



**St. Paul's Church of Palmer
Universalist-Unitarian**
Box 307, 1060 Central Street
Palmer, MA 01069-0307

November 2009

Tracie Shea, Church Administrative Assistant 413-283-8185

Barbara Stone, Music Director
Rob Faulkner, Church Custodian

Office Hours: Tuesday-Thursday 9 am-2 pm
email: stpaulu1@verizon.net
website: www.uuchurch-palmer.org

NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends,

Last May when I met with the Religious Services Committee to discuss serving as your student minister, program ideas, and opportunities for growth, I mentioned the importance of getting to know how St. Paul's functions as a community and what its members value.

My attendance at a recent meeting gave me some insights. What I heard expressed in the words and actions of those present is a healthy sense of pride in Unitarian Universalism; a sense of responsibility to both current and future generations of Unitarian Universalists, evidenced especially in the extensive work being done to maintain and modernize the building and grounds; and a forward looking vision as expressed in the desire to engage a professional religious educator in the near future. All of this says to me that our congregation is alive with hope and a sense of purpose; possessing the courage to image St. Paul's as a growing congregation in the years ahead. This is something to be excited about, my friends!

Newly elected president of the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association), the Rev. Peter Morales reminds us that, "We need to reframe growth and think of it not as an institutional imperative, something that we ought to do to be healthy as an institution. Instead we need to see it as a moral and religious imperative." I take those words very seriously. If we only think of growth as a way to "stay in business" then we risk reducing new and potential new members to little more than a sales goal. And that's no way for a church to respond a world that seeks, and rightly expects, more of us as a faith community.

As a Unitarian Universalist congregation we have a moral obligation to those who are hungry for a faith where they don't have to check reason at the door to belong; for marginalized people who thirst for a religious community where they can be fully who they are without fear of being shunned or rejected; a faith for souls feeling exposed and vulnerable to the harsh realities of modern life; a faith where people who are imprisoned by a sense of hopelessness and despair can find joy and hope. We simply cannot remain, as some refer to us, "the best kept secret" in the religious world.

Our church exists to serve one another; and that includes those who have yet to or may never cross our threshold. This is why we need to approach growth as a religious and moral imperative. From your words and deeds I believe you know this in your hearts. Ultimately this is *heart* work. I encourage you to revisit and reflect upon the content of your heart often as we journey together, for as Carl Jung wrote, "Your vision will become clear only when you look into your heart. Who looks outside, dreams. Who looks inside, awakens." May we continue to awaken.

Blessings and joy, *Craig*

CHURCH CALENDAR

Services are at 10 AM

- Nov. 1 Craig Nowak, Student Minister
Nov. 8 Rev. Bill Baughan
Nov. 15 Rev. Jon Rehms
Nov. 22 Thanksgiving Sunday – No service in the morning
Ecumenical Service at Second Congregational Church – 3 PM
Our student minister, Craig Nowak, will be delivering the sermon.
Nov. 29 Lay Led Service centering on holiday music by our guests,
Brimfield Bells, handheld bells

***** Coffee Hour immediately following the Sunday Service in Fellowship Hall. *****

Coffee Hour

If you are willing and able to host a coffee hour, please call June Bacon at 413-283-5290, Harriot Henrichon at 413-289-1870, or Verna Besaw at 413-283-4244 to help out.

Anniversaries and Birthdays

- | | | | |
|---------|---------------------|---------|-----------------|
| Nov. 14 | Gordon Christiansen | Nov. 25 | Crystal Torrell |
| 15 | Bernadette Dineen | Nov. 29 | Katie Balog |



Food Share

A Food Share Box is located in Fellowship Hall near the coat closet. Please feel free to place your non-perishable items in this box. Palmer Food Share at 39 Walnut St. is open on Tuesday and Friday from 10 am to 11:30 am. Those in need must register prior to receiving food, and then are eligible to receive food every 3 months. You can even mail donations to Food Share, 39 Walnut Street, Palmer 01069. We all need to remember that there are those who are really struggling to put food on their table. Let's help them out!

Church Greeters

Gordon and Irene Christiansen and Verna Besaw have graciously offered to be greeters on Sundays. If you would like to also greet, you can call the church office at 283-8185.

Community Meals

The November community meal will be on Saturday, November 28. These will continue on the 4th Saturday of each month. As always, any help you can give will be appreciated. The Social Action Committee selects the menu, sets up the hall, serves the meal, and cleans up after. This is a great group of people who know what has to be done and how it has to be done! Donations of sugar, decaf coffee, and salad dressing are always gladly accepted. Money from the Church budget has never had to be used.

FYI

On **Sunday, November 15**, the **Food Share** box will be at the back of the sanctuary. Please bring a non-perishable item when you come to church that day. Items will be delivered to Palmer Food Share for distribution.

The **Annual Palmer Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service** will be held this year at The Second Congregational Church at 3:00 pm, **Sunday, November 22, 2008**. This will replace the morning service that day. Our own student minister, Craig Nowak will be delivering the sermon. Let's all show our support and go that day.

From the Music Loft....

Barbara was so very proud of her two grand nieces Jennifer Arling age 9 and Allison Arling age 7 who sang Kumbaya during the offering on a recent Sunday. The girls are from Cromwell, CT and both play the piano. Following the service, each girl played a piece on the piano in the sanctuary for Joan Allen who was my piano and organ teacher.



We are so happy to have Sue King in choir again!!

We know you love to sing! And singing makes you smile and does your heart good! We're looking for more people to fill the church with music on Sunday morning. You can give Barbara Stone a call and let her know you are interested in joining the church choir.



Mark your calendar -

The Saturday tag sale/book sale continues through November 14.

November 7 is the Clara Barton District Fall Rally and Conference. Visit www.cbd.uua.org or call the church office at 283-8185 for more information.

St. Paul's Church will be filled with the sweet sound of handheld bells on Sunday, Nov. 29. Please plan on attending and do bring a friend to enjoy this special service.

Placing flowers in the Sanctuary is a unique and tender way to celebrate a special occasion, mark an important milestone or remember a loved one. If you and your family would like to provide flowers for a Sunday service, you call the church office.

The Hubbardston UU Church is having a free performance by the Pioneer Valley Brass Quintet on Sunday, Dec. 6 at 5:30 pm. This quintet includes trumpet, horn, trombone and a tuba. The concert features an array of our favorite holiday songs. This musical organization was formed when the towns of the Quabbin Reservoir were flooded. The First Universalist Parish of Dana established a trust fund to keep the memory of North Dana and their churches alive.

St. Paul's History -

The Rev. Stephen Davies Howard was called as a three-quarter time interim minister September 1, 2001, for a year, and his contract was renewed for a second year. His previous experience included fourteen other interim ministries, the most recent being Northampton, Massachusetts. Stephen and his wife Ann lived in Amherst. *

He was popular with our membership while he regularly guided us and politely prodded us toward improvement in many ways. Lay activities such as fundraising, social action, and community outreach continued as usual. An updated history of our church, a project strongly suggested and backed by Mr. Howard, was printed. Mr. Howard inaugurated Saturday evening vesper services once a month in lieu of Sunday services a few times each year. Also he worked with the Religious Services Committee preparing their once-a-month service.

A special church meeting, March 2002, voted to sell the parsonage at 4 Homestead Street. The sale was completed in May, and the net proceeds were invested as "The Griswold Parsonage Memorial Fund" to provide income to the church.

Mr. Howard's ministry was important in setting a positive climate as we looked forward to the promising pastorate of our new minister, the Rev. Priscilla Murdock, from Stockton, Illinois, who will start September 1, 2003.

This is the final section of St. Paul's Updated History, compiled May 2003.

*As you know, Rev. Howard passed away on July 15, 2009 at the age of 78.

Comments made in the year 1955!

(That's only 53 years ago!)

'I'll tell you one thing, if things keep going the way they are, it's going to be impossible to buy a week's groceries for \$20.00.

'Did you hear the post office is thinking about charging a dime just to mail a letter!.

'If they raise the minimum wage to \$1.00, nobody will be able to hire outside help at the store. '

'When I first started driving, who would have thought gas would someday cost 29 cents a gallon. Guess we'd be better off leaving the car in the garage.

'I'm afraid to send my kids to the movies any more. Ever since they let Clark Gable get by with saying DAMN in GONE WITH THE WIND, it seems every new movie has either HELL or DAMN in it.

'I read the other day where some scientist thinks it's possible to put a man on the moon by the end of the century. They even have some fellows they call astronauts preparing for it down in Texas .

'Did you see where some baseball player just signed a contract for \$75,000 a year just to play ball? It wouldn't surprise me if someday they'll be making more than the President.

'I never thought I'd see the day all our kitchen appliances would be electric. They are even making electric typewriters now.

'It won't be long before young couples are going to have to hire someone to watch their kids so they can both work.

'I'm afraid the Volkswagen car is going to open the door to a whole lot of foreign business.

'Thank goodness I won't live to see the day when the Government takes half our income in taxes. I sometimes wonder if we are electing the best people to congress..

'No one can afford to be sick anymore, at \$35.00 a day in the hospital it's too rich for my blood.'

'If they think I'll pay 50 cents for a hair cut, forget it.'



"To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment." - Ralph Waldo Emerson

