

Cross Currents

Newsletter of the Haydenville Congregational Church
December 2011 *Open Hearts & Open Minds & Open Doors*

FROM THE PASTOR

“Don’t be afraid.” It is a common and yet a startling refrain in the New Testament. And it is an important message for us to hear as we enter Advent and move toward Christmas. “Don’t be afraid.” Christmas is an important opportunity for us to experience being *unafraid*.

The first time the angel Gabriel appears is to the old priest Zechariah. The angel says to the old man, “Do not be afraid because your prayers have been heard” (Luke 1:13). Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth were going to have a son who would become John the Baptist. But Zechariah’s prayers are also answered in a larger sense: God was going to do something about the plight of God’s people who had lived under the weight of fear and oppression for generations.

The second time the angel Gabriel appears is the visit to Mary. “Do not be afraid,” Gabriel says to her, “for you have found favor with God” (Luke 1:30). Remember that Mary was not especially wonderful, perfect, elegant, faithful or mature. God chose her because she was so unlikely: young, obscure, and innocent.

The third angelic announcement occurs in the fields beyond Bethlehem to a group of shepherds. Remember that shepherds were essentially homeless and quite “fragrant,” (they traveled and slept outside with their flocks), poor (they owned nothing), and looked down upon (their “profession” was just about the lowest of the low). As the shepherds were watching over their flocks, an angel appears and, as the King James Bible says, they were “sore afraid.” “Do not be afraid,” says the angel, “for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people” (Luke 2:10).

Notice the unmistakable message: Glory to God in heaven and on earth peace. **Peace**. Not sorrow, not loss, not warfare, not fear. This is good news for ALL the people. Not just for some, but for ALL.

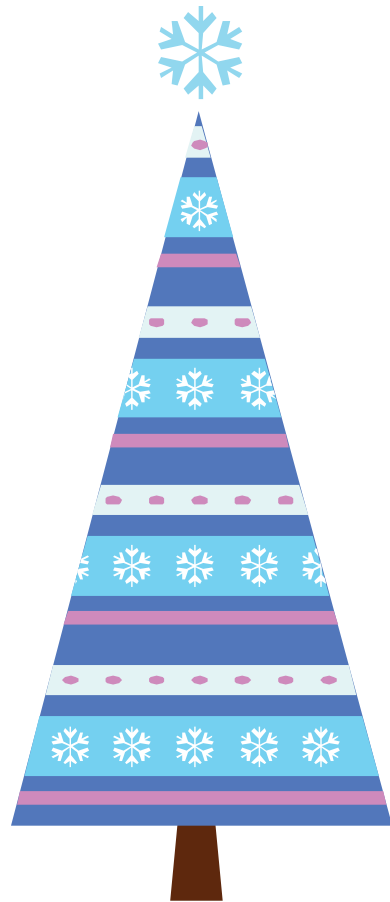
Peace and a lack of fear is a present reality which we experience from time to time. I speak to you about this often when I talk about the “inbreaking of the Kingdom”—those times when we experience God’s dream, God’s reign, God’s vision for the world, God’s shalom in our own lives. But this is also a future promise. The kingdom of God CAN be fully realized “on earth as it is in heaven,” as we pray each week when we say the Lord’s Prayer.

“Do not be afraid” means that money will come and go but God is always with us. Our health will change and fail, but God is always with us. Our lives will hold big challenges, our days will be hard, we will struggle with our brokenness, but God is always with us.

Through it all, we can be unafraid, and we are reminded of that so poignantly and so perfectly during Advent. We can rest in God. God’s goodness and grace descended on earth and a remarkable, holy being named Jesus was born and walked on this earth. His message and his words reverberate still.

The words of the angels speak to us during this dark season: **do not be afraid**. You are never alone, never unloved, never without hope. Never. Advent is a wonderful time to practice being unafraid. Remember the simple words of the angel Gabriel and rest in God’s peace: “Do not be afraid.”

Love and Blessings,



NOTE FROM MATILDA

Youth and Family Ministries

Advent and Christmas Pageant 2011

Dear Friends,

Every year we put a lot of thought into our Christmas Pageant, and we try to discern how *"God is Still Speaking"* over the sacred time of Advent. The Christmas Pageant is one of the most wonderful, but also the most challenging things that we do every year. In my five Christmases as Youth and Family Minister, we have tried numerous kinds of children's Christmas Programs and here is what we have found:

Christmas is a deeply evocative, intense time for adults as well as children. It is a time rich with many memories and associations for all of us of Christmases past. We are a diverse community and one kind of Christmas Pageant might be *just the right thing* for some people and feel *not right* to others...

We work hard and faithfully to strike a sacred balance between honoring the reverence of the season and producing a beautiful worship service; and having fun and making sure the "final product" of the program we do does not overshadow the importance of the process.

Celebrating the incarnation of God, joyful music, laughter, opportunities for children to be creative, celebrating the sheer magic of the season, and a spirit of welcome and inclusion to everyone are things we have found universal agreement on!

Taking into consideration these three important truths, we have decided that we will again avail ourselves of the expert, hilarious, brilliant directorial leadership and narration of Tom McCabe, nationally renowned storyteller and director of the Paintbox Theatre. (This decision was achieved by a Children's Committee vote) He has graciously offered to direct a pageant which includes songs, dance, and a *"God Is Still Speaking"* rendition of the Christmas Story. We will have stars, drums, bells, donkeys, surprise cameo appearances from church members, and maybe even, as in past years—dinosaurs! We are excited and deeply grateful for the way the Holy Spirit moves in and through the magical combination of Tom McCabe and our kids! In addition, in an attempt try to avoid the bad weather that seems to inevitably fall on the week of the pageant, *we are holding our children's Christmas show one week earlier this year—it will be on **Sunday 12/11/11.***

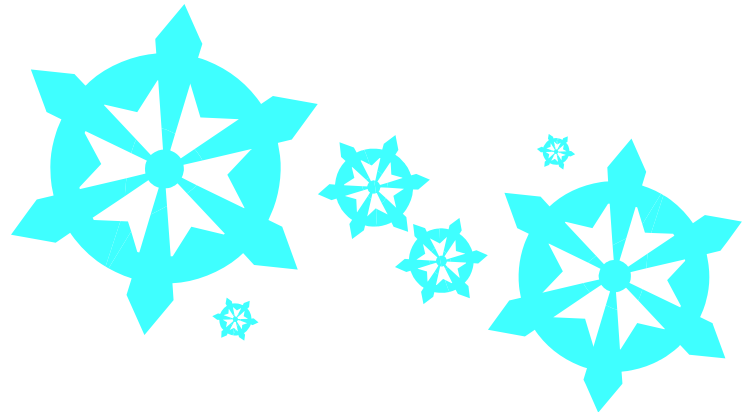
In addition, our Pageant will not require extensive "rehearsal" for the younger children, (0-5th grade) so we will have the opportunity to focus on the beautiful, magnificent unfolding of the season of Advent in CC. We will

celebrate the light in the darkness and that the children's light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not overcome it. We will give the children opportunities to use their individual gifts and strengths through the construction of a nativity scene, and a service project which Maureen Ricksgers will lead. Karen Guiel, one of our trained Godly Play teachers, will tell the story of the journey to Bethlehem. On **Sunday 12/18**, one week after the pageant, Pastor Andrea and I will conduct a family-oriented worship service, which will include an opportunity for children to leave the sanctuary early and celebrate in the dining room while the adults stay for the rest of the worship service. This service will have a quieter, more solemn tone as we get closer to the commemoration of the magical night of Jesus's birth. Both services will include the lighting of the Advent Candle. Children and families are also especially welcome to our Christmas Eve Service, when we sing "Silent Night" by candlelight in a circle around the Sanctuary.

And finally, our Advent theme this year is **"We are family."** Advent is a time when we celebrate that the spirit of God is made flesh in a tiny baby. This means we celebrate the Spirit in our midst, and we celebrate that **we are all members of the Family of God.**

In Faith and Gratitude,

Pastor Matilda



8 FOR 8

By Pastor Andrea

In October, I launched a campaign to have 7 people join me in giving 8% of their income as their pledge to the Church in 2012. I hoped so much that I could find 7 others to take on this level of giving and that we would have 8 FOR 8. The amazing thing is that NINE people stepped forward. We exceeded our 8 FOR 8 goal! HERE'S A SHOUT OUT and huge THANK YOU you to the **nine** 8 FOR 8 givers: Tobias Davis, Annie Loomis, Annie Turner, Lauren Pierce, Lynn Fogg, Bob Lampron, Andrea Ayvazian, and two Anonymous Donors. Wow. THANK YOU SO MUCH!!!!

THANK YOU, LORD, FOR YOUR BLESSINGS ON ME

While the world looks upon me as I struggle along
They say I have nothing, but they are so wrong.
In my heart I'm rejoicing, how I wish they could see
Thank you, Lord, for your blessings on me.

There's a roof up above me, I've got a good place to sleep
There's food on my table, and shoes on my feet.
You gave me your love Lord, and a fine family
Thank you, Lord, for your blessings on me.

I know I'm not wealthy and these clothes they aren't new
And I don't have much money, but Lord I have you.
And that is all that matters though the world may not see
Thank you, Lord, for your blessings on me.
(from the Gaither music)

*I have many friends here, as I walk along,
The garden is growing, the birds are in song.
The sun shines in the morning, and sets at days end,
Thank you, Lord, for your blessings on me.

*The breeze is so gentle, your touch, Lord, is smooth
I pray every morning, I know it is you,
Who gives me these blessing, so I might renew
Thank you, Lord, for your blessings on me.

(*Verses written by our own Cindy McQueston)

*"To Love all is to be vulnerable.
Love anything and your heart will certainly be
wrung and possibly broken. If you want to
make sure of keeping it intact, you must give
your heart to no one, not even to an ani-
mal. Wrap it carefully around with hobbies
and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements;
lock it up safe in the coffin or casket of your
selfishness. But in that casket – safe,
dark, motionless, airless – it will change. It
will not be broken; it will become unbreak-
able, impenetrable, irredeemable. The alter-
native to tragedy, or at least to the risk of
tragedy, is damnation. The only place outside
heaven where you can be perfectly safe
from all the dangers and
perturbations of love is hell."*

C.S. Lewis
from *The Four Loves*

**I am not bound for any public place,
but for ground of my own where I have
planted vines and orchard trees,
and in the heat of the day climbed up into
the healing shadow of the woods.**

Wendell Berry

BOOK MATTERS (AND BOOKS MATTER!)

By Paula Spencer

On December 10 (Saturday, 10 a.m., Church Dining Room) our Book group will be sharing children's books/ stories/ poems and enjoying hot chocolate and kid-like snacks (think graham crackers, popcorn, gummy bears). Dig out some old favorites or explore new titles in our wonderful public libraries and bookstores and come join us.

Also, please check to see if you have any books from our Church Library hiding around your house. I'm going to start going through the Check-Out binder to track down titles that have been checked out for months, in some cases years! Look for the HCC Library label on the spine and fill up that Library Returns basket to overflowing! As of January 1, there will be a one month limit for loans so more people will have a chance to enjoy our rich, diverse collection.

OUR PLANS FOR CHRISTMAS DAY AND NEW YEAR'S DAY

This year both Christmas Day and New Year's Day fall on Sundays. Here are our Church's plans for both days:

CHRISTMAS DAY: Our Church will hold a worship service at 10:00 but the service will be different in many ways. The service will be held in the DINING ROOM, not in the Sanctuary. Ken will play only piano. The service will be short and informal and then we will go directly to sharing a brunch meal together. The food will be ready and we'll close the service with a final Benediction and starting sharing a lovely brunch together. Everyone is welcome to this very unusual service and meal together. The service will be one hour in length with lots of singing and a story by Pastor Andrea. There will not be any Children's Church, all ages are welcome to stay together for this special worship experience and meal.

NEW YEAR'S DAY: We will hold our worship service at 10:00 as usual in the Sanctuary. We will share a ritual together about leaving the old and welcoming the new. We will also share Communion together that day. There is no Children's Church on New Year's Day. Children are welcome to stay in Church all morning or play, with parental supervision, upstairs.

CATHEDRAL IN THE NIGHT

Dear Haydenville Congregation:

When Cathedral in the Night first gathered last January, it was one of the most bitterly cold nights of the year, but Haydenville Congregational Church was there, to sing with us and feast with us. Since then, Cathedral in the Night has been out on the street every Sunday evening, welcoming all comers for worship and a free meal; so far, only the hurricane kept us away. But this past Sunday afternoon, as snow was falling and trees were snapping and power lines were falling and phone signals were jamming all around the Valley, I have to admit I was wondering if and how we would manage to set our table that night. But as luck – or providence – would have it, our Ministry Partner once again was the indefatigable Haydenville Congregational Church.

As we set up our tables on the dark and deserted streets of Northampton, Haydenville members began to arrive, with sandwiches and drinks and baked goods. Working by flashlight, they warmed up home-made soup and chili on the gas stove in the First Churches kitchen. And then the people of Northampton began appearing out of the darkness. You could see on everyone's faces the look of relief and surprise to find companionship, warmth, and food there in the midst of the blackout. One young man, a member of the downtown street community, arrived as we began worship, and exclaimed simply, "You're here!" When I told him that we also had hot food, he raised both arms to the sky and said, "Thank you!"

We *were* there, because Haydenville was there. Thank you, so much, for being there on a night when so many people needed someone to be there. More than one person that evening told me how grateful they were for our presence on that night especially. One man told me he had resigned himself to the fact that he just wasn't going to eat that day -- until he came upon the feast you provided. As the meal ended, you even offered your cars to take people safely to their homes or to the emergency shelter.

Last January, Haydenville was there on the coldest night of the year; last week you were there on the darkest night of the year. Your light indeed shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Peace and grace to you all.

From Liza Knapp, on behalf of Cathedral in the Night

NEW PLAN FOR COFFEE HOUR STARTS IN DECEMBER

Thanks to our dedicated and brilliant Jo Cannon, we have discovered that the way we have been dividing up the alphabet to bring things for Coffee Hour (and to help with set up and clean up) is not quite fair. Some weeks there are a couple of dozen names, and some weeks there are many fewer people. So Jo has re-made the bring-things-to-coffee-hour list and we'll be using this new arrangement starting this month! Here's the new line-up:

A - C and W - Z
D - F
G - K
L - M
N - R
S - V



Now each clump has about 22 names except for N - R. So we solved that by having the following people join the N - R group permanently: Jackie Cloonan, Jo Cannon, Sue Carbin, Matilda Cantwell and Andrea Ayvazian. That makes the groups pretty much even! Thank you Jo for your work on this!! Amazing and helpful! And everyone remember: **YOUR NEW CLUMP STARTS IN DECEMBER!** Remember to bring those goodies on the right weeks AND help set up and clean up!

Christmas Eve Service

7:00 PM

Singing Christmas Carols

Guest Harpist

"Silent Night" by Candlelight
as we circle the Sanctuary

Church members, family, friends,
visitors all warmly welcome!

THANK YOU DIANE SCOTT

Even though we had a lovely THANK YOU party for our beloved Diane Scott, we must say again: Thank you Dear Diane for serving as the Choir Director at our Church for 22 years. You gave SO much and did a fantastic job. We love you, and we thank you from the bottom of our big big Haydenville Church hearts.

The practice of forgiveness is our most important contribution to the healing of the world.

Marianne Williamson

CHURCH FAIR A GREAT SUCCESS

Thanks to all who helped out! Ladies Aid has some numbers to share with you. \$3,427.26! I'm not quite sure where the 26 cents come from, but I'd say those are some pretty impressive digits for a single event.

The active members of Ladies Aid constitute a fairly small but very hardy group. 21 of us, ranging in age from 29 to 88, actually worked the fair. Not counting our one youngster, the average age of those who spent days preparing and staffing the event was 65. There were three women in their 80s and another four in their 70s who worked the entire event after spending days sewing, crocheting, or baking!

That is, however, only part of the story. Many more of you helped to make it a great success! If you baked, you helped us raise a bit under \$1000.00. If you made something of yarn, wood, fabric, paint or something else, you helped earn well over ½ K (For those of you who are not computer geeks, a K is generally understood to mean 1000, although it is technically 1024.) If we count the items made for the raffle then we top \$1000.00 there as well! If you donated items to the tag sale or attic treasures, you helped bring in almost another ½ K. With the wonderful lunch Shirley Warner and crew made for us, we just about round off the third \$1000. The remainder came from all those fantastic prizes that Kim gathered up for us in the Tin Can Raffle, so if you patronize any of the businesses that donated prizes, don't hesitate to let them know Haydenville Congregational Church appreciates their generosity.

More importantly don't forget that Ladies Aid appreciates you, your hard work and your generosity. Just because the above numbers don't mention those of you who dropped by on Friday – Sunday to help setup, carry tables, empty boxes of stuff for the tag sale from people's cars, help with the work in the church and help cleanup after the fair, don't think for a minute that your work isn't greatly valued. None of the above could have happened without your help! Ladies Aid sends a huge THANK YOU to the entire church community, and remember that next year we'd love to bring that average age down a bit, so get involved!

Jackie Cloonan & Jo Cannon, Fair Co-Chairs

ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION

My dear Church Family,

I have learned from a number of clergy colleagues that around the anniversary of their ordinations, they ask their congregation to contribute to a special church-related cause as a way to mark and celebration their special day.

I was ordained on December 6, 1998 at the First Churches in Northampton. Consequently, for the first time, I am going to ask whoever wants to in our Church family to contribute (at the close of worship) to "Our Church's Wider Mission" on December 4th. We'll hold a basket "at the door/on the line" after worship. You can drop in a contribution to OCWM if you wish. OCWM is the overarching fund at the United Church of Christ that pays for special programs, relief efforts, pastoral support and all kinds of good things on the state and national levels. Should you want to contribute on December 4th that would be lovely. It is also fine if you choose not to give.

With love and with thanks, Pastor Andrea

NEWS BY THE NUMBERS!

- * \$3,427: Church Fair raised this year!
- * \$2,783: Profit from the Evelyn Harris concert in our Church in October
- * 60% of our Church annual budget goes to staff salaries
- * 9 people have decided to give 8% of their income to the Church as their pledge for 2012
- * \$126,543: Stewardship Goal for 2012, do you think we'll make it?

THANK YOU RUSS BILLINGS

By Pastor Andrea

For the SEVENTH YEAR IN A ROW, a friend of our Church, Russ Billings, has made an Advent Wreath for us to enjoy throughout Advent and on Christmas Eve. Russ works in the Greenhouse at Mount Holyoke College and is a friend of mine and a friend to many MHC and South Hadley people who worship at our Church. He makes our Advent Wreaths himself, with great great care and great great love. Should you want to drop him a note of thanks, feel free! Russ's Advent Wreaths are a thing of beauty and add so much to our worship experience during Advent.

If you want to write to thank him, his address is: Russ Billings, Talcott Greenhouse, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA 01075.

Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy.

Thich Nhat Hanh

MEN'S BOOK GROUP

The Men's Book Group, a new and exciting venture at the Haydenville UCC, was open to all the men in the church as well as interested outsiders. Pastor Andrea had chosen the book *Naked Spirituality: A Life with God in 12 Simple Words*, by Brian McLaren. The plan was to meet on four consecutive Saturday afternoons to share our reading, interpretation and application of the principles of the book to our own spiritual development.

Brian McLaren has made a name for himself in writing about new, progressive ways of approaching Christianity, and is also the author of *A New Kind of Christianity* which will be the text for the second Men's Book Group reading, as well as the larger church book group in January. The last meeting of our group had to be postponed after the big snow and was smaller as people were still recovering from the storm. Present at the final session were: Ross, Darien, Chip, Reverend Phil, Rick, Reverend Andrea, and Andrew. Other meetings also included: Wyatt, Willot, Richard S., Ty, Gary, and Reverend Tom.

We followed the format of prior sessions with Pastor Andrea beginning with a centering prayer or meditation; then we reviewed the last chapter(s) of the book. There was some general discussion of prior meetings and what stood out for us over the weeks.

We took turns reading from the last three chapters of the book, sometimes stopping to discuss a key point or question. Often Pastor Andrea guided us with a story, a connection to other works, or an insight. Most of us agreed that McLaren's book had a special appeal because the prayers were short, simple, doable, and durable.

Some of the emerging themes from session 4 included: the beatitude of **Behold**; the surrender of **Yes** (giving in, not giving up); and figuring out what that darn ellipsis was supposed to be (...= silence or 'aaah'; being present). Pastor Andrea gave some examples of how "Yes" can also contain "No": I might say no to something asked of me because I need to say yes to my self-care so I can ultimately be there for others.

We went through some closing exercises using McLaren's simple prayers and applying them to the realities of our own lives. Group members always had the chance to pass if they wanted to, and a ground rule was that anything said in the group would stay with us. That way people would feel freer to share their feelings.

Here are some more personal responses to the reading of *Naked Spirituality*, so you can see the range of opinions expressed.

Phil found McLaren's book both "exciting and very help-

ful." He responded that when he was in Seminary, students were told that our relationship with the Holy was something we'd have to "figure out on our own." It can't be taught. Phil felt that Seminary was comfortable teaching "through the head" but so much "through the heart." For Phil, reading McLaren's book felt "like...reading a fresh word." He liked the way in which McLaren combined his "strong Evangelical roots" with "some of the new themes in spirituality..."

Phil noted that McLaren quoted from Richard Rohr, a Franciscan priest doing some work similar to McLaren's: *Prayer is not primarily saying words or thinking thoughts. It is rather, a stance, a way of being present...of living in the Presence...*

Darien found *Naked Spirituality* "hard to read," and difficult to decode what McLaren was actually saying. He found it "challenging," and "containing a lot of spiritual gems." But Darien felt that McLaren's book—as a "basis for teaching and learning"—was not fruitful. He found the twelve basic words "divided into four seasons...unwieldy," a structure that "interfered with the gems and insights." While not useful in teaching prayer, Darien acknowledged that Andrea "successfully used this book as a manual for teaching prayer...and only she could have pulled it off."

Chip reported that the twelve prayers were "short, doable and durable.." as McLaren had written, and as such, are wonderful for weaving into our days and our lives.

Rick found the book inspiring, provocative, very useful for one's day-to-day spiritual life, and he also particularly liked the "short, doable and durable" quote about McLaren's prayers. Something about the brevity of McLaren's words made them open up into wider and larger meanings, meanings which each reader could add to and interpret in individual ways.

Andrew thought the book was very thought-provoking, and the part he liked best was the intimacy created by submitting and listening to heartfelt prayers of the members of the group, based on themes or prompts from the book.

The Men's Book Group will continue to meet on four Saturdays in January, at 4:30-5:45, on these dates: 1/7, 1/14, 1/21, and 1/28. All are welcome to come to any of these sessions, and we welcome new participants. The majority consensus of this group was that McLaren was a gifted and insightful spiritual leader, and that our group learned a lot from him, from each other, and through the inspired leadership of our own spiritual star, Reverend Andrea.



BEAUTIFUL PRINTS GIVEN TO THE CHURCH

An anonymous donor has given the Church four framed prints that will soon hang in our Dining Room and in Children's Church. These are a rare and lovely gift and we appreciate this gift tremendously. The donor has written the story about acquiring them below. We thank the donor from the bottom of our hearts for this gift of beautiful artwork for our Church.

I was in Brattleboro shortly after Hurricane Irene flooded the town with debris, mud, and destruction of homes and roads. Many businesses had been hard-hit, and one of them was the art studio of Christine Triebert. Though the home of Christine and her life partner Carol Ross was relatively unscathed, they watched in horror during the storm as a small stream on their property flooded and swept away Christine's art studio (also a source of their livelihood). In the aftermath, Christine decided to have a Hurricane Irene Rebuilding Sale.

In a small gallery down an alley side street in Brattleboro, Christine sold her remaining award-winning photography for nearly one-half its worth in order to rebuild her studio and make ends meet. When I saw Christine's photography series depicting a wide diversity of forms of spiritual practice, I was struck by their quality, beauty, and presence of heart and spirit. I left the sale, went home, and could not get those photos off my mind, for they truly seemed special and in need of a spiritual home as a group. To their surprise (and mine), I went back and offered to purchase four of the large photos and to donate them to a church community where they would be appreciated and cherished and placed in the appropriate locations. When Christine's partner Carol heard my plan, she welled up with tears, thanked me, and said that she had hoped these unique photos would go as a group and be honored for the depth and diversity of spirituality and heart they conveyed. She also said that the money paid for the prints would be gratefully used for rebuilding Christine's studio by November.

**We find what we look for in life.
If we look for a troubled world,
we will find it.
If we look for peace and kindness,
we will find that.
Spend some time each day in solitude
connecting with
the higher energy forces within.
Connect with people who find the positive.**
J.J. Goldwag

REFLECTIONS ON VETERANS DAY

Submitted by Ellie Loomis

Nobody likes war and all the things associated with it. At the Veterans Day Program in Williamsburg, David West, a World War II veteran, read this poem:

"Thank a Veteran for your Freedom"

By J. L. Sager

It was a Veteran, not a reporter,
who guaranteed freedom of the press.
It was a Veteran, not a poet,
who guaranteed freedom of speech.
It was a Veteran, not a campus organizer,
who guaranteed freedom to demonstrate.
It was a Veteran, not a Minister,
who guaranteed freedom to worship.
It was a Veteran, not a salesman,
who guaranteed freedom to own property.
It was a Veteran, not a travel agent,
who guaranteed freedom to travel.
It was a Veteran, not a politician,
who guaranteed freedom to vote.
It was a Veteran who salutes the flag, risks all for the flag,
and who is buried beneath the flag.

So, Yes, we need to THANK A VETERAN for the freedoms we all enjoy every day.

**Your mind is your greatest treasure.
We become so taken up with the world, with
having and doing more and more that we
come to ignore who we are and forget what
we see the world with.
The most powerful way to change your life is
to change your mind.
When you beautify your mind,
you beautify your world. You learn to see differently.
When your mind awakens, your life
comes alive and the
creative adventure of your soul takes off.**

John O'Donohue



NOVEMBER'S THURSDAY NIGHT LIVE: FRED GOODHUE ON THE MILL RIVER FLOOD OF 1874

By Paula Spencer

The house was packed on Thursday, November 10th for Fred's presentation on the Williamsburg dam disaster. Over 40 people turned out to hear his thorough and insightful account of one of the most catastrophic man-made disasters in the U.S. in the late 1900s. After reviewing the facts of the event-- the failure of the dam, 600 million gallons of water roaring through the villages of Williamsburg, Haydenville and Leeds, claiming 139 lives and causing massive property destruction-- Fred opened up the discussion and asked us to consider three points:

- (1) what were they (the mill owners, the county commissioner, etc.) thinking?
- (2) the idea of a "social contract" and how that affected the events that ensued
- (3) "What if...." (the Goshen dam had ruptured as well; Joseph Hayden Sr. had acted on his suspicions that the dam was unstable; George Cheney's father hadn't looked out the window on that May morning and seen the earthen wall slip away)

A lively discussion followed and we are very grateful to Fred for providing this fascinating look at an important piece of local history. This was the culminating event on this subject which included reading Elizabeth Sharpe's *In the Shadow of the Dam* in our church book group, and a walking tour of the dam led by members of the Williamsburg Historical Society.



This being human is a guest house. Every morning is a new arrival. A joy, a depression, some momentary awareness comes as an unexpected visitor. Welcome and entertain them all! Be grateful for whoever comes because each is sent as a guide from beyond.

Rumi

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

December 2	Laurie Priest
December 3	Margie Pierce
December 6	Maureen Mathers
December 7	Elaine Lamy
December 8	Sean McElligott
December 9	Cathy Strader
December 10	Ann Turner & Lynn Goodhue
December 12	Jerry Roberge
December 13	Talya Gilman-Solomon & Kaliah Pilot
December 14	Nate McElligott & Anna Morin
December 17	Judy Swanson
December 20	Jennifer Griswold & Benjamin Rose
December 21	Grace Molano
December 23	Julianna Donofrio
December 27	Bob Anderson & Regina Kaufman
December 31	Martha Smith



WE ARE FAMILY

During Advent this year, our theme each week as we light the Advent Wreath will be "WE ARE FAMILY!" During the four weeks of Advent, different configurations of families will come forward to light the four candles in the Advent Wreath, and then the Christ Candle at the center of the Wreath on Christmas Eve. We are lifting up and celebrating the diversity in our Church by claiming "WE ARE FAMILY" as our theme this year throughout Advent.



DECEMBER CALENDAR

Sunday, December 4:		Advent 2
	10 AM	Worship Service with Communion. Stewardship Campaign Announcement: Did we make our goal? Launch "Stockings For Change" Drive
	6 PM	Children's Church Teacher /Committee. Potluck, Church Dining Room.
Monday December 5:	6 PM	Diaconate Meeting, Church Dining Room
Tuesday, December 6:	5:30 PM	Trustees Meeting, Church Dining Room
Wednesday, December 7:	7:15 PM	Shepherd's Meeting, Church Dining Room
Saturday, December 10:	10 AM	Book Group. Annual Children's Book Sharing. Bring kids' picture books, stories, poems etc. to read aloud to each other. Contact Paula Spencer for details. Church Dining Room
Sunday, December 11:		Advent 3
	10 AM	Worship Service. Children's Church Christmas Pageant with Tom McCabe, <i>Narrator</i> . Church Council Meeting after Church in the Sanctuary
Tuesday, December 13:	5:30 -7 PM	A2A Disability Meeting. Contact Toby Davis for details. Church Dining Room
Thursday, December 15:	1 PM	Ladies Aid Christmas Party, Church Dining Room
	6:30 PM	Blue Christmas Service. A special quiet service, led by "The Shepherds" for anyone who finds Advent and Christmas difficult for various reasons. Church Dining Room
Sunday, December 18:		Advent 4
	10 AM	Worship Service with Special Children's Message, No Children's Church
Saturday, December 24:	7 PM	Christmas Eve Service, Families Warmly Welcome, Closing Hymn, Silent Night by Candlelight
Sunday, December 25:	10 AM	Christmas Day Service, Church Dining Room, one service for all ages with Brunch to follow





Haydenville Congregational Church

United Church of Christ
143 Main Street, PO Box 257
Haydenville, MA 01039