you may need to recommit to forgiveness over and over again.

Forgiveness takes away the power the other person continues to wield in your life. Through forgiveness, you choose to no longer define yourself as a victim. Forgiveness is done primarily for yourself, and less so for the person who wronged you. Getting rid of that baggage puts you in line for a flight through life full of peace and joy!

May God bless you as you live well with forgiveness and enjoy your flight with the One who makes us soar on wings like eagles!

Have a Happy Healthy New Year!!

Faithfully,

*Margery Eramo*, RN, FCN

Faith Community Nurse

**From  
the Ministry of Mission & Service**

**What Happened  
to the Pumpkin Money?**

The Ministry of Mission and Service is happy to report that the funds so many of you helped raise have been used as follows:

- \$500 Senior High Fellowship mission trip
- \$1556 Christmas Families
- \$500 Habitat for Humanity in Boston
- \$500 Habitat for Humanity international
- \$500 Heifer

Used to match the funds raised by the Christmas Offering:

- \$802 Church World Service to provide clean water.
- \$802 Christmas Fund for supplementing pensions of retired Clergy.

Thank you all, who unloaded, sold, bought or otherwise helped in the effort!

*Martha Crawford*

Ministry of Mission and Service

**Thank You, Donors!**

Heartfelt thanks to all who bought gifts, wrapped, and/or contributed money this holiday season for the purchase of gifts and essential household items for our Christmas Outreach Families. Special thanks to Michael Gettings for coordinating this big project!

This is the 12<sup>th</sup> year that First Parish has shared Christmas joy with families struggling to survive the economic and physical demands of caring for a disabled child.

Welcome the New Year knowing that 6 families in Norfolk County and 12 children at the Massachusetts Hospital School wore bright smiles on Christmas Day! What you do really matters!