
the WINDOW

Arlington Street Church, *Unitarian Universalist*

March – May, 2006, Vol. 5, No. 3

The Ripening Place

REV. KIM K. CRAWFORD HARVIE, SENIOR MINISTER

Dear Friends,

I am told that there is a belief, among Tibetan Buddhists, that there are places on earth where souls are magnified, which is to say that people in these places—translated, roughly, as “ripening places”—are living richly spiritual and deeply purposeful lives.

There is a concentration of power in these ripening places, a transforming power for good. The Tibetans say that when many people gather there, drawn by the power, great things can happen. I am told that Arlington Street Church is such a place.

Over the past 276 years, all kinds of people have made their way through the doors to take a place in our congregation. Some stayed just for a moment; some for a good, long time. In my relatively short years here—a mere 17 and counting!—I’ve been told a lot of things by people who fancied themselves sages or seers; some have been in their right mind, some in their right brain ... and some have not. But who am I to say? Who am I to comment on the truth of Arlington Street as a ripening place?

What if it’s true?

I’m reminded of a wonderful story, a long story that deserves a good telling sometime. For now,

an abbreviated version:

Four elderly monks and their abbot lived in a monastery in the woods. Times were hard; they were the last of their order, and this troubled them greatly. Nearby, the old rabbi from the neighboring village frequented a small hermitage, where he came to rest, reflect,



and pray. One day, it occurred to the abbot to seek advice from the rabbi, although the two men had never met.

And so, painstakingly, he made his way through the woods. The rabbi greeted the abbot warmly, but, when the abbot explained the purpose of his visit, the rabbi could only commiserate. Things were also bad at the synagogue, he said; the spirit had gone out of the people.

The two old men grieved together, and read parts of the Torah, and spoke of many things. At the

close of their visit, they embraced. “It has been a wonderful thing that we should finally meet after all these years,” said the abbot, “but I have still failed in my purpose in coming here today. Is there no piece of advice you can give me that would help me to save my dying order?”

Sadly, the rabbi shook his head. “No,” he said, “I have no advice to give you. The only thing I can tell you is that one of you is the messiah.”

Mystified, the abbot returned to his monastery and shared the strange and wondrous news. In the days and weeks and

months that followed, each of the old monks pondered its possible significance. Could the rabbi possibly have meant the abbot? Yes ... or, then again, could it be Brother Thomas? Certainly he couldn’t have been speaking of Brother Eldred. But then again.... And what about Brother Phillip? Maybe Brother Phillip is the messiah. Of

see *Ripening* on p. 12



ARLINGTON
STREET CHURCH
Unitarian Universalist

The Church Lady

EMILY DUNN, PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE

When the Prudential Committee holds its monthly meetings we come together to commit to the work of the church. We start by lighting our chalice with a reading by a committee member and then a “centering” by Rev. Kim K. Crawford Harvie. We each “check-in” with the group: as we share a piece of our personal lives we learn about each other in ways that help us work together in shaping the life of the church. We listen to Kim’s report on her activities during the past month as well as reflecting on her vision and hopes for our congregation. Peter Johnston informs us of his work in managing the administrative operations of an active church. Our new treasurer, Richard Pooler, informs us of ASC’s finances so that we can make “prudent” (as in *Prudential*) observations regarding our income and expenditures.

We have had ongoing discussions about the MBTA project (the start of which is already here) and how it will affect our church life and our building. An architectural firm delved (literally) into the church’s foundation and found it in better shape than we had imagined, which is wonderful news. Liz Regan has investigated the value of our Tiffany windows and as she eloquently stated: “we are stewards of these priceless works of art.” We are receiving expert advice on how to protect them during this construction period.

There are always details

around church life that need our attention, and we attend to these with diligence. But the role of the Prudential Committee is larger than this, of course. We are trying to pursue the goals of the long range planning committee. This particularly includes growth in membership numbers, but also facilitat-



ing another kind of growth in our current members, through encouraging participation in spiritual passions, in social justice work, in our new *Connections Groups* (ASC’s small group ministry), in religious education, and in committee memberships.

Our lifespan religious educator, Vera O’Brien, is looking at

creative ways to attract new families with children. We need to continue our efforts to nourish and welcome our children.

At any given meeting when all the reports are heard and acted upon, we reflect further on how to strengthen our religious community. We have particularly focused on ways to develop leadership skills in ourselves and to look at possibilities of mentoring others to become leaders. Kim has been particularly helpful to us in sharing what she has

learned from the many books she has studied on leadership.

Charlene Galarneau recently asked her fellow Prudential Committee members to respond to the statement: Being a member of Arlington Street Church has given me....

“wonderful ministers and min-

see *Church Lady* on p. 12

Mini Financial Update

Total Pledges To Covenant 2005 – 2006: **\$273,056**

Payments Received Through February 1st, 2006: **\$160,662** (59%)

Total Operating Income Through November 1st, 2005: **\$360,730**

Total Operating Expenses Through November 1st, 2005: **\$345,848**

Covenant Renewal 2006: March 26th

PAUL DAKIN, CHAIR, COVENANT RENEWAL COMMITTEE

As winter softens out into spring, mark your calendars for Covenant Renewal Sunday on March 26th! This annual ritual of faith and commitment is one of the most vital worship experiences of the Church year. Placing our pledges together into the ASC Ark of the Covenant, and celebrating afterward over brunch, we have raised more than two-thirds of ASC's total pledge goal on Covenant Sunday alone. As you can see, pledges and their payment make up over 30% of our annual budget for staff, building expenses, music, children's programming, and all the rest. And we've been thinking with even bigger minds and hearts lately... continue reading for an explanation of how Gandhi's quote below relates to Covenant Renewal 2006.

For those new to ASC, Covenant Renewal is our annual process in which all ASC mem-



bers and friends make financial pledges and offer volunteer service for the coming Church year (July 2006 to June 2007). By pledging, members also renew our ASC membership each year. The success of Covenant Renewal on March 26th tells us whether next year at ASC will be

a strong one.

2005's Covenant Renewal was another strong step upward for our congregation. Our pledges, in total, increased 8% to \$275,000

(from \$254,000 in 2005, and \$212,000 in 2004) Due to our generosity of commitment, ASC reached a historic milestone this year: finally, we are now paying our entire staff 100% of fair compensation per guidelines set by the UUA! Hallelujah! This has been a cherished goal of many ASCers for a long time, and we are deeply pleased to have reached it. We now hold two major goals as we look forward to Covenant 2006.

The first goal of this year's pledges is simply to anchor and make permanent our commitment to 100% Fair Compensation for our beloved ASC staff, and to prove that the past two

**We must be the change
we wish to see
in the world.**

MAHATMA GANDHI

years' generosity in pledging has not been a fluke. I have absolute faith we can and will achieve this!

The second goal is a new and exciting one for ASC. Now that we have reached an important measure of social justice at home with fair compensation, Rev. Kim and several of us have begun to buzz with energy about the idea of becoming a more intentionally philanthropic congregation. Philanthropy, the root of the word, means "love of humankind." Far more encompassing than only money, a philanthropic church is one that goes beyond spending 100% of its resources on internal needs, and commits a piece of its congregation's volunteer energy, love, financial and human capital in a focused way to the outside world around us. Returning to the quote from Gandhi, we at ASC hold much in our hearts for the changes we

wish to see in the world. What if we—together as a congregation—were to take a more fully realized step in this direction, doing something significant each year to **BE** the change we wish to see in the world? The ASC leadership is holding forums and ongoing dialogue now about the what-when-and-how of this goal, and your participation is most encouraged! The bottom line here is that we're feeling an increasing sureness that ASC wants, and is ready, to take a step in this inspiring direction.

So please begin thinking now about your pledge for the coming year at ASC, and help us make Covenant Renewal 2006 a solid and exciting testament to our generous spirits. Take a look at these charts and consider your own part in helping to build the coming ASC year. The Covenant pledge forms will also feature a brochure giving more detail on volunteer opportuni-

ties across the ASC community. Last year, more than 80% of us pledged volunteer service on our cards in addition to our financial pledges! As you read through this issue of **THE WINDOW**, the forthcoming Covenant 2006 Brochure, and upcoming issues of InsideASC, consider what parts of ASC most interest you, and where you'd like to be involved in the year ahead.

Please plan now to be a part of **Covenant Renewal Sunday on March 26th**!

If you have any questions about Covenant Renewal, please speak with me (Paul Dakin at covenant@ASCBoston.org or 617-279-3538) or Rev. Kim K. Crawford Harvie, or Congregational Administrator Peter Johnston, or any member of the ASC staff. Our generous support, both volunteer and financial, is what re-creates Arlington Street Church each year. Many, many thanks to each of you! ☺

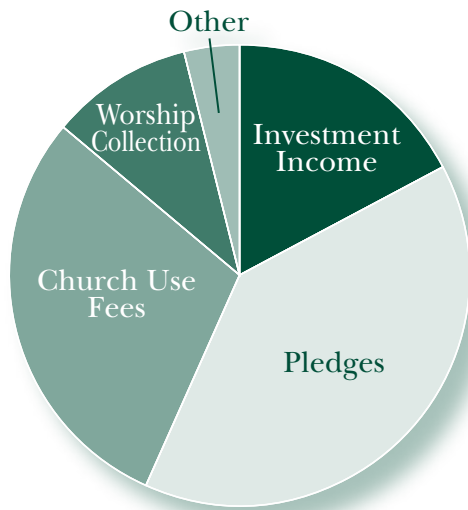
Covenant Renewal

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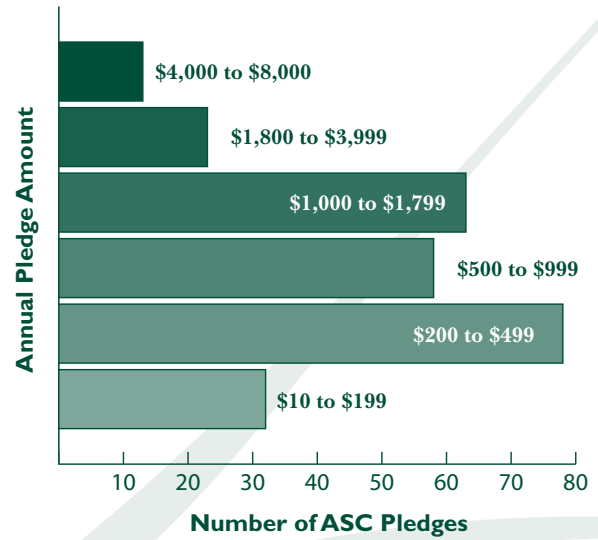


ARLINGTON
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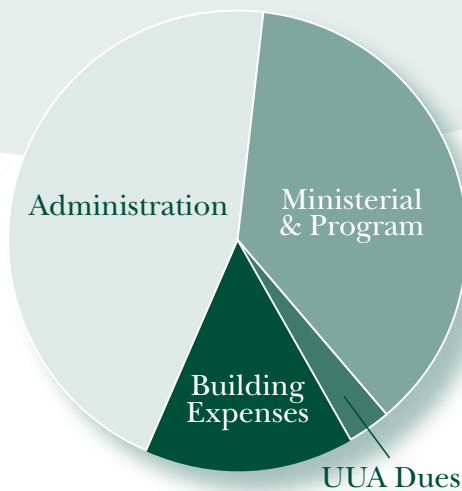
FY2005 Income Sources



FY2006 Pledge Amount Distribution



FY2005 Expenses



Find Yourself!

INCOME	2.5%	5%	10%
\$10,000	\$250	\$500	\$1,000
\$20,000	\$500	\$1,000	\$2,000
\$30,000	\$750	\$1,500	\$3,000
\$40,000	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$4,000
\$50,000	\$1,250	\$2,500	\$5,000
\$60,000	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$6,000
\$70,000	\$1,750	\$3,500	\$7,000
\$80,000	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$8,000
\$90,000	\$2,250	\$4,500	\$9,000
\$100,000	\$2,500	\$5,000	\$10,000

Note: The guideline of a quarter-tithe (2.5%) assumes we are also sharing our financial resources with Uncle Sam and worthy charities in addition to Arlington Street Church.

Worship Notes

FROM THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Congregational Safety

A recent experience of a distraught guest commandeering the pulpit has prompted many to write or speak to the committee with questions about congregational safety. Arlington Street Church remains committed to providing a safe spiritual home for our community. What is congregational safety? It's the promotion of "right relations" between parishioner and parishioner, clergy/staff and parishioners, and between guests and parishioners.

With other religious organizations experiencing difficulty in this area, the Unitarian Universalist Association is working on a denomination-wide Congregational Safety initiative. At ASC, our Congregational Safety Committee (a group made up of lay mental health professionals, staff, and other laypersons) stands by every Sunday and throughout the year to make sure our spiritual home remains a haven.

Wednesday Gathering

GINNY MERRITT

I'm thrilled by the warmth and camaraderie I could share with the twenty-five of you who came to our first mid-week



evening service, the Wednesday Gathering. From Joe Della Penna's graceful accompaniment to Matt Meyer's soulful drumming to eating with folks in the kitchen, I am enriched by this expression of our vital community.

For those of you who haven't heard, the Wednesday Gathering is an opportunity to recharge your spiritual batteries at mid-week, providing opportunities for singing, reflecting, and feeding your soul.

For the remainder of this church year, Gathering will be

held on the first Wednesday of every month in the Hunnewell Chapel. Our remaining dates are March 1st, April 5th, May 3rd, and June 7th, 2006.

Doors open upstairs at 351 Boylston Street at 6:00 PM; Service 6:30 – 7:15 PM. Bring a meal or snack if you choose; light refreshments to follow service. I look forward to sharing these evenings of worship and breaking bread with all of you. ☺

Welcoming the Guests

ALISON GREEN WILL, MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP COORDINATOR

During this past Winter, Kim and I, along with some folks from the Membership Committee, attended a program led by the Mass Bay District executive, Rev. Teresa Cooley on growing congregations. Terasa opened her remarks with some statistics about how Unitarian Universalist congregations are growing compared with other denominations. Some of us were surprised to learn that most liberal Christian denominations are in a steep decline. Unitarian Universalism has held steady over the past decade or so at about 250,000 members, but compared with population growth over the same period, our “market share” has dwindled. We represent a tiny fraction of the US population, a percentage so small we might as well be a rounding error! Rev. John Shelby Spong has a well-known book entitled *Why Christianity Must Grow or Die*, an analogous title about our faith might read, *Why Unitarian Universalism Must Grow or Become Irrelevant*.



The good news is that Arlington Street Church already has many of the characteristics shared by most growing congregations. We are spiritually vital. We are a moral beacon in the community. We have consis-

tently high-quality worship. Our programming has breadth and depth. But we could do a lot more toward making our visitors feel welcome. We could think of it this way: if ASC is our spiritual home, when guests come to call, it is only common courtesy to be hospitable. Shall I say it again? If ASC is our spiritual home, then we are the hosts, with all that title implies.

Often people tell me that

they don't know what to say when talking to a newcomer. Rev. Teresa pointed out at the growth event last week that we really don't need to say much—mostly we need to listen. “What brought you to ASC?” is often enough. Listen to your guest's answer and let them tell you what they're looking for, and what they've already found with us.

We are well-known in the denomination, an historic congregation often called “The Mother Church.” We attract visitors from all over. I have this fantasy that we will

also gain a reputation as one of the friendliest congregations. What would that look like? What would we have to do? Thank you for helping us get there. ☺

In faith,

Alison Green Will,
Membership and Leadership
Coordinator

Worship Highlights: Spring 2006

Wednesday, March 1st, 2006

Featuring

Deedee Agee, writer

Sunday, March 5th, 2006

Open House Sunday

Preaching

Rev. Kim K. Crawford Harvie

Music

Laudate coeli Dominum,
Johann Adolf Hasse

Sunday, March 12th, 2006

Preaching

Rev. Kim K. Crawford Harvie

Music

Guantanamo, *José Fernandez*,
arr. *Gene Glickman*

Sunday, March 19th, 2006

Preaching

Paul Sprecher, Ministerial Intern

Music

Selections from *All-Night Vigil*,
Rachmaninoff with the Boston
Choral Ensemble

Sunday, March 26th, 2006

Covenant Sunday

Preaching

Rev. Kim K. Crawford Harvie

Music

O-re-mi, *Nigerian song*,
arr. *Mike Brewer*

Sunday, April 2nd, 2006

Preaching

Rev. Kim K. Crawford Harvie

Music

Peccantem me quotidie,
Cristobal de Morales

Wednesday, April 5th, 2006

Featuring

TBA

Sunday, April 9th, 2006

Preaching

Rev. Kim K. Crawford Harvie

Music

O sacrum convivium!, *Olivier
Messiaen*

Sunday, April 16th, 2006

Easter Sunday

Preaching

Rev. Kim K. Crawford Harvie

Music

Easter Anthem, *William Billings*

Sunday, April 23rd, 2006

Earth Day Sunday

Preaching

Paul Sprecher, Ministerial Intern

Music

The Yale Russian Chorus
Alumni Group: *Fire and Soul*

Sunday, April 30th, 2006

Preaching

Rev. Kim K. Crawford Harvie

Music

Who Will Remember?, *David
York* and *Judith Barrington*

Wednesday, May 3rd, 2006

Featuring

TBA

Sunday, May 7th, 2006

Preaching

Rev. Kim K. Crawford Harvie

Music

Even When God is Silent,
Michael Horvit

Sunday, May 14th, 2006

Preaching

Rev. Kim K. Crawford Harvie

Music

The Boston Choral Ensemble
with selections from their
upcoming program of new music

Sunday, May 21st, 2006

Preaching

Rev. Kim K. Crawford Harvie

Music

Choir Sunday

Sunday, May 28th, 2006

Preaching

Paul Sprecher, Ministerial Intern

Music

guest musician, TBA



music@ASC

The Music@ASC Concert Series – Events for Spring, 2006

Visit www.ASCBoston.org/music/series05_06.html for the latest details



Gail Archer, Organist

Sunday, March 5th, 2:00 PM

ASC is excited to welcome Gail Archer to our sanctuary. Ms. Archer is an international concert organist, lecturer, and recording artist whose solo debut CD *The Orpheus of Amsterdam: Sweelinck and his Pupils* (CACD 88043), recorded on the Fisk organ at Wellesley College, was recently released by London's Cala Records. A live concert recording made at the Organalia Festival in Turin, Italy was also released in 2005. Her modern edition and translation of *Cantate, ariete a una, due, et tre voci* Op. 3 by the seventeenth century Venetian composer Barbara Strozzi has been published in A-R Editions Recent Researches series. ⊕

Fire & Soul: Yale Russian Chorus Alumni Group

Sunday, April 23rd, 3:00 PM

The acclaimed Yale Russian Chorus Alumni Group will present a Russian Easter program of irresistible dance tunes, haunting ballads, and glorious Orthodox liturgical music at Arlington Street Church.

Bruce Lieberman and Daniel S. Godfrey will direct the peerless 45-member unaccompanied men's choir, founded at Yale in 1953 by Denis Mickiewicz.

A suite of Easter chants will include spectacular traditional Russian-style bell-ringing by the church's own Rev. George G. Whitehouse. The Spring centerpiece of Music@ASC, this concert is not to be missed. ⊕

Rodger Vine, Pianist

Sunday, May 21st, 2:00 PM

ASC's own Rodger Vine presents this short recital for the ASC community. The intimate half-hour event will take place in ASC's Hunnewell Chapel.

On the program, Rodger has programmed music from different parts of the globe, including America, Germany, Spain, Russia, Poland, England, and Taiwan. There will be several "Boston premieres" in the program, and several transcriptions by pianist-composer Earl Wild. The program will also include short pieces on the lighter side, including some with very familiar tunes. ⊕



Being a Part of the Choir

VOICES OF ASC CHOIR MEMBERS

EDITED BY MIGUEL FELIPE, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

In this third in a series, I offer voices of ASC's choir. As one of the most active areas of the church community, our group of 30 – 40 dedicated musicians—non-music-reading amateurs—conservatory-trained professionals—gathers every Thursday and Sunday for hard work and lots of fun. We are always open to new members and hope, over the coming year, to welcome even more folks interested in having lots of fun while learning and serving the ASC community!

In response to a set of questions asked in June of 2005, choir members have shared their thoughts on the choir experience so you can get an idea of the variety of backgrounds and experiences.

What does the choir offer the congregation?

“The choir offers the congregation leadership and the chance to participate, even when one thinks one cannot sing.”

“The choir gives the congregation a chance to relax and listen, or meditate or be inspired or just zone out for a while.”

“I think the choir offers a moment for a period of meditation and reflection, especially during the anthem, to the services as well as adding some variety. Personally any church service without music, to me is too dull and lacking.”

“We offer a musical break in the service and an opportunity to hear different kinds of music?”

“The choir offers a diversity of worship, and it fills that empty hollow inside where some of us wait for the divine mystery to enter. The choir is a visible symbol of community, and provides continuity for its members, and leadership to those who seek a steadfast presence among church goers. The choir provides music that is beautiful, meaningful, stirring, and often life changing.”

“I believe the choir offers hard work, dedication, and a desire for excellence that allows the congregation to experience music that is performed in an earnest and heartfelt manner.”

“I think we offer [the congregation] a number of things, depending on the music—a chance to meditate, support in grieving, a joyful exuberance, spiritual connection. Many respond emotionally to music in a way they can't always respond to spoken words in the rest of the service. It's a chance for the congregation to just sit back and soak in the feeling (and hopefully no wrong notes).”

“The choir offers what all our *Connections Groups* offer: a small community with a shared vision within a larger congregation with a

global vision. The choir uniquely offers context for the service. We support and reinforce the minister's message. We are the opportunity to “think about it.” And we offer exposure to a wide variety of music that the congregation may not have the opportunity to hear elsewhere.”

“The choir offers the congregation a moment for reflection and a chance to relax. The choir also makes them aware of different styles of music that they might not otherwise get to hear.”

“Offers another level of spirituality; music is often more accessible for people to explore their relationship with the transcendent and the divine, to be in the present moment and to be reminded of an evanescent and ever-changing experience with life.”

In the next edition of THE WINDOW we conclude this series. There, choir members will share their thoughts on why you should join the choir!

If you have any questions about music at ASC, contact Miguel Felipe, Director of Music, at MFelipe@ASCBoston.org, or show up to choir at 7:00 PM in the Clarke Room on a Thursday night! ☪



ASC to Ordain Roger Peltier, April 30th

PHYLLIS RICKTER, CHAIR, UU AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Recently the UUA sent the obituary of the Rev. Frank Schulman. I was struck by the fact that the first line of this obituary read: "Ordained in the Arlington Street Church, Boston in 1954." After years of service to our religious movement in congregations all over the country, his ordination was the first fact of importance as we recalled his life. Ordination is a very important ritual.

Arlington Street Church will have the honor and privilege of ordaining our own Roger Peltier into the Unitarian Universalist ministry on April 30. Ordination, the formal conferring of ministerial authority for our clergy, is a responsibility valued by Unitarian Universalist congregations. In Unitarian Universalism it is the congregation which grants this authority, not a seminary, the UUA, or any other body.

Preparation for our ministry is a long and arduous process. After completing the Master of Divinity degree and practicing the role of hospital chaplain during their Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), the candidate serves a congregation as Intern Minister. Paul Sprecher is this year's intern at ASC.

During this time the candidate appears before the Min-

isterial Fellowship Committee (MFC), the UUA's credentialing body, for its approval. After ordination by a congregation, the candidate is welcomed into UUA fellowship at the Service of the Living Tradition at General Assembly the following year. We all celebrate their calling and future service.

Early in this training a ministerial candidate must be sponsored by a congregation. Our congregation has developed a process for candidates to work with a small committee of lay people who advise, affirm, and follow the candidate until ordination. We listen to their sermons and coach them for their appearance at the MFC.

Since 1989 Arlington Street Church has sponsored nine students and ordained seven. Two were ordained in the congregations they served as interns. Now Heather Janules is serving as Assistant Minister at Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church in Bethesda, Maryland. Myke Johnson was called this year to the Allen Street UU Church in Portland, Maine. She reports she is enjoying having Carol Strecker as a close colleague down Route One in Kennebunk. We ordained Carol and she served here as Associate Minister before going on to

Kennebunk. Laurie Auffant recently served the Follen Church in Lexington, Massachusetts and is currently in the search process. Cathy Surack and Marshall Hawkins are both chaplains in local hospitals. Tim Kutzmark returned recently to this area as minister at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Reading. Marta Valentin Chase, ordained here in 2005, was called to the First Unitarian Universalist Church of New Orleans. She arrived there just before Hurricane Katrina destroyed the historic building and dispersed its people all over the nation. Marta has faced an enormous challenge and began meeting her congregation by telephone when she had been evacuated to Dallas. We hold her and her congregation in our thoughts and prayers.

We still have two ministerial students being sponsored by Arlington Street Church. They are Intern Ministers in local churches, Marjorie Matty in Wellesley Hills and Darrick Jackson in Watertown.

Please plan to join us on Sunday afternoon, April 30th, to play your part in sending Roger Peltier, another member of Arlington Street Church, into the future as an ordained minister. ☉

Church Lady, continued from p. 2

istry. The opportunity to join with others to attempt to repair the injustices of our community and our world.”

“a stronger immune system, leadership skills, and patience for chaos.”

“great friends, fun times, more trust in people...and has connected me to a more diverse community than I interact with in the rest of my life.”

“help in deepening my love and understanding of my connection to all; a commitment and community that strengthens my soul.”

“a fantastic spiritual family. It has also given me the opportunity to continue my spiritual growth. As a member I have had the opportunity to serve on many committees, which has led to meeting lots of people and forming many strong friendships.”

The above quotes are committee members’ responses in completing that statement.

Our co-chair, Sherene Aram, writes that her motivation to join the Pru is that “I really care about ASC and I have something to offer. I feel passionately that the existence of ASC as both a church and a community makes a major difference in many lives, both internally to members and friends and in the wider world. Because of that passion, I want to be able to do what I can to help Arlington Street Church remain a vital, thriving organization. I think that each member of our community has unique gifts and perspectives to offer and that we all benefit when we work together.”

So we forge ahead, with ex-

citement for all that the future holds, to do the work of this community we cherish. Our hope is for all who walk through our doors to experience welcoming hands, spiritual nourishment, and to join us as we seek to uphold and promote our



Ripening, continued from p. 1

course the rabbi didn’t mean me. He couldn’t possibly have meant me. But just suppose....

As they contemplated in this manner, the elderly brothers began to treat each other with extraordinary respect, and kindness, and love, on the off-chance that one of them might be the messiah. And, on the off, off-chance that, in fact, he was the messiah, each man began to feel quite differently about himself.

For many years, neighboring villagers had come to picnic on the grounds of the monastery. Now, when they came, they sensed that something was different. The monastery radiated an atmosphere of respect, and kindness, and love. There was an aura, a kind of magic surrounding the old monks. Hardly knowing why, the villagers came more frequently, not just to picnic, but to worship in the ancient chapel. They brought

family and friends from other villages, and, eventually, some of the younger men who visited began to speak with the old monks about the possibility of joining them.

And so it came to pass that, within a few years, the monas-

tery had once again become a thriving order, all thanks to the rabbi’s gift. (Chassid, as told by Christina Feldman and Jack Kornfield, *Stories of the Spirit, Stories of the Heart*)

What if it’s true?

Thich Nhat Hanh once said that the messiah is not a person. The messiah, he said, is a community: a community that is manifesting on the planet, right now. Why wouldn’t we act as if it’s true? Why wouldn’t we act as if it’s ASC, it’s we, it’s each and every one of us? Just suppose....

Happy spring, dear friends. May you join in the spiritual planting in this season, that we might all enjoy the fruits of the ripening place. ⊕

Faithfully yours, with love,

Rev. Kim K. Crawford Harvie,
Senior Minister

Social Action Update

LAURA PATTISON, CO-CHAIR,
SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Great things are happening at ASC! These days, it can be really hard to decide what to do between 12:30 and 3:00 PM!

Should I go to a film in the “Ministry for the Earth” series (cosponsored by the Green Sanctuary Committee and the Social Action Committee) or should I go to something else equally interesting? Could be a “Spiritual Passions” where a new discussion of ways for ASC members to “give back” (time, money, skills!) is occurring. Could be a Corporation meeting or another gathering through this year where the same thing is discussed. One of the films in the Green series is about food production in this country and the values we express by eating (*The Future of Food*), but one could also attend a “Spiritual Passions” where Marilyn Castriotta discusses this topic from another angle. There’s a great confluence occurring of increasing opportunities to learn about our world, talk about it and work to make change.

The Social Action Committee offers these specific possibilities: wake up early on the first Sunday of each month and meet in the Clarke Room (9:30 AM) to discuss various and sundry important issues of the day. Come to the Social Action moral values discussions a week or two after each Green film, and learn to articulate progressive values, disagree constructively and take action. Come to a showing of *The Revolution will not be Televised* about Chavez in Venezuela

(March 9th) or our *Awaking the Dreamer* event (www.pachamama.org on March 16th). Bring your materials to the Social Action table for distribution and while you’re there, sign a letter or petition or suggest one of your own.

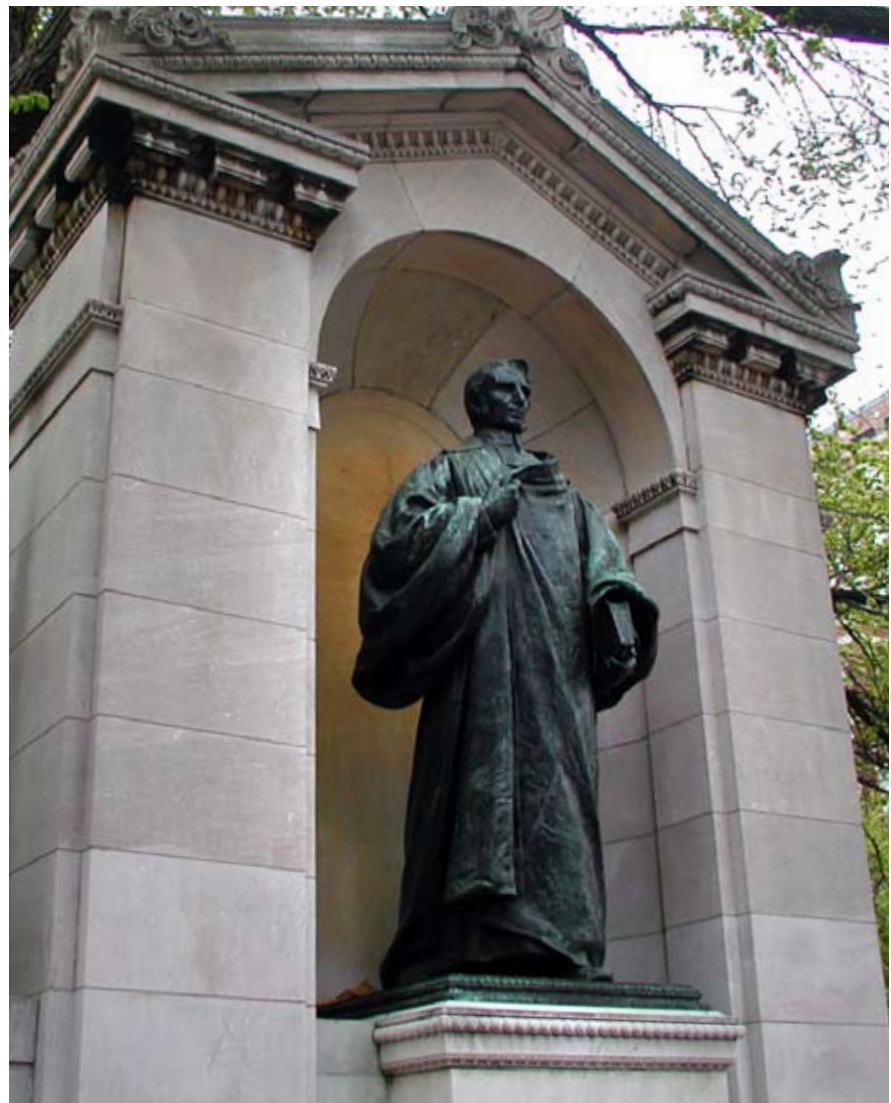
Look for details in Inside weekly about all the above or send an email to SocialAction@ASCBoston.org to be put on either a committee list or an announcement list. And know that if you have a social concern, you can lift your voice at ASC and most likely someone will join in. You just have to take the first step. ☺

Voting Irregularity

HELENI THAYER

Massachusetts is looking at three voting options for people with disabilities. Two are electronic voting machines called DREs and the third is a ballot marker. The DREs are the Diebold TSx and The Hart Intercivic E-Slate. The ballot marker is the AutoMARK.

There are important security and accessibility differences between DREs and ballot markers. Ballot markers do not store or tally votes but simply mark a paper ballot that can then be



easily verified by the voter and counted in the normal way. They are transparent and under the control of the voter. Ballot markers include the AutoMARK which has highly convenient interfaces to assist people with disabilities and the non-electronic paper booklet called the Vote-PAD that amazingly can be hand marked by a wide range of disabled voters.

DREs are by their nature less secure and more vulnerable to tampering than ballot markers. They are frequently also less accessible not by their nature but mostly because their manufacturers have not developed their systems with due diligence and sensitivity to the disabled community.

The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) requires accessible voting equipment be in place for 2006 elections. Although HAVA specifically allows “other accessible voting systems,” many states are bringing DREs into every precinct in their state, even when the precincts previously have used paper ballots for voting. These machines (many still without an audit trail) will be available for use by able bodied voters in those precincts, thus compromising election integrity in the entire country.

Please inform yourself by accessing the web sites www.votersunite.org and www.wheresthepaper.org and work to be sure that Massachusetts chooses the AutoMARK rather than a DRE and that we keep DREs out of this state. We have the opportunity to keep Massachusetts a fully paper ballot state and we can speak out to do that. The highest quality elec-



tion document, the ballot most suitable for audits and recounts, is one directly hand marked by the voter. Where exceptions must be made for people with disabilities, ballot markers still make DREs unnecessary.

A number of small towns in Western MA have been very upset at being asked to bring ANY voting machine into their towns. Some are very tiny with very tiny budgets. Monroe had a turnout of only 35 (63 voters registered) in the presidential election of 2004. Hawley had a turnout of 118 with 250 voters registered. Cheshire Town Hall doesn't even have electricity. The Vote-PAD, not currently approved in Massachusetts, would be much

less burdensome financially and timewise, especially for towns with hand counted paper ballots and no electronic equipment. There is a good case to be made for urging the Secretary of State to approve it.

Please speak to Heleni Thayre or e-mail SocialAction@ASCBoston.org if you need more information. ☺



Good Summer News for Bi and Gay Men

Each summer, about 150 men form a week-long community of acceptance and affirmation that could be a turning point for you or a Gay/Bi man you know. The GAYLA Conference, now in its 28th year, is a week in July where Gay/Bi men find a safe, fun-filled, affirming intentional community at the Ferry Beach UUA retreat facility on the southern coast of Maine near Saco.

GAYLA coordinators report that the experience offers celebration, discovery, and renewal for Gay/Bi men who are single, partnered, younger, older, “out”, not “out,” or exploring. Activities (all are optional) include elements of play, laughter, listening, sharing, learning, reflecting, dancing, resting, and making friends.

Feel free to talk with past ASC attendees including Kevin Tyrrell, Paul Dakin, Philip Roberts, and Joel Light (piikoi@comcast.net, 617-354-1123).

GAYLA 2006 will be July 15th

– 22nd with the theme “Being Your Whole Self: Body, Mind, and Spirit.” Registration is now open, but space is limited (single fee includes meals & lodging.) To register, or for more information, visit www.gayla.org or contact Ferry Beach by phone at 207-284-8612. ☎

Ministry for the Earth Film Series

GREEN SANCTUARY COMMITTEE/
SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

What’s so bad about vinyl siding? Does a single corporation already dictate what you feed your family? Can a cola company take over a water supply? Did your trip to church on Sunday really impact the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge?

Not quite sure how to answer? Check out “Ministry for the Earth Film Series,” which is being co-sponsored by the Green Sanctuary and Social Action committees. The films will empower you with knowledge and the enlightening discussions afterward will leave you



with sensible solutions to life’s complex questions.

The documentaries will be shown in the Clarke Room from 1:00 – 3:00 PM. The series, which began in January and continues through June, features the following films:

March 12th – *Thirst*, Is water a human right for all people, or is it a commodity to be bought, sold, and traded in a global marketplace?

April 23 – *The Lorax*, An animated film by Dr. Seuss for adults and children alike warns us of the dangers of clear-cutting, pollution, and disregard for the Earth’s environment.

May 7 – *Oil on Ice*, A documentary connecting the fate of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to the decisions America makes about energy policy and transportation choices.

June 4 – *Blue Vinyl*, With humor and a piece of vinyl siding firmly in hand, filmmaker Judith Helfand sets out in search of the truth about PVC, America’s most popular plastic.

Refreshments will be available. The film viewings are free and open to the public. To learn more, go to www.ASCBoston.org/films. ☎



the WINDOW



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Policy for Submission

Calendar items may be submitted with title, date/time, and 50 word description. **Open submissions** of no more than 400 words may be submitted on any topic. **Committee reports** are encouraged. No submission will be accepted by telephone. Materials must be legible, signed, and *fully composed* and may be edited. Please note that we only publish submissions related to ASC events or the wider UUA community.

Submission Deadline and Method

Entries should be sent as Word® documents to Window@ASCBoston.org by **5:00 PM, Friday, May 5th, 2006** for inclusions in Vol. 5, No. 4, June – August, 2006.

Subscriptions

To add/remove your name from **THE WINDOW** mailing list, please contact Corey Spence, administrative assistant, in the Church Office at office@ASCBoston.org.

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