

Hello and welcome to the start of a new church year!

This surely is a season of new beginnings: a return to regular worship services and congregational events, a newly-arrived minister, and an increase to 3/4 time ministry.

With new beginnings come change and its attendant anxiety, as well as excitement. We are beginning a journey together and it will take some time for us to get to know each other. We will need to build our own unique relationships, one by one, and this will be the focus of our work together over these first months.

To this end, I invite you to join in one of the small group meetings I will be hosting over the next few weeks. These loosely-structured, casual gatherings are meant to begin the process of relationship building. I'll bring a couple of questions and an activity or two; we'll laugh and have some fun together, maybe even enjoy a snack, and start getting to know each other better. The meeting times are listed elsewhere in this newsletter. If none of them works for you, please let me know so I can add an additional gathering to our schedule.

By the time you read this, Micah and I will have just moved into our new home in Petersham. We're both excited to become a part of this wonderful community and look forward to seeing you around town and at church. Our first worship service together will be Ingathering and Water Communion on September 11th. Remember to bring some water which represents a special experience or gift of the summer. See you soon!

In faith,

Rev. Michelle



CHURCH CALENDAR

Sunday, Sept. 11, 2011

10 a.m. ~ "Ingathering and Water Communion",

with Rev. Michelle LaGrave

Wednesday, Sept. 7, 2011

6:30 p.m. Parish Committee Meeting

Sunday, Sept. 18, 2011

10 a.m. ~ "A Covenantal Faith",

with Rev. Michelle LaGrave

Sunday, Sept. 25, 2011

10 a.m. ~ "Peace and Social Action Sunday"

Sundays, 9:00 - 9:45 a.m.

Silent meditation in Davis Memorial

Getting to Know You

As your newly-arrived minister, I will be hosting several small group meetings at the church so that we may get to know each other better. I'll bring some questions for discussion and an activity or two; you bring yourself or come with a friend.

Please try to call ahead and sign up so that we might divide the groups more evenly. (978-724-3401)

Hope to see you there!

Rev. Michelle

Thursday, September 8th at 2pm

Wednesday, September 14th at 6:30 pm

Thursday, September 22nd at 6:30 pm

Wednesday, September 28th at 2 pm

Notes from the Parish Committee

On August 1, 2011, Rev. Michelle LaGrave began her ministry at First Parish, and we are delighted to have her with us. The Membership Committee organized a well-attended **Welcoming Pot Luck Dinner** on Aug. 6th, so Michelle could introduce herself to members and friends. Then, on Aug. 20th, a special **"Ministerial Startup Workshop"** was planned by the Minister and the Parish Committee. Doug Zelinski, Director of Leadership Development - Clara Barton District, aided by Karen Bellavance-Grace and Kathy Ballou, PC Chairperson, did an impressive job in facilitating this important event. Throughout the day, participants explored the congregation's relationships with previous ministers, and discussed the expectations for the new ministry. Start-up Goals included articulating the challenges of shared ministry, outlining the structures and boundaries necessary for effective ministry, and identifying the best ways for the new minister's strengths to shine forth. People attending the workshop felt very positive about the experience.

The workshop was eye-opening, and was a great opportunity to air thoughts and opinions in a non-judgmental environment.

There was a strong feeling of camaraderie among participants. This next year is so important for our church. It will take teamwork and enthusiastic participation to help our church move forward. We look forward to doing this together.

Michelle's first service of the new church year will be **Sunday, September 11, 2011**. The service will include a 10-year anniversary remembrance of 9/11,

and will also include a water communion to celebrate the start of our new church year with Rev. LaGrave!

Pam Chevalier,
Parish Committee Secretary

A Tribute to Ledlie Woolsey

Ledlie Laughlin Woolsey died August 6 at Edgewood retirement community in North Andover at the age of 93. She was born Rebecca Ledlie Laughlin on December 2, 1917 at her grandparent's house in Brookline, MA. She was the daughter of Henry and Rebecca Laughlin and the wife of the late John M. Woolsey, Jr. Ledlie grew up in Concord, MA and was one of the first students to be enrolled in the Concord Academy when it was started in 1922. She visited Ireland with her family regularly in the summertime when she was young, resulting in her particular affection for the place and the people there throughout her life. As a student at Bryn Mawr College (class of 1940), she lived with a French family in Paris in 1938-39 and wrote letters home full of first-hand observations of the developments there in the months preceding the Nazi occupation of France. A wartime marriage to David Rodd ended in divorce in 1946 and Ledlie married John M. Woolsey, Jr. in 1948. The family moved to Cambridge in 1949. Over the next 22 years, Ledlie was involved in parent activities at the Shady Hill School and civic organizations in Cambridge. She and several friends took cooking lessons with Julia Child in the days before the French chef launched her show on Public Television. As a result, Ledlie mastered the art of the omelet and the soufflé' (among other things) to the delight of

her family and guests. Personally, she favored meals consisting solely of hors d'oeuvres and dessert, especially chocolate ones. Later, she spent 20 years at the Museum of Fine Arts as a gallery instructor, introducing and explaining the works of art to student groups in the Boston public schools and at the museum. For over 70 years, Ledlie attended Friday afternoon concerts of the Boston Symphony, first with her parents and then as a subscriber herself. Ledlie and her husband John spent summers and vacations with their family in Petersham, where they both were active members of the First Congregational Parish, Unitarian. Ledlie loved to read and she belonged to multiple book groups over the years. With typical understatement, the accomplishments Ledlie claimed to be most proud of were her handwriting, her skill at packing a suitcase, and her deftness in backing a car. Others admired her talent for arranging flowers, evident in the weekly decorations for the Petersham parish church during the summer, and in the many ribbons she won at local fairs. Beyond such visible achievements, her family and friends valued her grace and wit, her loyalty and sense of fun. In 2000, after 51 years in Cambridge, she and John moved to Edgewood retirement community in North Andover. John died in 2005. They were married for 57 years. Ledlie is predeceased by her son, David M. Rodd, Jr. She is survived by her remaining children, Hillary (Rodd) Loring of Andover, John M. Woolsey III, of Providence RI, Alice W. Godfrey of Oak Park IL, Henry M. Woolsey of Petersham, Mary L.S. Woolsey of Berkeley CA, and 9 grandchildren, all of whom will miss her very much. Burial will be private.

A memorial service will be held at First Parish in Petersham on Saturday, September 17 at 2:00 p.m. Contributions to her memory may be made to *Merrimack Valley Hospice*, 360 Merrimack St., BLDG 9, Lawrence MA 01843 www.HomeHealthFoundation.org. or to *First Parish Unitarian*, P.O. Box 305, Petersham MA 01366. Arrangements are under the care of the Dee Funeral Home of Concord, Susan M. Dee and Charles W. Dee, Jr. Funeral Directors.

To share a remembrance visit www.deefuneralhome.com



YOGA WITH LINDA

Sept. 2011

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10 a.m.:

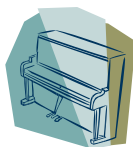
Sept. 6, 8, 13, 15, 20, 22 and 27

\$5 per class

For more information, contact Linda at:

lckabo@verizon.net

978-434-1598



Free Piano

We need to move out the piano in the Davis Memorial and will give it to anyone willing to move it. It needs some work. Please call Kay Berry at 978-724-6610 if interested.

Newsletter

Material for the newsletter may be emailed to the firstparishnt@verizon.net, or can be placed in the wall file outside the Church office. Please make a note stating that the item is for the newsletter, or you can mail your item to: First Congregational Parish, News Team, PO Box 305, Petersham, MA 01366.

Friendly Reminder: Please send in your newsletter items **on or before** the **Monthly Deadline Date, which can be found on the front page of the newsletter.**

Our church newsletter is edited and mailed by volunteers. We are always happy and grateful to receive contributions towards the expenses of paper, printing and mailing, as well as general news and news of families.

Thank You,
The Newsletter Team,
Kay Berry
Don Eaton
Robert Hall
Kathy Ballou ~ Editor

If you would like to receive your newsletter electronically instead of by regular mail, please email us at firstparishnt@verizon.net and let us know.