



On Call

I have always been touched by Rev. Robert Weston's meditation on the New Year, and pass it along to you in love, affection, and in that spirit of the "perfect light" the three Magi traveled towards—which, of course, is in fact residing **within** each of us.

A year is gone. There were other years,
And some began with a birthday
And some with a death;
Some began with a song and others with a lament,
But today I start another year, whatever the month or seasons;
It is what lies before me that concerns me now.

There will be decisions and tasks;
There will be drudgery, achievement and defeat.
There will be joy and grief,
All the raw stuff of experience
Waiting for me to shape, to fashion as I will,
And it will never become just what I planned.

However it may appear to others
I can turn it to knowledge and wisdom
Or folly.
If it be hard, I can make of it strength.
Someone might say, "It all depends on what the year
May bring,"
But what I make of it depends on me.

Let us never forget, or forsake, that personal responsibility lies at the heart of all the days to come—the "raw stuff of experience."
Happy New Year!

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Volume 1, Issue 1

January 4—18, 2008

Services

January 6, 2008

"Question Box"

Please email your questions
for Revs.

Kendrick and Lloyd to Joan
at

Joan@firstchurchboston.org

January 13, 2008

*"A Common Word
Among Us"*

Rev. Stephen Kendrick

January 20, 2008

Rebekah Ingram
Marshall Hughes, soloist

January 21, 2007

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Church Office closed
Marshall Hughes Concert
at 3:00 pm

Sunday morning worship
services are broadcast live
at 11:00 am every Sunday
on WERS 88.9 FM.
Listen if you can't be
here!



R.E. Views:
Director of Religious Education,
Ruth Owen

**You Don't Even Have to
 Leave Home . . .
 To Join Our New,
 Online Parenting
 Group**

So, now the holidays are over and winter has set in, in earnest, and you would like to do something for yourself, but you don't want to bother with babysitters and nap schedules, parking or snowstorms. Whether you are a new parent, an old hand, a parent of adult children, a grandparent or an interested aunt, if you are engaged with the care and nurture of the next generation, our new, online parenting group is for you! We will have one meeting (before church on January 27), one book, **At Work in Life's Garden: Writers on the Spiritual Adventure of Parenting** by Sarah Conover, and weekly, online discussions of topics relating to all aspects of parenting.

The book is a series of vivid personal essays by an amazing, ecumenical group of contemporary authors such as Barbara Kingsolver, Anne Lamott, Alexandra Fuller, Scott Russell Sanders, Beth Kephart, Barry Lopez, and many others. They explore the endless surprise and spiritual enrichment of parenting, even at its most difficult. Each week we will read one essay, I will post questions for reflection, discussion and reaction to the group and you will have a chance to write your thoughts and experiences and read what others have to say.

The essays are touching, challenging and provocative and I'm sure everyone will have a lot to say. On **Sunday, January 27 at 10:00 am**, we will meet together once as a group to meet one another face to face (so we know who we are talking to) and to establish guidelines for the conversation.

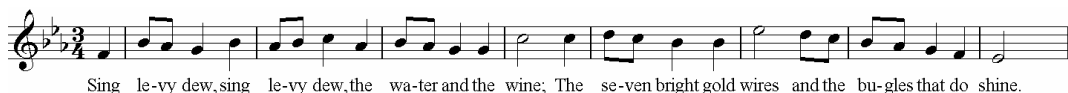
There will be coffee, bagels and childcare available. If we are snowed out we will meet the following Sunday. It will be a closed group once we get started; you have to sign up to participate. The book is available online from the UUA bookstore: <http://www.uuabookstore.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=307> Please email Ruth Owen at ruth@firstchurchboston.org by January 21 to sign up.

**Snow Festival
 Sunday, January 20**

You've hoped for it, dreaded it, shoveled it, and slipped and slid in it, now it is time to celebrate it – snow! On Sunday, January 20 the Children and Youth RE Program will be celebrating snow. We will celebrate the uniqueness of each snow flake, we will make art out of snow (the real stuff if we have some, paper maché, if not), we will write songs and poems to snow and we invite you to participate too. We will be holding an "open mike" performance during coffee hour for anyone who would like to read, recite or sing about snow. So, please make your calendars and join us.



Music at First Church Dr. Paul Cienniwa



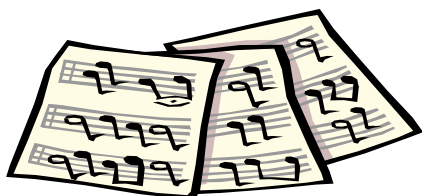
During the December 30 service, soloist Ethan Bremner led the congregation in singing Benjamin Britten's *A New Year Carol*. The words, from Walter de la Mare's anthology of children's poetry *Tom Tiddler's Ground*, come from a Welsh pagan tradition.

"Very early on New Year's Day about three or four o'clock in the morning, groups of boys came round to the houses in the neighborhood, carrying a vessel of cold spring water, freshly drawn, and twigs of box, holly, myrtle, rosemary or other evergreens. They sprinkled the hands and face of anyone they met for a copper or two. In every house, each room was sprinkled with New Year's water and the inmates, who were often still in bed, wished a Happy New Year. For this service and wish they were also gifted with coins. The doors of those houses which were closed to them were sprinkled with the water. The verse was sung during the sprinkling."

(<http://www.schooloftheseasons.com/carols.html>)

*Here we bring new water
From the well so clear
For to worship God with
This happy new year.*

*Sing Levy-dew, sing levy-dew,
The water and the wine
The seven bright gold wires
And the bugles that do shine.*



*Sing reign of Fair maid
With the gold upon her toe
Open you the west door,
And let the old year go*

*Sing reign of Fair maid
With the gold upon her chin
Open you the east door,
And let the new year in.*

Upcoming Concerts at First Church

Chamber Orchestra of Boston, January 19, 8:00 pm,
www.chamberbos.squarespace.com

Annual Martin Luther King Concert with Marshall Hughes, January 21, at 3:00 pm.

First Church Musicians in Concert

Carrageen (Irish/Scottish music with First Church member Willa MacAllen), Sun., January 20, 1:30pm,
Goddard House, 105 Chestnut Street, Brookline,
www.goddardhouse.org

Music at First Church on You Tube!
<http://www.youtube.com>



Rosemary's Reflections

"If you want peace, work for justice." –Henry Louis Mencken

It is New Year's Day 2008, and the snow is falling gently outside the window, brushing each tree branch with its soft coat of white. Aware that this latest snowfall means more shoveling and slow driving and possible hardship for some, in this moment, from where I sit writing inside a warm house, I am feeling blessed and grateful.

In this moment of rest and quiet, I feel a possibility of peace rising in my imagination. What if all the people of the world could know this feeling of being warm and safe in a place of peace and freedom? Some might dismiss this as a liberal, optimistic dream. I prefer to characterize it as a vision grounded in compassion—something to work toward every day. I don't imagine that I, working alone or even in partnership with all of you, will achieve this vision in my lifetime. Still, it is a vision that could guide much of what I do and support my making difficult choices or putting in the extra effort or practicing being a tiny bit more patient.

What will it require, this living into a vision of peace and freedom for all people? It will require taking steps (and perhaps risks) to make the world more just. That is the essence of the words by Mencken (and re-popularized by Pope Paul VI): "If you want peace, work for justice."

As I consider my New Year's resolutions this morning, I realize I want them to reflect a commitment to a vision of peace and freedom. That will mean taking steps to work for justice.

Steps like: becoming more aware of how I use resources and modifying my consumption; supporting agencies and legislation that work for systemic change; interrupting bigotry and being a champion for diversity.

It could mean voting, praying, changing the light bulbs in your house, becoming a tutor at UU Urban Ministry, learning how to lobby your representative through GBIO, or contributing time or money to the UU Service Committee, Grameen Foundation or any of hundreds of agencies working for justice in Boston or around the world.

I look forward to sharing our ministry of justice and compassion as we "work toward a planet transformed by our care."

Happy New Year,
Rosemary

Caring Church

If you have cares or concerns, a celebration or joy to share, please send an email to **Rosemary** at Rosemary@firstchurchboston.org

**Learning Community
Presents!**
Films At First:
A Free Film Series
Wednesdays
January 9—February 13, 2008
6:00 pm.



Warm up your winter and join us for films, fellowship and (of course) popcorn. We gather for a bring your own "sack dinner" at 6 pm and the films begin at 6:30 pm.

Each film will be followed by a short, informal discussion. Popcorn, coffee and soft drinks will be served.

In the event of dangerously bad weather we will cancel. Call 617-267-6730 ext. 223 after 4:30 p.m. on the day of the film for cancellation information.

January 9

The Eyes of Tammy Faye

Share in the love story—and disappointments—of once popular televangelists Jim Bakker and his unsinkable wife, Tammy Faye. A funny and surprisingly poignant documentary (2000).

January 16

The Ghosts of Abu Ghraib

Blending interviews with the perpetrators, witnesses and victims, this Emmy winner for Best Nonfiction Special seeks to tell the stories behind the now-iconic photos. (2007)

January 23

Seabiscuit

During the American Depression, one spectacular horse, Seabiscuit, provided the troubled nation with unbridled joy. This film focuses on Seabiscuit's trainer, owner and two jockeys who turned the horse into a champion. (2003)

January 30

This Film is Not Yet Rated

This provocative documentary investigates the secretive and inconsistent process by which the

Motion Picture Association of America rates films and reveals the association's efforts to control culture. (2006)

February 6

Time of Fear

During World War II, Japanese-Americans were removed from their homes and interned in camps. Footage of teachers and internees makes time stand still as the subjects relive their most poignant experiences from that dark era. (2004)

February 13

The Line King

Hollywood caricaturist [Al Hirschfeld](#) turned simple pencil-to-paper drawings into lively cartoons of some of the entertainment industry's most popular names. His unique style is easily recognizable, down to the famous hidden placement of his daughter Nina's name on every drawing. This Academy Award-nominated documentary takes a look at Hirschfeld's career. (1996)

Book Club News

Evening Book Group

The next book group meeting will be held on **Thursday, January 10, at 7:30 pm**. The book, a 2006 finalist in the National Book Critics Awards, is *"The Lemon Tree: An Arab, A Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East,"* by Sandy Tolan, centering around the Palestinian -Israeli conflict. All are welcome. Please call the church office for more information.

Daytime Book Group

Meets Tuesday, January 29 at noon in the parlor.

For January, we will be reading *"1,000 Splendid Suns"* by Khaled Hosseini. Contact ruth@firstchurchboston.org

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The **Holiday Decorations Committee** is requesting your help in defraying the costs of our holiday greenery. Any donations will be warmly appreciated.

Congregation Artists Reception

In appreciation for the excellent response to the call for artists, both in numbers and quality, there will be reception for the artists and those who wish to fete them Sunday, January 20, after coffee, from 1pm-2pm. Come to see and praise the artists of the works you have been admiring for the past month. Contact the church office.

We are presently working on a **new Membership Directory** for 2008, that will be mailed early in the New Year. If you would like any changes or updates to be made to your contact details, please email the Church Office at joan@firstchurchboston.org or call 617-267-6730.

Please will you direct all **Usage Requests**, including the setup of rooms and other space for committees, directly to the Church Office, and not to the sextons. This is being done to avoid any ambiguity that might arise with requests. Joan's email is joan@firstchurchboston.org

Newsletter Deadlines

January 17 – January 31, 2008:

Monday, January 14

January 31 – February 14, 2008:

Monday, January 28

Email Joan@firstchurchboston.org by 9:00 am

JANUARY 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5
6 9:30 am Social Justice 12:30 pm Fundraising Committee	7 2:00 pm Women's Spirituality 6:30 pm Women's Spirituality (2 groups)	8 6:00 pm Standing Committee	9 10:00 am Membership Committee 6:00 pm Films at First	10	11	12
13 9:15 am Caring Network 12:30 pm House Committee 12:30 pm ARE Committee	14 6:00pm Purls of Wisdom	15	16 6:00 pm Films at First	17 7:00 pm Young Adults Group	18 10:00 am Historic Bostons	19
20 9:15 am Men's Group 12:30 pm Fundraising Committee	21 Martin Luther King Day Church Office closed	22	23 6:00 pm Films at First	24 6:00 pm Worship Committee	25	26
27	28 6:00pm Purls of Wisdom	29	30 6:00 pm Films at First	31		

13 cont.
12:30 pm
Canvass
Committee
12:30 pm
Fundraising
Committee

John Benson, Chair of Standing Committee, John.Benson@state.ma.us
 Rev. Stephen Kendrick, Senior Minister, pannabeth@aol.com
 Rev. Rosemary Lloyd, Associate Minister, rosemary@firstchurchboston.org
 Ruth Owen, Director of Religious Education, ruth@firstchurchboston.org
 Dr. Paul Cienniwa, Director of Music, paul@firstchurchboston.org
 Joan Whalen, Administrator/Events Coordinator, joan@firstchurchboston.org
 Bill Rabbitt, Facilities Manager/Lead Sexton, billrabbitt@gis.net
 Rebekah Cutler Ingram, Intern, ringram@hds.harvard.edu
 Robin Tanner, Intern, rtanner@hds.harvard.edu

Church Office Hours:

Monday-Friday 9:00– 5:00 pm

Please check this box and return this page to the office if you no longer wish to receive the newsletter.

First Church in Boston
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