



The Clapboardtree Spire

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

March, 2010

HOLY WEEK & EASTER AT FIRST PARISH

SUNDAY, MARCH 28TH – PALM SUNDAY

- 10am: Palm Sunday worship in the Meeting House
- 4PM: Concert – Rutter's *Requiem* at Walpole United Church.

MONDAY, MARCH 29TH

- 7-9pm: Labyrinth Meditation in the Parish Hall

TUESDAY, MARCH 30TH

- 7-9pm: Labyrinth Meditation in the Parish Hall

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31ST

- 4pm: Children's Labyrinth Walk in the Parish Hall
- 7-9pm: Labyrinth Meditation in the Parish Hall

MAUNDY THURSDAY – APRIL 1ST

- 12-3pm: Labyrinth Meditation in the Parish Hall
- 7:30pm: Service of Communion & Tenebrae in the Meeting House

GOOD FRIDAY – APRIL 2ND

- 9am-3pm: Personal meditation in the Meeting House
- 12-3: Labyrinth Meditation in the Parish Hall
- 7:30pm: Good Friday worship in the Meeting House

HOLY SATURDAY – APRIL 3RD

- 7-9pm: Labyrinth Meditation in the Parish Hall

EASTER SUNDAY – APRIL 4TH

- 6:30am: Sunrise Worship in the Meeting House garden (light breakfast served afterwards in the Parish Hall)
- 10am: Intergenerational Worship in the Meeting House

LIVING THE QUESTIONS

Thursdays: March 4, 11, 18 & 24
7:30PM in the Vogel Room

Jesus was typical of the rabbis of the day. According to the canonical gospels, he rarely gave a straight answer to a question. Instead he responded with another question or told a story. For the most part, Jesus was not offering simple answers. Instead, he put his questioners in a position of having to think for themselves.

In that spirit, you are invited to gather with leaders Brian Bayer and Pastor Chris to consider some of the questions we live with as Christians, which also connect with our Lenten worship theme of horizontal habits. Each week's conversation is independent of the next, so come when you can. Conversations will be helped along by a video featuring one of the following reflections: Restoring Relationship, Prophetic Justice, Reclaiming the World, and Social Justice.

DON'T FORGET...

Turn your clocks
AHEAD one hour

SUNDAY, MARCH 14

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays

March 1	Arny Goodrich Jr.
March 2	Carley Donovan
March 3	Aidan Kelly
March 5	Graham Bayer
March 6	Jackie Bigelow
March 9	Chris Poreda
March 10	Amy Bean
March 11	Bradford Baldwin, Brian Miskell
March 12	Danielle Damren
March 13	Nicholas Damren
March 14	Ellen Bailey, Jim Delisle Jr. Jane Howard, Ryan Marten
March 16	Millie Arntz, Ron Arntz Alison Deininger, Jim Worth
March 17	Kathy Davis, Ashley Malmquist
March 19	Sheldon Blaney, Bonnie Blomquist Cara Mancini
March 20	David Candella, Klaus Ullmann
March 21	Robby Owen
March 22	Andy Walker
March 23	Jim Aldinger, Eric Peterson
March 24	Evan Matzell, James Whalen
March 25	Jason Blaney
March 26	Lloyd Clark
March 27	Donna Bertazzoni Miriam Hawkins Nannestad
March 28	Kyle Burgess
March 29	Eddie McCracken
March 30	Justina Germano
March 31	Isabelle Haines, Steven Kane Debora Pfaff, Sarah Whalen

Anniversaries

March 9	Sheldon & Janice Blaney
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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. Available monthly at www.firstparishwestwood.org, via email, and through the mail (by request only).

LIFETIMES

Contact Updates:

- *Mason & Cynthia Taber:* 781-326-7529
tabermason94@gmail.com
- *Beth Roper:* beth.roper@verizon.net

In Memoriam:

- On Feb. 24th: *Naomi Billings*, former First Parishioner, and wife of Bill Billings, 447 Main St., S. Dennis MA 02660. Funeral arrangements are in process at Folsom Funeral Home, High St., Westwood.

WHO'S WHO AT FIRST PARISH

Pastor:	Rev. Christoph L. Dodge
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Sexton:	Denis Wholey
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WHAT TO DO DURING LENT

OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

- **CRADLES TO CRAYONS:** Donations are needed for this organization which helps children who are homeless or in need. Gently used children's clothing (size infant to 20, adult S/M/L), shoes, coats, books, baby equipment and new school supplies (pens, markers etc) may be left on the Parish Hall stage through Sunday, March 21st. Adult and children volunteers are also needed on Saturday, March 27th from 1-3PM to help sort items in CTC's warehouse in Quincy. A sign up sheet is posted on the Parish Hall stage.
- **FOOD DRIVE:** Donations for the Westwood Food Pantry may be left on the Parish Hall stage through Sunday, March 7th. All donations are welcome, but the following foods are particularly needed: canned hams, tuna fish, pasta sauces, boxed Mac & Cheese, dry cereal and oatmeal, and cake or brownie mixes.
- **STUDENTS IN GRADES 9-12:** Your help is needed at the Westwood Council on Aging after school on Tuesday, March 9th restocking the shelves at the Westwood Food Pantry. If you can help, add your name to the sign up sheet beside the food drive poster in the Parish Hall.
- **STUDENTS IN GRADES 6-8:** Save Sunday, March 14th to make sandwiches for Rosie's Place! Sign up beside the Rosie's Place poster in the Parish Hall, and plan to meet in the kitchen after worship on the 14th.
- **PENNIES FOR PEACE:** This Year's Church School offering will benefit Pennies for Peace, an international service program which promotes peace through education and literacy, and provides community-based education in remote mountain regions of Central Asia. Our donations will purchase much-needed school supplies. A donation jar and additional information about the program are located beside the coffee serving table in the Parish Hall.
- **SIGN UP SHEETS** are posted in the Parish Hall to help us learn about the outreach efforts parishioners undertake on their own. If you support an organization either through donations or by volunteering your time and talents, sign up on the sheet and let us know about it!

VIDEO DISCUSSION SERIES

On every Thursday in March, at 7:30PM we will gather in the Vogel Room for "Living the Questions", a video discussion series which will explore our relationships to others and our responsibilities as a people of faith. Conversations will be helped along by a video featuring one of the following reflections: Restoring Relationships, Prophetic Justice, Reclaiming the World, and Social Justice. Each week's conversation is independent of the next, so come when you can. Questions? See facilitators Pastor Chris or Brian Bayer.

HOLY WEEK LABYRINTH MEDITATION

Within the vessel of the labyrinth, we give ourselves the space for prayer and meditation, and open ourselves to God's Word and God's presence. Through this ancient Christian spiritual practice, experience the labyrinth as a walking meditation and a metaphor for our spiritual journey as individuals and within a community.

The labyrinth is located in First Parish's parish hall, across the street from the church. Please wear comfortable clothing and socks. Shoes must be removed while on the labyrinth, unless needed for medical support.

Open Walks:

7-9pm: 3/29, 3/30, 3/31 & 4/3

12-3pm: 4/1 & 4/2

Kids Walk

4pm: Wednesday 3/31

WORSHIP

Palm Sunday	10am on Sunday, 3/38
Maundy Thursday	7:30pm on Thursday, 4/1
Good Friday	7:30pm on Friday, 4/2
Easter Sunday	6:30 & 10am on Sunday, 4/4

FROM PASTOR CHRIS



The season of Lent is upon us, and this journey toward Easter has us following Jesus' journey from Galilee to Jerusalem. In Jesus' journey we see amongst other things, hope, encouragement, challenge and comfort. We are to see ourselves in the adventures along the journey, so that we can find our best selves and move closer to the God who comes to find us and save us.

So the Lenten journey begins with Jesus going into the wilderness, following his baptism (Luke 4:1-12). It was his time to prepare for the work that God was calling him to do. God's work would be difficult work, riddled with anxiety and opposition even from those closest followers. But it would be fruitful work filled with moments of grace that give meaning and purpose to so many lives – including yours and mine today. It required sacrifices, courage, wisdom, prayer, companionship and complete trust in God above all else. The same is true for

our journey as Christians and as a church community.

Anthony Robinson, in his book, *"Changing the Conversation"* offers these thoughts about Jesus' wilderness experience.

In the wilderness Jesus resists and thwarts temptation by reliance upon the Word of God, the story that names and claims him. In the Gideon Bible I am looking at here in a hotel room in Montreal, they emphasize this by putting Jesus' responses, all words of Scripture, to the three temptations of the Devil in caps as well as quotes, as if to say, "Jesus said this really loudly." Of course, and this is the wonderful complication, the Devil also quotes Scripture. So merely quoting Scripture isn't in itself the point, though it may be a good place to start. The point is that Jesus' identity is grounded in God, in God's word and story, and so he is able to resist the Satan's attempts to make him anxious about who and whose he is. That invitation to anxiety is couched in the Satan's come-on, "If you are the Son of God . . ." These days we live in a society, and participate in churches, where there is a whole lot of anxiety going on. It makes us vulnerable. Niebuhr observed that anxiety, which comes with being human, is not in itself sin or sinful. But it is the precondition, the seedbed, so to speak, of sin. Our anxiety causes us to do things we shouldn't. So the antidote here to anxiety is faith, deep faith in God's presence and power, faith in God's sufficient word, and trust in the story that names us and delivers us from temptation.

I pray that we may all have a meaningful season of Lent and find a deeper faith when we get to Easter and journey beyond.

Peace,
Pastor Chris

IT'S NOT TOO LATE FOR OGHS

During worship on Sunday, Feb. 21st First Parish gratefully accepted donations for this year's One Great Hour of Sharing offering. To date we have collected \$625 for this important cause, and we thank all for their generosity.

But it's not too late if you missed us on the 21st! OGHS envelopes, located at the Hospitality Table at the back of the Parish Hall, may be placed in the offering plate on any Sunday. It's never too late to help those less fortunate than ourselves!

Donna Bertazzoni
Church School
Administrator



NURTURING CHILDREN IN A LIFE OF COMPASSION

Throughout Lent, both in worship and in the church school, we've been trying out various 'horizontal' practices, acting intentionally on behalf of others. In the church school the focus has been on two specific spiritual practices: praying for others and mission - supporting the children's annual mission project, *Pennies for Peace*, and praying for the children of Pakistan and Afghanistan who will benefit from our pennies. What do we hope for them to learn through these practices? Why is it a good idea to hone our children's tendency towards empathy through thinking about others and supporting the building of schools for central Asian children?

Understanding how we're connected to one another and to God is the essence of our spiritual life. Ethicist Lisa Sowle Cahill identifies seeking the well being of others beyond the boundaries of our natural family as the "most distinctively Christian moral virtue". Jesus wanted his followers to be especially attentive to the poor and the defenseless who have no power or prestige. What is done to them will be done to him (Matthew 25:40). Children caring for other children through prayer and mission embodies Jesus' message. Scripture combined with the weight of thousands of years of Christian practice is reason enough to ask children to take the welfare of others to heart for a few weeks. And yet it may interest you to know that there is empirical research being done on the spiritual formation of children that confirms this experiential approach.

Through the twentieth century religious research concerning children focused on their religious development or perception of religious experience but rarely addressed their faith or spirituality. Interest has shifted more recently to the integration of biblical, theological and social science perspectives on children's spiritual experiences, development, and formation (Ratcliff). The number of studies is blossoming and can be accessed through a variety of books and websites. A few are listed below. The Search Institute identifies three core processes for spiritual development:

- Awareness or awakening—being or becoming aware of or awakening to one's self, others, and the universe (which may be understood as including the sacred or divine) in ways that cultivate identity, meaning, and purpose
- Interconnecting and belonging—seeking, accepting, or experiencing significance in relationships to and interdependence with others, the world, or one's sense of the transcendent (often including an understanding of God or a higher power) and linking to narratives, beliefs, and traditions that give meaning to human experience across time.
- A way of living—authentically expressing one's identity, passions, values, and creativity through relationships, activities, and/or practices that shape bonds with oneself, family, community, humanity, the world, and/or that which one believes to be transcendent or sacred.

The main point of undertaking any Lent practice is what is gained by trying. The goal is spiritual growth through doing something that will remind us of what God values. Praying in new ways and serving others in Jesus' name are habits that stretch our spiritual wings, allowing us to come to Easter having made an attempt to live into the sort of people we are meant to be.

In faith,
Donna

For further information and research into nurturing children in a life of compassion:

National Study on Youth and Religion www.youthandreligion.org

What Kids Need: Spiritual Development <http://www.search-institute.org/spiritual-development>

Building Assets, Strengthening Faith: Results from a Field Test Survey <http://www.search-institute.org/system/files/BASF-FieldTestReport.pdf>

CHURCH SCHOOL UPDATE

Please note:

Worship through March 21st will be in the Parish Hall.

Sunday, March 7th:

- **9:00 AM:** Festival Choir rehearsal in the Parish Hall
- **10:00 AM:** Intergenerational Communion worship
- **10:00 AM:** Communion Class in the Cottage
- **11:30 AM:** Confirmation Class in the Stage Classroom
- **4:00 PM:** Music in the Meeting House concert (appropriate for junior high/high school age students)

Sunday, March 14th:

- **10:00 AM:** Worship, church school & communion class
- **10:15 AM:** Extreme Breakfast (downstairs in the Parish Hall)

Sunday, March 21st:

- **10:00 AM:** Worship, church school and communion class
- **11:30 AM:** Confirmation Class in the Stage Classroom

Sunday, March 28th: Palm Sunday

- **10:00 AM:** Palm Sunday worship *in the Meeting House*. Communion Class in the Cottage
- **10:15AM:** Church school (Pre-school through Grade 2)
- Extreme Breakfast in the Parish Hall

Wednesday, March 31st:

- **4:00 PM:** Kids' labyrinth walk in the Parish Hall

SENIOR MOMENTS FELLOWSHIP

The Senior Moments Fellowship Group will meet on Thursday, March 4th at 11:30 AM, and the following month on Thursday, April 8th. Mark your calendars now, and plan to attend.

All Senior Moments meetings are on the first Thursday of each month, September through June, unless otherwise noted on the schedule. All seniors are invited to bring a bag lunch to the Parish Hall for conversation and fellowship. Coffee and dessert are provided.

It's a great opportunity to gather together, just because it's fun!

FELLOWSHIP AT FIRST PARISH

RETIRED MEN'S CLUB

On Thursday, March 18th, the Retired Men's Group will gather in the Parish Hall at 9:30AM for its monthly meeting. Guest Speaker will be Westwood Superintendent of Schools, John Antonucci. All retired men in Westwood and surrounding communities are invited to attend.

The Men's Group meets on the third Thursday of each month in the Parish Hall, unless otherwise noted on the schedule. The meeting begins at 9:30AM with a coffee & doughnut social, followed by a guest speaker.

FOX HILL BIBLE STUDY

Rev. Chris Dodge will meet with the Fox Hill Bible Study group on Thursday, March 18th at 10:30 AM.

If you live at Fox Hill Village and would like to begin attending the Bible study, contact Pastor Chris.



**From Our
Parish Nurse**

Is winter getting to you? I'm looking out at all left over snow and waiting for more later in the week, and it is no longer beautiful, just wet and a hazard to walking and driving. Some of the words below speak to me; I hope they speak to you also.

Stressed Out? Try Some Instant Stress Busters!

Medical researchers are discovering more and more links between high stress levels and health problems. If you lead a busy and stress-filled life, and who among us doesn't, consider the following tips.

- Take care of yourself...Like you take care of a new car!
- Look at the bright side of life...After a storm in life; notice the rainbow in the sky.
- Retire from the Supreme Court...Get out of the world affairs judgment business.
- Don't buy a cow to get a glass of milk...Don't make big deals out of everything. Simplify life. Take on a little bit at a time.
- Avoid leaping contests with kangaroos...Don't compete with everybody doing everything. Refuse to compare yourself to others. Set your own standards.
- Don't tie tin cans onto dog's tails...Be kind. Respect the feelings of others. Be nice to everyone, whenever possible.
- Look at crisis realistically...They may occur serendipitously to prompt you to a change for something better.
- When crisis do occur...Take a big, deep breath and blow out every bit of unnecessary tension. Then remember...its only money!
- Plan for your next crisis...Some stressors keep coming back repeatedly, so next time anticipate the crisis and manage it calmly.
- Remember you are not alone...Allow your family and friends to be your support network. Talk to them when it hurts.
- **Remember the Serenity Prayer..."God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."**

(Adapted with permission from Dr. Wesley E. Sime, Department of Occupational Stress Management, University of Nebraska) and Wheat Ridge Ministries

Blessings,
Margery Eramo, RN, CHM
Faith Community Nurse

FIRST PARISH VOLUNTEERS

COFFEE VOLUNTEERS

Sunday, March 7th:
The Vancura and Kelly families

Sunday, March 14th:
????????????????

Sunday, March 21st:
????????????????

Sunday, March 28th:
The Holbrooks

A WORD ABOUT COFFEE HOURS

We are so grateful to the volunteers who provide the food and pour the coffee after worship each Sunday. A sign up sheet is posted in the Parish Hall lobby if you would like to join those who help make our after-worship fellowship so pleasant.

In general, volunteers are welcome to provide whatever type of refreshments they wish. However, choices need not be elaborate or expensive. A simple basket of bagels or muffins with coffee is both inexpensive and sufficient!

However, during Lent (Feb. 21st - March 28th), we ask that Coffee Hour hosts *not* serve heavily sugared foods and pastries, in support of the congregation's spiritual practice of giving up sweets (and hopefully eating more healthy foods) at Coffee Hours during Lent.

ROSIE'S PLACE VOLUNTEERS Monday, February 18th

Drivers:
S. Reeve & J. Germano

Fruit (bananas: 8-10lbs, \$7 max.)
S. Reeve J. Germano T. Berg S. DeFeo M. Speros

Sandwiches (12 dozen ham & Swiss cheese on wheat bread)
JHYF

ALTAR FLOWERS

Sunday, March 7th:
Given by Jane Smith, in loving memory of her husband, Barton P. Smith.

Sunday, March 14th:
Given by Elvin Fowell, in memory of his mother, Dorothy Fowell.

Sunday, March 21st:
Given by the Dorey family and Nancy & Bob Stoll, in memory of Nancy's grandparents, Iona & Edom Dorey.

Sunday, March 28th:
Given by Dix & Diane Howard, in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary

USHER SCHEDULE

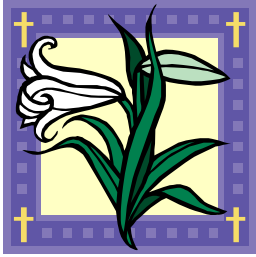
Worship is in the Parish Hall through March 21st!

Sunday, March 7th:
Dix & Diane Howard
Steve & Ingegerd Larch
Ron & Joy Sudduth

Sunday, March 14th:
Bob Kadehjian
Bob Robertson
Jim & Linda McKenzie

Sunday, March 21st:
Bill Holbrook
Sheldon Blaney
Don Friedl
Lee Adourian

Sunday, March 28th:
Palm Sunday
(in the Meeting House)
Dave & Bonnie Blomquist
Chris Pfaff
Dan & Karen Wagner



Easter Memorials

If you would like to remember or honor a loved one by placing a plant in the Meeting House on Easter Sunday or by making a donation to the Special Music Fund, please complete the order form below

This year, plants are \$10, and orders and your payment are needed in the church office by Sunday, March 28th.

UPCOMING MUSIC IN THE MEETING HOUSE EVENTS

SUNDAY, MARCH 7, 2010

SOPRANO ALIANA DE LA GUARDIA

4PM

First Parish of Westwood

Don't miss this vocal recital by this rising star of the Boston music scene. Ms. de la Guardia is well known for her musicianship and adventurous programming. Tickets are \$10 (\$7/seniors and students) and will be available at the door.

SUNDAY, MARCH 28, 2010

JOHN RUTTER'S REQUIEM

3PM

Walpole United Church

30 Common St., Walpole

On the afternoon of Palm Sunday, a special collaboration, of the choirs of First Parish of Westwood and Walpole United Church will perform John Rutter's *Requiem* with orchestra and guest soloists at 3pm.

MEMORIAL GIFTS AT EASTER, 2010

To honor the memory of loved ones, I would like to: (check space)

____: Place a plant in church at Easter (\$10 each). I would like to order ____.

____: I will pick up my plant(s) after the 10 AM service on Easter Sunday.

____: Please deliver to a hospital patient, nursing home resident or shut-in.

____: Make a gift of \$____ to be used for SPECIAL MUSIC.

All memorial gifts will be acknowledged in the Easter worship bulletin. Please print your dedication below:

IN MEMORY OF:

GIVEN BY:

Enclosed is a check for \$____ to cover the above gift(s). **Please make checks payable to First Parish of Westwood, and send this form to the church office, 340 Clapboardtree St., Westwood, MA 02090 by Sunday, March 28th.**

Signature: _____