

Dearest Ones,

It is with a bit of amazement that I write this, my last newsletter column of the church year. The time has passed more quickly than I might have imagined it would. Over these last ten months, we have laughed together and we have cried together. We have celebrated together and we have grieved together. All the while, the people of this place, this congregation, this town have attached themselves ever more firmly to my heart.

This past year has not been the easiest of years. The congregation has lost three members who dedicated much of their lives to the good of this beautiful church on the Common: Ledlie Woolsey, Rev. Arthur Perkins, and Doris Coolidge. The losses among your extended friends, family, and town have only added to the grief experienced over the past year.

This year has also been a year filled with hope: hope for a new ministry, hope for new life, hope for a healthier congregation. You have told the stories of the past in groups small and large, you have started to work through some important questions, and you have begun to heal. Just a month ago, you held a special congregational meeting at which differing opinions were expressed, good process was followed, and new options were found. When I first arrived several months ago, many of you expressed disbelief that a congregation could ever agree on calling a new minister with a 90% vote or more. Some of you wondered if that number should be lowered. Yet, just a month ago, you voted overwhelmingly in favor of renewing your developmental minister's contract. I want to be clear – this is NOT about me, this is about you and the work you have done to get to this place. It may not feel like a lot, it may not feel like enough, but I am absolutely certain that you are now a healthier congregation than when I first arrived.

There is more to be done, of course, but for now we can pause and celebrate once again: the joy of being able to speak more openly and safely, the joy of seeing children present at Social Hour on Sunday morning, the joy of worshipping together and caring for one another day after day.

On Tuesday evening, June 12th at 6:30 pm in the Sanctuary, I will share my year's-end developmental minister's report. I hope you will be there.

'Till then, I tip my hat to all of you.

In faith and love,

Rev. Michelle



## **CHURCH CALENDAR**

### **Saturday, June 2, 2012**

**9:00 – 3:00 ~ Alliance Plant & Bake Sale** - On the Common

**9:00 – 3:00 ~ Yard Sale at church**

### **Sunday, June 3, 2012**

**10:00 a.m. ~ "Multimedia Ministry"**  
a sermon by Rev. Michelle LaGrave

### **Wednesday, June 6, 2012**

**6:00 p.m. Parish Committee Meeting**

### **Saturday, June 9, 2012**

**11:00 a.m. ~ Interfaith Choir Rehearsal** in the Sanctuary

### **Saturday, June 9, 2012**

**1:00 p.m. ~ Celebration of the Life of Rev. Arthur Perkins** in the Sanctuary, followed by a graveside service in the East Street Cemetery and a reception at Winterwood

### **Sunday, June 10, 2012**

**10:00 a.m. ~ "Samurai v. Monk"**  
Rev. Dr. Ken Reeves

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### **Wednesday, June 13, 2012**

**11:30 a.m. ~ Committee on Ministry**  
In the minister's study

### **Thursday, June 14, 2012**

**6:30 p.m. ~ Radical Hospitality Book and Spiritual Practices Group** in the minister's study

### **Wednesday, June 13, 2012**

**6:30 p.m. ~ "State of the Unitarians"**  
Developmental Minister's Report by Rev. Michelle in the Sanctuary

### **Sunday, June 17, 2012**

**10:00 a.m. ~ "Flower Communion"**  
a sermon by Rev. Michelle LaGrave

### **Wednesday, June 20, 2012**

**6:30 p.m. ~ Membership Committee Meeting** in the minister's study

### **Thursday, June 21, 2012**

**6:30 p.m. ~ Radical Hospitality Book and Spiritual Practices Group** in the minister's study

### **Sunday, June 24, 2012**

**10:00 a.m. Peace and Social Action**

### **Sundays, 8:15 - 9:00 a.m.**

Silent meditation in the Davis Memorial.  
Please note new time.

## **Worship Notes**

The Rev. Dr. Ken Reeves is a graduate of the Starr King School for the Ministry in Berkeley, CA, and has served congregations in Ohio and Delaware. He has also earned a Masters in Pastoral Counseling and a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology. He is currently a clinical psychologist with a therapy practice, a consulting psychologist with the Center for Career Development and Ministry, and an adjunct professor at Andover Newton Theological School.

## **Planting Seeds Workshop Has Sprouted!**

On May 20th ten children ages 5-11 began the Planting Seeds workshop series. The Davis was filled with laughter and joy as the children shared acts of kindness, read *Wonderful Nature*, *Wonderful You*, and planted seeds. This pilot series is off to a great start!

Christine and Jody hope the enthusiasm continues through the end of the series (June 24th).

### **Petersham Branch Alliance**

The Petersham Branch Alliance is sponsoring an "American Girl" doll raffle to support its scholarship program.

Tickets are \$1.00 per ticket or 6 for \$5.00. Raffle prize is "Holly McIntire" along with a collection of outfits.

The drawing is at 2:00 p.m. on June 2, 2012 at the Alliance Plant and Bake Sale. Please call or email for tickets:

Anne Perkins 978-724-8802  
[anneperkins28@verizon.net](mailto:anneperkins28@verizon.net)  
Dale Bull 978-724-3339  
[DSB4747@yahoo.com](mailto:DSB4747@yahoo.com)

The **Plant and Bake Sale** will be held on the Common, under the blue Market tent on June 2 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Plants, Baked Goods and Garden Books!

You may bring plants, marked for identification either on Friday 1st on the day of the first Market (there will be a special table where you may leave your plants) or early the morning of the 2nd. You may also bring baked good before the Plant Sale.

A new feature this year will be a table of Garden Books. Bring any you would like to give away or come and browse!

The proceeds of the sale will go to the Petersham Memorial Library (75%) and to the Community Food Pantry (25%)

Happy June!

### **Recent Graduate**

Brittany Heck graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science degree in Health Studies from Utica College in Utica, NY. She is a 2009 graduate of R.C. Mahar Regional High School and will pursue her masters in Occupational Therapy. She will do an internship in Norwich, CT this summer.

Her parents are John and Jennifer Berry of Petersham and her grandparents are Kay and Bill Berry and Carol Ouellette also of Petersham. Bob Ouellette of Sturbridge, MA is her grandfather.

### **Yard Sale**

We will have a yard sale on June 2nd from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. to coincide with the Alliance Plant and Bake Sale. Tables will be available for rent to individuals or vendors for \$10 each. Chairs will also be provided. If the weather is agreeable we can set up on the front lawn.

We need help with set-up and knock-down and also people to help man a table/tables for the church.

If you can help in any way or would like to rent a table, please call or email Kay Berry at 978-724-6610 or [elderberry2@verizon.net](mailto:elderberry2@verizon.net).

Thank you very much.  
Kay Berry



## **The Congregation's Developmental Goals:**

- **To increase attendance and membership with a diversity of ages**
- **To foster a spirit of reconciliation among all members and friends of the congregation**
- **To provide multigenerational experiences through worship, programs, and activities, sharing our liberal religious traditions and values**



### **YOGA WITH LINDA June 2012**

**Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10 a.m.**

**Yoga classes  
June 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21  
No classes June 26 & 28**

**Chair Yoga: June 6, 13, 20  
No classes: June 27**

**\$5 per class**

**For more information, contact Linda at:  
[lckabo@verizon.net](mailto:lckabo@verizon.net)  
978-434-1598**

**No yoga classes in July and August.  
Have a wonderful summer and I will  
See you in September.**

**Reminder** – Please send in your Adult Religious Education Surveys!

We're on facebook! "Like" us at:  
First Congregational Parish, Unitarian in  
Petersham.

## **Newsletter**

**There will be no newsletter printed  
in July and August.**

Material for the newsletter may be emailed to the [firstparishnt@verizon.net](mailto: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, P.O. Box 305, Petersham, MA 01366.

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