

## We're On Our Way!

Dearest Ones,

We are on our way! With the decisions made at the recent Annual Meeting of the congregation, we are truly on our way! I am feeling both honored and grateful to be accompanying you on this awe-some and wondrous journey as we explore together what it means to follow a vision of the Quabbin as our Walden. Micah and I are both excited to be moving into the parsonage this summer and back into the midst of community life in Petersham. In my role as minister, I will be attending various community events and meetings in order to get to know the people of Petersham even better and to find ways to partner with other people and groups as we follow our vision of environmental stewardship. My mother, Nancy LaGrave, will be living with us part-time in the parsonage and will be joining the congregation during our New Member Sunday in February. We will likely be adding one more member to the family later this summer as Micah begins looking for just the right new dog to join us.

You have made a bold decision to move forward into the future while also honoring the past. What ties the future, past, and present together is our faith. We are the heirs of the Unitarian transcendentalists, of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, and we are privileged to be living in the midst of the abundance of the Quabbin, where every day we can experience the intersection of the natural world with our spiritual lives. We are blessed, truly blessed, to be living in this time and place where we can live out our lives of faith so fully – with walks in the woods and dips in the pond, with worship in a beautiful sanctuary, lectures and discussions on topics that challenge us both intellectually and spiritually, and the opportunity, every day, to work toward the preservation and regeneration of the living world which sustains and nourishes our very bodies and souls.

With love and gratitude for this beautiful journey we have just begun,  
Rev. Michelle



## **CHURCH CALENDAR**

### **Saturday, Feb. 2, 2013**

**6:30 p.m. ~ "Quabbin's Got Talent"**

In the Davis Memorial

### **Sunday, Feb. 3, 2013**

**10:00 a.m. ~ "Searching for Joy"**

with Rev. Michelle

**11:00 a.m.–12:15 p.m. Planting  
Seeds**

### **Thursday, Feb. 7, 2013**

**6:00 p.m. ~Branch Alliance Meeting**

In the Davis Memorial

### **Sunday, Feb. 10, 2013**

**10:00 a.m. ~ "Dare to Rise"** Debra  
Dunnington; MDiv, UU hospice chaplain

**11:00 a.m.–12:15 p.m. Planting  
Seeds**

### **Chocolate Auction**

**11:30 a.m.** In the church dining room

### **Sunday, Feb. 17, 2013**

**10:00 a.m. ~ "Sitting in the Heart of  
God"** with Rev. Michelle. This is New  
Member Sunday – please join us to  
welcome the newest members of our  
congregation!

### **Wednesday, Feb. 20, 2013**

**6:30 p.m. Parish Committee Meeting**

### **Sunday, Feb. 24, 2013**

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

Christine Word speaking on the Planting  
Seeds Program

**11:00 a.m.–12:15 p.m. Planting  
Seeds**

### **Sundays, 8:00 - 8:45 a.m.**

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

**Choir** – We now have a choir! The choir  
meets at 8:45 a.m. on every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday  
to rehearse before the 10:00 a.m.  
worship service. Please come join us!

### **New Members Welcome!**

On Sunday, February 17th, we will  
be welcoming new members into our  
congregation during the morning worship  
service. If you are interested in  
becoming a member or have questions  
about membership, please contact Rev.  
Michelle. We'd love to have you join us!

### **Notes from the Parish Committee**

On January 20<sup>th</sup> the Church held its  
Annual Meeting. We had a good turnout  
and lively discussion. In addition to  
voting on the normal agenda items, the  
congregation voted to extend Rev.  
Michelle's developmental ministry 2 more  
years for a total of 5 years. Her duties  
will now include working with the  
congregation on a vision of  
environmental stewardship and  
sustainability. She will be moving into  
the parsonage over the summer. It is a  
very exciting and bold time for the  
Church and the Parish Committee looks  
forward to working with the congregation  
to make our church a center of  
environmental stewardship. I want to  
thank Sally Sennott, Phil Hubbard,  
Genevieve Fraser and Rev. Michelle for  
all their hard work over the past year.

Penny Blum

## **Planting Seeds Continues!**

An ongoing workshop for children based on the "Planting Seeds" curriculum by Thich Nhat Hanh began October 7th. The program invites children ages 5-11 to explore and experience mindfulness, meditation, and movement practices for themselves under the guidance of Christine Word, Jody Bird, and Jeanneane Pugliese. They meet in the Davis Memorial on Sunday mornings at 11:00 a.m. The program is free and open to all children on a drop-in basis.

### **Winter**

February 3, 10, 24  
March 3, 10, 17

### **Spring**

April 28  
May 5, 12, 19, 26  
June 2, 9, 16, 23

## ***"Quabbin's Got Talent"***

### ***Seeking Talent of All Ages***

### ***Starting Saturday, February 2***

The First Congregational Parish, Unitarian on the Common in Petersham, MA will be hosting a four-part "Quabbin's Got Talent" Coffee House series starting Saturday, February 2nd at 6:30 pm in the Davis Memorial Hall located behind the church. The talent contest is open to all ages, both individuals and groups, in all categories.

Throughout the series, the competition will be open to the first ten individuals or groups that sign up.

Performances will be limited from three to five minutes each. Following an initial judging, three finalists will be chosen and asked to perform one more time to determine the top prize winners. Cash and other prizes will be awarded. According to the rules, competitors can re-enter for any or all of the remaining coffee houses in the series, except for 1<sup>st</sup> prize winners who will be excluded.

The "Quabbin's Got Talent" Coffee House is free of charge and open to the public, though donations will be gratefully accepted. *Beverages and snacks will be available for purchase. Proceeds will benefit the Parsonage Renovation Fund.* Additional dates scheduled include Saturdays, March 9<sup>th</sup>, April 6<sup>th</sup> and May 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm.

*"This program is sponsored by the First Congregational Church, Unitarian in Petersham and a grant from the Petersham Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency."*

For further information, or to volunteer as a judge or provide prizes for the event, contact Genevieve Fraser at [\(978\) 544-1872](tel:(978)544-1872), or email [FraserGenevieve@gmail.com](mailto:FraserGenevieve@gmail.com)



## **CHOCOLATE AUCTION 2013**

Once again we will have our Chocolate Auction in February. This fun and mouth-watering event will be held on Sunday the 10th at 11:30 a.m. with Chip Bull as our auctioneer. This year the auction will be in the church dining room.

The Chocolate Auction, started several years ago by Rev. John Pastor, has grown in participation and innovative items since that time. We have had theme baskets, cookbooks, movies, and all kinds of chocolate concoctions. It's great to watch the bidding rivalry going on and then get to enjoy, and in some cases share, some great treats.

Please think of what you can offer for the auction and come have a great time. As this is just 4 days before St. Valentine's Day you may be able to find a special treat for a special someone.

**Saturday, Feb. 9**

**Valentine's Dance**

**Waltzes & Reels ~ Two Sides of Love**

**7 - 10 pm**

**Don't miss terrific music by Joy After Sorrow**

**with contra dances taught and called by Tim Van Egmond**

**At a great dance hall!**

**Petersham Town Hall**

**1 South Main Street on Petersham Common**

**Suggested donation: \$5/adults.**

**Kids & Seniors on the house**

## **In Memory of Rev. Arthur W. Perkins**

Heinrich Christensen, Music Director at King's Chapel in Boston, commissioned a piece in memory of Rev. Arthur W. Perkins. The piece composed by Graham Gordon Ramsey is titled "Mysteri Mirabilium" and was performed at King's Chapel on January 27th with the composer and the Perkins family present. Arthur grew up in King's Chapel and played the organ and piano for Sunday School when he was in his early teens. He preached at King's Chapel in 1973 while attending seminary with his parents present. His father, Palfrey Perkins, was Minister from 1933 to 1955 and Minister Emeritus until his death in 1976.

## **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**

**A reminder to those who use the church facilities to make sure that the doors are closed tightly and locked when you leave.**



### **YOGA WITH LINDA**

Yoga and Chair Yoga will take a break for the winter. Classes will resume in the spring.  
Stay warm!

Linda

### **Newsletter**

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

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

Now that we are well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we would like to consider a more cost efficient and energy-saving method of delivering our monthly newsletter to all of you.

If you have email, and if you would prefer, we would like to send you newsletters electronically. Please send your email address to [firstparishnt@verizon.net](mailto:firstparishnt@verizon.net) and we will put you on our electronic mailing list. We would appreciate an email address update, from those of you who had been getting the newsletter electronically, to make sure that we have current email addresses.