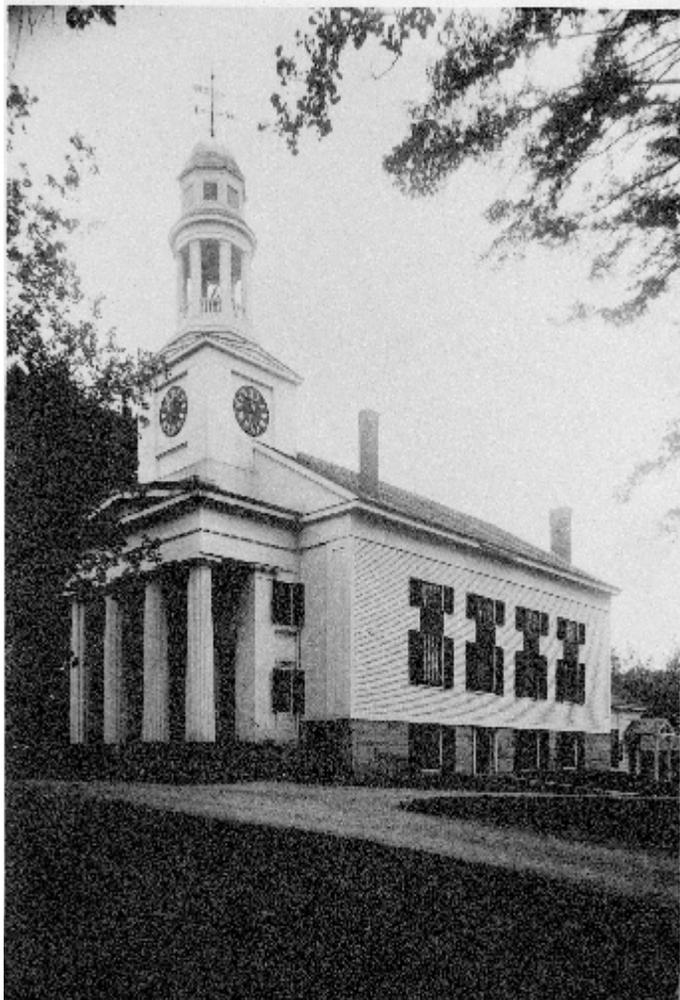


Ministers of the First Parish Church in Concord: 369 Years of Parish Ministry

by Marian Wheeler

February 2006



1841 Meeting House (courtesy of the Concord Public Library)

Introduction

This paper accounts for twenty-one Senior Ministers who served First Parish from 1636 to 2005. No Assistant, Associate nor Affiliate Ministers have been included, of which there have been eleven to date.

I would like to acknowledge the work of Eric Parkman Smith, whose ten-page booklet, *The Church in Concord and Its Ministers*, written in 1971, is such a valuable resource. He did the original research on the ministry of all these old timers, and I have added to his work with research of my own as to where they lived and where they are buried, etc. Of those that are deceased, thirteen are buried in our own Concord Burying Grounds and five are buried elsewhere.

Definitions:

1. Pilgrim: One who journeys a long distance. English Separatists who founded the Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts in 1620 were called Pilgrims.
2. Puritan: One of a class of Protestants in the 16th century who arose within the Church of England, demanding reforms in doctrine and worship and greater strictness in religious discipline.

1. **Rev. John Jones** b.1593 d.1664/65 served 1636-1644



2. **and Rev. Peter Bulkeley** b.1583 d.1657 served 1636-1659

Many of us think of Rev. Peter Bulkeley as our first parish minister, but this was not the case. The town had been founded in 1635, and the first church had been “gathered” in 1636 with Rev. John Jones as “the Minister” and Rev. Peter Bulkeley as “the Teacher”. Both men had the same background of education in England, and they both had comfortable livings and headed fine parishes. Both were Puritan Dissenters and came to the colonies looking for another group of Puritans to lead. Both men found themselves in Concord at the same time as Ministers in the new world, although we know that Jones was here before Bulkeley.

Rev. Bulkeley had been ousted from his pulpit in Odell, England (where he had succeeded his father, Rev. Edward Bulkeley, in 1609), in 1634 after several warnings from Bishop Laud and the Church of England that he was not following the dictates of King Charles I. He, along with John Jones, knew full well that he would be removed from his pulpit sooner or later, so, being foresighted, he sent his oldest son Edward and a house builder named Thomas Dane to the colonies to build a house for Peter’s family. Rev. Bulkeley was a wealthy man, and fortunately for him, he was allowed to bring his money with him when he followed his son to the new world a year later. Rev. Jones might have had some wealth also, but he apparently was not permitted to bring it with him and arrived in the colonies with his family penniless, needing to seek immediate employment.

There are many theories about the relationship between these two men. A tenth generation descendant of Peter Bulkeley, Thomas Taylor, has recently written his own essay, offering new thoughts to the discussion. It must have been difficult for two strong-minded men

to be leaders of such a small group of settlers. In any case, after eight years of testing the soil and climate and trying to farm in Concord, several of these settlers became dissatisfied with the conditions, and seventeen families chose to leave in 1644. They took Rev. John Jones with them as their leader and settled in what is now Fairfield, Connecticut. Included in the group was Thomas Bulkeley, Peter's son, who had married Sarah Jones, Rev. Jones' daughter. About twenty years ago, Doug Baker, my husband and I drove to Fairfield and found Rev. Jones's old church, which is still active. We talked to the present day minister, a young man proud of his old church, who helped us to locate Rev. Jones's gravestone in the old burying ground there facing Long Island Sound.

Thus Rev. Jones solved the problem of the Concord church, that of a small group being led by two ministers, and left Rev. Peter Bulkeley to be the official Minister of the church. Rev. Bulkeley continued to serve until his death at age 77 in 1659.

In 1983, my husband Russ Wheeler and I took a trip to England to look up our English ancestors, including Peter Bulkeley. At the same time, the Concord Minute Men were planning a trip to Paris, France, to join in the celebration of the 200th Anniversary of the ending of the Revolutionary War in 1783. Russ was not a Minuteman, but a conversation with Captain "Brud" Tucker assured us we would be very welcome to join them for their celebration in Odell, England, where they were stopping for a day to pay tribute to Concord's early minister, Rev. Peter Bulkeley. The name of the town is pronounced Oh-dull, to rhyme with yodel. The original name was Wood Hill, but through the years it has been reduced to Odell. It is a town of 200-300 people, with thatched roof houses and fields of grains, much the same as it was in Peter Bulkeley's day.



Odell Castle



All Saints Church, Odell

It was a “red letter day” for us. The Minute Men performed in their full colonial uniforms with their costumed ladies in attendance, preceded by a true English Garden Tea Party and followed by a formal church service in Peter Bulkeley’s own All Saints Church, with Lord and Lady Luke in their grand attire. Their castle is very near the church, and they arrived in all their royal trappings, in their crested carriage, pulled by two matching chestnut horses and two coachmen with their tall silk hats. Brud Tucker presented a long scroll from our First Parish and the town of Concord to their All Saints Church, and my husband presented a large framed picture of our church representing Peter Bulkeley’s original parish in America. To end the day, we were all invited to a bar-b-qu at the barn, which had been our gathering place for the day, and as we arrived a little later, there was Lord Luke himself, in blue jeans, drinking beer with the Concord Minute Men.



St. Andrew's Church, Abbot's Ripton

Then, by ourselves again, we found our way to Abbott’s Ripton, about thirty miles west of Odell, where John Jones had served in St. Andrew’s Church. That was another marvelous day. St. Andrew’s still stands, though built in 950 AD by the Saxons and rebuilt in 1246. It was recorded in the Doom’s Day Survey of 1086 by William the Conqueror, and so is now very ancient and honorable. In Abbott’s Ripton, we found Col. William Johns, warden and keeper of the keys, who drove us to St. Andrew’s and showed us through this ancient church. There on the wall, in plain sight, is a long plaque of names of all the ministers who have served that parish. There in the middle it says:

Johannes Jones

1619 Departed 1630

Upon his departure, Rev. Jones presented his parishioners with a sterling silver Communion flagon, about eighteen inches high. It is now kept in a vault and “only brought out to use when the Bishop comes to bless us,” but we saw a picture of it. This may be an indication of Jones’ financial standing at that time, a man of comfortable wealth.

The location of these two towns, only about thirty miles from each other, and both men being Puritan Ministers and Dissenters, would indicate the possibility that they knew each other before coming to the colonies.

3. **Rev. Edward Bulkeley** b.1614 d.1695/6 served 1659-1696

Edward Bulkeley succeeded his father, Peter, as Minister from 1659-1696. His house still stands at 92 Sudbury Road. He had graduated from Harvard Divinity School and been ordained at Marshfield, MA in 1642.

Edward served during the bloody King Philip’s War of 1675. People said that he delivered such fiery prayers that the Indians didn’t dare attack his town, and indeed there was never any trouble here with the American natives

During his ministry, the second Meeting House was built on the same site as the first, we believe, only twice as big. The exact location of these two buildings has never been decided. One argument is that they were located on top of the hill where it would have been closer to God and a look-out for any enemies approaching. The other argument is that they would never have lugged materials up that steep hill when they could have more easily built on ground level. There they would have had easier access in an emergency, more warmth in winter with the help of the sun from the east, south and west, and protection from the north winds with the high esker behind them. My own theory is that it was on the ground level because of the location of the burying ground and the first grave stones we see there today. In their traditional English manner, their dead were buried close to and around their churches, and seven or eight very early stones, before inscriptions were possible, are in a just right position to indicate where a building might have stood.

On March 5, 1694, the town of Concord voted, "Whereas the Rev. Pastor, Mr Edward Bulkeley, is under such infirmities of body by reason of great age, that he is not capable of attending the work of the ministry as in time past, being also sensible of the obligations the town is under to afford him a comfortable maintenance during the term of his natural life, that thereby the people may testify their gratitude for his former services in the Gospel, they do hereby oblige the town to pay Mr. Bulkeley yearly, during his natural life, the sum of £30 in lieu of his former salary." He accepted this provided he could preach or not, as he felt inclined.

4. **Rev. Joseph Estabrook** b.1640 d.1711 served 1667-1711

Rev. Joseph Estabrook was born in Enfield, Middlesex County, England, in 1640, and came to the colonies in 1660 already prepared to enter Harvard College, where he graduated in 1664. Three years later, he was ordained as a colleague of Rev. Edward Bulkeley, who suffered from a "feebleness of body" (lameness). When Bulkeley died in 1696, Estabrook became the pastor in Concord. He married Mary Mason in 1668 in Watertown, and they had four children. The family lived about where our fire and police stations now stand on Walden Street. His brother Thomas followed him to Concord and owned a large farm. The Estabrook Woods in the northern part of town were named for his family.

Rev. Estabrook was an expert on the Hebrew language, and his preaching was said to have been plain, practical and persuasive. He was described as affectionate, with a good father image. This prompted his parishioners to give him the title of the "The Apostle". His salary was 80 pounds a year, to be dispensed as 40 pounds in cash and 40 pounds worth of grains (wheat, rye and corn), "and every householder with a team shall carry annually one load of wood to the minister, and every other householder shall cut wood one day for the minister."

It was during this time that an episode over a ceramic Delft plate took place in the Meeting House. Rev. Estabrook had brought it with him from his homeland as a reminder of his former life. He cherished it, and chose to use it one day for the Alms Basin (collection plate). One member spotted symbols of the old Catholic popery in the design and became so irate that he broke the plate against a wall as "not being fit for a Puritan church to use." Estabrook's son gathered up the broken pieces and mended it, and today it is in the Concord Museum with other

relics of First Parish Church. Unfortunately, this episode haunted Rev. Estabrook for the rest of his ministry by affecting his salary and favors from the town.

Rev. Estabrook died in 1711 at the age of 71. According to the *History of the Town of Concord*, the following obituary notice appeared in the "Boston News Letter" on 8 Sept 1711: "This day was interred in Concord the Rev. Mr. Joseph Estabrook, minister of the gospel in the said town for about forty-four years (and for many of them was colleague with the famous Mr. Bulkeley.) He was eminent for his skill in the Hebrew language; and a most orthodox, learned, and worthy divine, of excellent principles in religion, indefatigably laborious in the ministry and of holy life and conversation." He was buried in Concord, but we have no visible gravestone for him. Dr. Ezra Ripley said that he was buried with the two Bulkeley ministers, his predecessors, which would be the brick vault in the east corner of the Old Hill Burying Ground, but this has never been proven.

5. **Rev. John Whiting** b.1681 d.1752 served 1712-1737

Rev. Whiting, though a good preacher and fondly loved by many of his parishioners, had an unfortunate addiction to alcohol, especially after the death of his first wife. Eric Smith delicately phrases this as "his fondness for the flowing bowl". Often the schoolmaster, Dr. Timothy Minot, a Harvard graduate, would be sent for to take over and preach the sermon. Ultimately, Rev. Whiting was dismissed on a Sunday morning when he was unable to make it into his pulpit. However, a certain group of 20 people wanted to break away from the church under Rev. Daniel Bliss and form their own group. They asked Rev. Whiting to be their leader. They met in the Black Horse Tavern, which was vacant on a Sabbath morning, thus acquiring the name of "the Black Horse Church".

Rev. Whiting married Rebecca Bulkeley, daughter of Maj. Peter Bulkeley and Rebecca Wheeler, after 1731. He died in Concord in 1751. A quote from his gravestone in South Burying Ground reads: "...he never detracted from the character of any man and was a universal lover of mankind."



6. **Rev. Daniel Bliss** b.1715 d.1764 served 1737-1764

Eric Smith tells us that “Mr. Bliss was most earnest in his dedication to God and truth as he saw it.” His was the era of The Great Awakening and evangelists, and Rev. Bliss was becoming a crusading evangelist himself, to the disdain of some parishioners. He invited the British evangelist George Whitfield to come here and preach. He held outdoor mass meetings and preached such a dynamic sermon on one occasion that they all ended up “weeping on each other’s shoulders.” The children of the parish were frightened by him, and his views were not popular with the Minute Men of that time.



(Picture courtesy of the Concord Public Library)

7. **Rev. William Emerson** b.1769 d.1811 served 1765-1776

Rev. William Emerson was a “Son of Liberty”, and his sermons roused the Concord farmers into action to fight for their freedom from the tyranny of the crown of England. When he was a young man, fresh from Harvard Divinity School, he was called to the Concord Parish,

and he went to live as a boarder with Rev. Daniel Bliss's widow. He met their lovely daughter Phebe Bliss, and they were soon married. He built what is now called "The Old Manse" for her.

On April 19, 1775, Rev. Emerson witnessed first-hand the battle taking place on the North Bridge and spent his day comforting the women and children who flocked to his house for protection. When war was declared, he asked to leave his pulpit and joined the Continental Army as a chaplain. He was sent to Fort Ticonderoga and administered to the troops there, but he soon caught the dreaded "camp fever" from the soldiers and became very ill. He was discharged from his duties, given a horse and headed home, but he never made it back to Concord. He was so ill that he stopped at the home of the Minister in Rutland, Vermont. They took him in and cared for him for a few days, but he soon died. It was February, and there was no way to get his body back to Concord, so he was buried in the minister's family lot, where he remains to this day. The town of Concord erected a cenotaph for him on top of our Old Hill Burying Ground.

The Emersons had five children. One of their grandsons was Ralph Waldo Emerson.



8. **Rev. Ezra Ripley** b.1751 d.1841 served 1778-1841

During the Revolutionary War, Rev. William Emerson was instrumental in bringing Harvard College to Concord. General Washington had taken over the dormitories of Harvard to house his troops, causing a need for the school to temporarily relocate. Rev. Emerson was a very recent graduate of Harvard and, realizing the problem, invited the college to move to Concord and use the Meeting House for their classrooms. The students were housed with any family who could enjoy the income from their board. The entire Harvard Library was transported out here in two ox carts, and the books were housed across the street.

Among the Divinity students that year was young Ezra Ripley. In 1778, he was chosen as Concord's new minister, and he became a boarder at the home of Phebe Emerson, then a widow in need of income. In 1780, he and Phebe were married, which caused a bit of talk in town because she was ten years his senior. Together they had three children.

During Rev. Ripley's administration, the old church, built in 1711, was turned a quarter angle turn to face Lexington Road and renovated, including the addition of a steeple. This was the building in which the first and second Provincial Congresses had met just prior to the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, and where the laws of our nation were formulated, resulting in our Declaration of Independence.

It was Dr. Ripley who introduced the new idea of Unitarianism to the parish. Until this time, all of the New England churches followed the original religion of the Puritans, the Church of Christ Congregational. This new Unitarian idea that was spreading rampantly among Boston ministers was a breath of fresh air to those weary of the concept of "hell and damnation", and more and more people were turning to it. It was not without controversy, and it got to a point where neighbors were not speaking to each other! The town called a special Town Meeting to vote on the issue, and it came out two to one in favor of Unitarianism. Since the town owned the Meeting House in those days, the larger body of voters kept the building, and the smaller body went across the Mill Brook and built their own Trinitarian Congregational Church on Walden Street.

In his Social Circle biography of his step-grandfather, Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote: "He was identified with the ideas and forms of the New England church, which expired about the same time with him, so that he and his coevals seemed the rear guard of the great camp and army of the Puritans, which, however in its last days declining into formalism, in the heyday of its strength had planted and liberated America. It was a pity that his old meeting-house should have been modernized in his time. I am sure all who remember both will associate his form with whatever was grave and droll in the old, cold, unpainted, uncarpeted, square-pewed meeting-house ..."

At the time of Ripley's death in 1841, after 63 years as Minister, the original 1711 structure was being renovated again, and the four Doric columns were added to the front. Ironically, because of the renovation, his funeral took place at the new Trinitarian church. Dr.

Ripley had two Associate Ministers to help in his old age. The first was Rev. Hersey Goodwin in 1830, and the second was Rev. Barzillai Frost in 1838.



9. **Rev. Hersey Bradford Goodwin** b. 1805 d.1836 served 1830-1836

Apparently, Rev. Hersey Goodwin was afflicted with ill health. He only served as Associate Minister for six years before he died. He was married to Lucretia Ann Watson. I know nothing more about him, except that he wished to be buried in his home town of Plymouth, Mass., where his grave stone can be found today.



10. **Rev. Barzillai Frost** served 1837-1857

Rev. Barzillai Frost was called in 1837 to replace Rev. Goodwin, and at Ezra Ripley's death, he was chosen to carry on for sixteen more years, until his retirement in 1857. This was the man who inspired Emerson to write his Harvard Divinity School address, "because of his dull and non-inspirational sermons." But Rev. Frost was loved by his congregation. He was active in reform movements and respected in the community for the firmness of his convictions. At his

retirement, the congregation gave him a lovely silver pitcher. In later years, after his death, his widow gave the pitcher back to the church so that each minister could “hold” it during his period of service as minister of First Parish. The tradition still exists in 2005.

At his funeral, Henry A. Miles said, “No small part of his sturdy influence was wielded in other places than that pulpit. He was ready everywhere for an earnest talk—in the streets, in the fields; and few had more ability or relish for an improvised discussion. . . . one who through the week was diligent in your service, a guide in your schools, a counselor at your firesides, a comforter at your sick and dying beds. . . . With unfailing cheerfulness and healthy mind daily lifting up this community to a higher time.”



11. **Rev. Grindall Reynolds** b.1822 d.1894 served 1858-1894 (Honorary Pastor 1881-1894)

Rev. Grindall Reynolds succeeded Rev. Frost. After serving the Concord church for twenty-three years, he was called to the Beacon Street Unitarian headquarters to be the Secretary of the Unitarian Association. He was a great scholar, interesting and bright, with a degree of Master of Arts and a Doctor of Divinity from Harvard College. Our church gave him the title of “Honorary Pastor” until his death in 1894.



12. **Rev. Benjamin Reynolds Bulkeley** b. 1855 d. 1930 served 1882-1893
(Pastor Emeritus 1924-1930)

Rev. Benjamin Reynolds Bulkeley was ordained in 1882. He was a kind and gentle man, a poet by hobby (his *The Shifting Wind and Other Poems* of 1895 is in the Concord Free Public Library), but served for only eleven years. His wife became ill, and he retired to take care of her. He returned to Concord to live in 1924 and enjoyed the title of Pastor Emeritus, given him by the congregation, until his death in 1930.



13. **Rev. Loren B. Macdonald** b. 1895 d. 1924 served 1895-1924

Rev. Macdonald came in 1895. Much happened during his ministry – the “turn of the century”, the catastrophic fire which destroyed the historic 1722 Meeting House on April 12, 1900, and the outbreak of World War I. His congregation appreciated his good works and leadership until his untimely death. The story goes that he had a favorite cherry tree that he had

planted himself. He died suddenly, perhaps from choking, after eating a pie made with the cherries from this tree.



14. **Dr. Johannes A. C. Fagginger Auer** b. 1882 d. 1964 served 1926-1930

In 1925, Dr. Auer filled in for Loren Macdonald, and in 1926, he was duly chosen to be the official minister. He was the father of our own member here today, Trynje Hawks.

A native of the Netherlands, as was his wife, he was educated at Meadville Theological School. Eric Smith wrote, “Dr. Auer was the first minister of the Parish to hold the Humanist view of religion. In 1933, he was one of a limited number of men to be invited to sign the Humanist Manifesto – now regarded as one of the milestone documents of American religious history.”

Dr. Auer left here in 1930 to become the Professor of Religion at Harvard Divinity School. The family returned to Concord to live after his retirement from Harvard.



15. **Dr. Edward Perry Daniels** b. ? d. 1962 served 1931-1956
(Minister Emeritus 1956-1962)

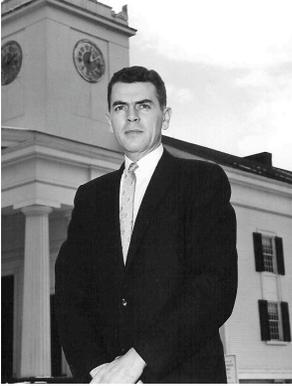
After a long search, Rev. Daniels was called in 1931 from Santa Barbara, California. He was a native of Maine and had served other New England churches. He had a great knowledge of church music. He was an organist and a choir director, directing marvelous Christmas choir performances and organ recitals throughout the year. He was the musical editor of *Hymns of the Spirit*, the outstanding hymnal of his time.

Rev. Daniels and his wife Polly were very much engaged with the business and social life of the town. She was involved with the Concord Players, and he loved being the Chaplain of the Concord Fire Department. He was loved by all of his parishioners, and when he retired, the Parish gave him the title “Minister Emeritus”. The moment of his retirement was well planned in advance – it began after the grand finale of his last Christmas Eve choir concert. He bowed gracefully to the audience from the choir loft, then walked solemnly down the stairs and out the front door!



16. **Rev. Robert D. Richardson** served 1956-1957 (Interim)

For the next year, Rev. “Bob” Richardson filled in as an Interim Minister while the parish was choosing a replacement for Rev. Daniels. He and his family had just moved to Concord, but he was an ordained Unitarian Minister and accommodated us most graciously. He and his sweet wife Lucy did a noble job of keeping the parish together until a new minister was called.



17. **Rev. Arthur Boyd Jellis** b. ? d. 2005 served 1957-1970

Rev. Jellis was called in 1957. He was young and handsome with five growing children. His wife Betty was qualified to work with the Religious Education Director. Rev. Jellis brought new life and new members into the church and greatly increased the Sunday School attendance. He was a humanist and a pacifist, outspoken in his support of civil rights. He marched in the demonstration in Selma, Alabama, and was very critical of our country's going into Vietnam. This started disagreements within the membership, causing trouble all around. Eventually, he was asked to leave, which he did in September of 1970. At his departure, his supporters gave him a gift of money as their token of affection for him.



18. **Rev. Dana McLean Greeley** b. 1908 d. 1986 served 1970-1986

Dr. Dana McLean Greeley was freshly retired from his position at "25 Beacon Street", Boston, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) headquarters, as the last president of the Unitarian Association and the first president of the Unitarian Universalist Association. He was instrumental in making the transition when the two bodies voted to merge. He was also

president of the International Association for Religious Freedom in the Hague and was active at the United Nations in New York City. He and his wife Deborah were both natives of Lexington, and they were happy to be back home again. They chose to live in the same house in Concord that Rev. Grindall Reynolds had built and lived in while he was our minister.

Dr. Greeley was a charismatic figure and a peacemaker. A friend and supporter of Martin Luther King, he marched arm-in-arm with him to Selma . He did a noble job of pulling the members of the congregation back together, and the church continued to grow. He died of cancer in June of 1986.

19. **Rev. Charles Wilson** served 1986-1988 (Interim)

Rev. Wilson served for a two-year period as an Interim Minister and held the parish together until a new minister could be found.



20. **Rev. Gary Eugene Smith** b. 1947 served 1988-present (Senior Minister)



Rev. Gary Smith was born in Waterville, Maine, in 1947 and educated in the Waterville public schools. He majored in Philosophy at the University of Maine and went to divinity school at Vanderbilt University. During that time, he married Elizabeth Masciadri in 1970. Ordained by the Kennebec Valley Association of the Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ in 1972, he was Associate Minister at first Church of Christ in Middletown, Connecticut, and then

Minister at First Universalist Church in Bangor, Maine from 1976-1985. From 1985 until 1988, Rev. Smith served at the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) in Boston, first as Director of the Capital Fund Drive, then as in Public Outreach, and finally as Director of Public Relations. In 1988, he was called to First Parish.

Rev. Smith's grandmother was a Universalist, but his parents were Congregational, and he was raised in that tradition. While serving at the First Universalist Church in Bangor, he attended a General Assembly in East Lansing, and, as he put it, "was converted". Before he even became a Unitarian Universalist Minister in 1982, he was already teaching Unitarian Universalist history and polity and serving as president of a UU minister's association.

In 1984, Rev. Smith went to a church in Westchester, PA, as a "Minister on Loan", and the experience further expanded his horizons, leading him to his positions at the UUA. In 1988, after being the first candidate in a field of twelve to be interviewed by the Search Committee, he was chosen to serve at First Parish and moved to Concord with his young family.

Rev. Smith married Elizabeth (Eliz) Masciadri in 1970, when he was a divinity student and she was a German major at the University of Maine. Their son Johnathan is currently a fourth grade teacher in the Concord schools, and their daughter Hannah is a web page designer.

Under Rev. Smith's leadership, First Parish has grown such that we now have two services with an average attendance of 350 people each Sunday. Children now come to the sanctuary before going to their classes, and the RE program has grown, especially for our older youth. The church has reached out to the community through the Wright Tavern Center and the Jericho Road projects, and the building is now in constant use during the week. We are once again a center of activity in the town of Concord.



21. **Rev. Jenny Rankin** b. 1958 served 1997-present

Rev. Jenny Rankin has the honor of being the first woman to be listed as a Minister of our church. She was born in Boston and grew up attending King's Chapel, a Unitarian

Universalist church in the heart of Boston. After graduating from Princeton University, she spent time living and working in Paris before returning to the U.S. to do community organizing and peace work. She received her MDiv from Harvard Divinity School in 1988 and served in several interim ministries, including the chaplaincy at Tufts University and congregations in Hingham, Hopedale and Cohasset. Jenny was called to First Parish in Concord in 1997, when she moved here with her husband Rich. They now have three children, Emily, Charlotte and Nicholas. She has taken charge of the social action activities of the church and helped to make the Jericho Road project a reality.

In the whole 369 years since this church was gathered in 1636, there have only been twenty-one ministers, one more reason that this church and town are so unique.

Associate/Assistant/Affiliate Ministers of First Parish in Concord

1. Patrick G. Green, Associate 1972-1977
2. James A. Robinson, Associate 1978-1982
3. Jon M. Luopa, Interim Assistant 1982-1983
4. Walter S. Jones, Assistant 1983-1984
5. Alice B. Lane, Interim Assistant 1984-1986
6. Lucinda S. Duncan, MRE 1986-1988
7. Karen Lewis Deutsch, Interim 1988-1990
8. Beth Graham, Associate 1990-1994
9. Nancy Dean-Franks, Interim Associate 1994-1995
10. Adele Smith-Penniman, Assistant 1995-1996
11. Rebecca M. Blodgett, Interim Assistant 1996-1997
12. Rebecca M. Blodgett, Affiliate 1998-2002
13. Ann Willever, Acting Minister of Religious Education 2003-2005
14. Karen L. Foley, Associate Minister for Pastoral Care 2002-2006

With grateful thanks to Sue Beck for her interest in this project and her expertise in putting these pages into final form, and to Stonewall Ballard, the Web Master for The First Parish in Concord, for preparing these pages for the web site.