

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER 2007

The First Congregational Church of Georgetown, United Church of Christ
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A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends:

As many of you know, this Thanksgiving Sara, Zeph and I traveled to Wisconsin to visit my family. We had a wonderful time, but also experienced a few moments of stress. The Wednesday before the holiday we were driving down to Milwaukee on Interstate I-43 hoping to explore the Betty Brinn Children's Museum. Unfortunately we never made it. About half-way there we were involved in a pretty serious accident. I've been in a couple of fender benders before, but never anything like a three car pile up at 60 miles an hour. Luckily we escaped the scene without injury. The whole experience left us a little shaken up and more than a little thankful that the accident hadn't been worse. As my dad offered grace at the dinner table on Thursday, I said my own silent prayer of gratitude for the gift of life as well.

The day after Thanksgiving, I read an article in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reporting another auto accident which occurred just down the road from our own on I-43. This time those involved were not as fortunate. Two teenagers were killed when their car crossed the median and hit an oncoming SUV. Five others were seriously injured in the crash. My heart goes out to those families whose lives are forever changed. They will never share another Thanksgiving feast with their loved ones and I suspect for them a holiday meant to encourage gratitude will always be mixed with a tremendous sense of loss.

So many people share this story. The details may be different, but the end result is the same. We've lost loved ones to accidents, cancer, heart attacks, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, separation, divorce, and countless other causes. Regardless of the timing, whether it is a new loss or occurred years ago, the holidays can be difficult for remaining family and friends.

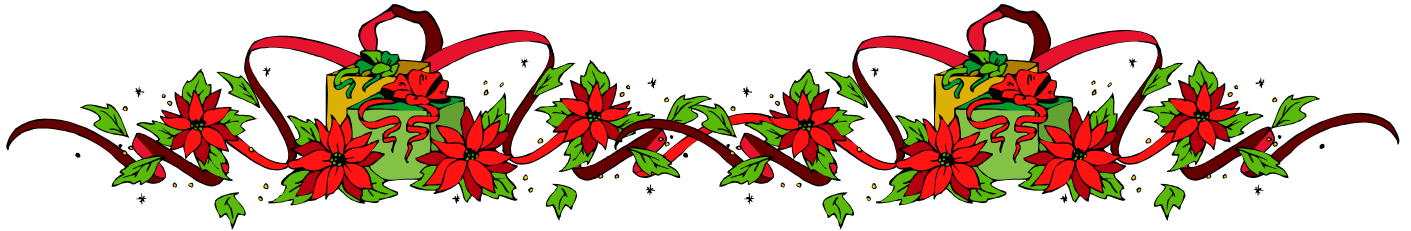
The same is true for our church family as well. We've lost some dear, beloved members over the last year. This will be our first Christmas without them. For many, the joy and hope of this season will be beyond reach. It is natural to grieve these important losses. Some may be experiencing a sense of denial or anger. Some may be attempting to bargain with God, praying that the loss may change or be erased. Others may be experiencing the symptoms of depression. Grief takes many, many forms and is a natural process which eventually can lead to a sense of healing and acceptance.

In the five years I have called New England home, I have witnessed just how skilled we all can be at suppressing these tough emotions. Often we do not want to burden others with our pain. But it is important to remember that we need not bear that weight alone. As members of the body of Christ, we have one another to lean on, to provide support and care, to offer a listening ear and an open heart.

If your life has been touched by loss and you would like someone to talk with, know that Pastor Sara and I are available and happy to meet with you during the upcoming holiday season and throughout the year. Feel free to schedule an appointment to meet with either one of us in the church office, at your home, or at a restaurant for a cup of coffee or lunch. Let us know how we can be helpful.

And, most of all may the blessings of Christ fill your hearts with God's love and hope throughout the seasons of Advent and Christmas, even as we continue to grieve the losses in our lives.

Pastor Eric



Christmas Pageant



Our First Annual Christmas Pageant will take place during our Sunday Service on December 16th.

Rehearsals for our pageant will be held in the Sanctuary directly after worship on December 2nd and December 9th.

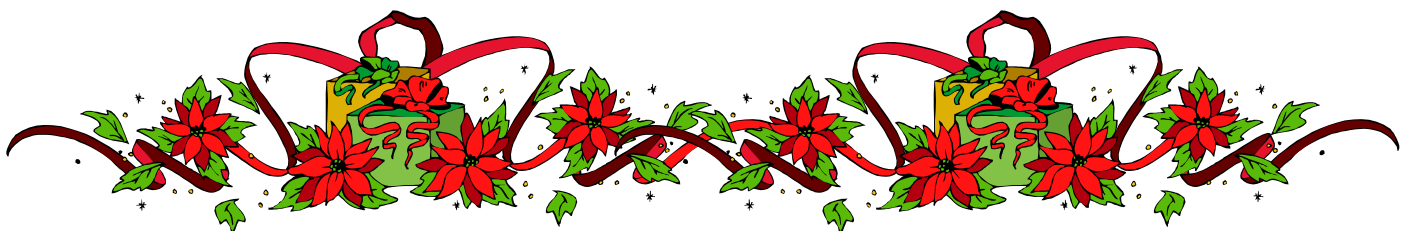
All children and adults are welcome to participate!



Christmas Eve Service



Join us for our Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols Monday, December 24th at 7:00p.m.





THANK YOU



Dear Church Family,

Thank you all for the many lovely cards, phone calls, and flowers that I received after my accident. They certainly helped to brighten my spirits. Also, thank you for the food basket filled with delicious dishes from the fair food table. I enjoyed them greatly.

Love,
Isabel Gammon

Dear Friends,

I can't believe that the "Thee Ole Colonial Faire" is just a memory! So much planning, time, energy and effort, and the two days are gone in blur of fun, food and fellowship (and hard work but I can't add it because it spoils the alliteration). I have to admit, the role of chair for the fair did frighten me, but I shouldn't have spent a moment worrying about it. The people in our church are so supportive, that the fair can't fail, and it never does. For everyone that helped, a big THANK YOU!!!! It always amazes me how things come together year after year - but with a group of people like we had, success is the ultimate result.

If you haven't had a chance to work at the fair, I strongly suggest that you make plans to do it next year. It is hard work (at times) but you have a chance to meet people, to get to know people on an entirely different level and to support our church in a meaningful way. The job of Fair Chair is open for next year- give it some thought. I would be happy to talk to anyone who wants to know the details. It's not as hard as you probably think it is and it's fun! Thanks again to everyone who helped - we did it!

With warmest regards,
Laura Zalewski

Many people do not realize the amount of man-power it takes to make some 200 pies (large and small) to have ready for the opening hour of the church fair. So, to all who had picked, sorted and bagged blueberries, grew, picked, peeled and sliced apples...Thank-you! To those who came to mix pastry dough, roll the dough out for the pie-crusts, mixed ingredients and filled the pies, crimped, baked and bagged all the pies...Thank-you!

In addition....to those who made pumpkin, pecan, raspberry and apricot pies, whoopie pies, turnovers, cinnamon sticks, peach crisp, apple dumplings, apple sauce, soups, baked beans, casseroles and other assorted foods...Thank-you! To those who donated supplies and ingredients...Thank-you! To those who joined our pie-making "parties", giving up some week-day evenings, week-ends and a full day before the church Fair...Thank you!

Lastly, to all who came to the Fair and bought one, two or even more food-items...Thank-you!

Emily Knapp and Pam Sheehan
Food-Table Chairs



ANNOUNCEMENTS



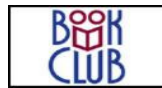
Stewardship Update

Thank you! To all who participated in our annual **Stewardship Campaign** by filling out and turning in your pledge cards! We thank you for your faithful dedication to God and to our church.

And a friendly reminder; if you didn't get the chance to pledge yet, there is still time! Pledge cards are available next to our pledge box in the Fellowship Hall, or in the church office. If you need more information about our Stewardship Campaign please talk with one of our Stewardship Team members, Richard Aberman, Tim Clift, George Comiskey, Tom Stewart, or Pastor Sara Marean.

The Woman's Guild

We'll be meeting at Noon at Wheelerbrook Farm on Thursday, December 13th. It will be a "Share-the-Cost" Christmas luncheon (\$6.00) and everyone is asked to bring socks for Ruth's House (men's, women's and children's socks are all needed).



Book Club



The meeting of the book club will take place on Thursday, December 13, at the home of Janice Murphy, 371 Andover Street, Georgetown. The book of discussion will be **Water for Elephants**. Everyone is welcome!



Books Available



There are books available for the taking, from the small meeting room next to the Long Room. Help yourselves and pass them along to friends, or return them, as you wish.



Coffee Hour



Coffee hour host/hostesses are needed for December and January. If you would like to host please contact Kirsten Davis (978-352-2157) or email chuckd100@verizon.net or Janice Murphy (978-352-7454) or email jmurphy7@keyspanenergy.com.



Flower Donations



If you would like to donate flowers for the Communion Table for a birthday, anniversary, or a special occasion, please contact Michelle Brock at 978-352-6853 or Jaime Krenn at 978-352-7932.

Future Mission Projects, Events, etc.

If anyone has any ideas/suggestions for any mission projects, please contact Diane Townsend, Missions Coordinator (978-373-0619).

Deadline for Sunday Bulletins

If you would like announcements inserted into the Sunday bulletin, please submit to the church office via email at no later than 10:00a.m. on the Wednesdays before. If information is not received by the deadline, it may not be inserted into the bulletin.

Deadline for January Newsletter

All articles for the January Newsletter must be received before the deadline, which is Monday, December 17th. If articles are not received by the deadline it may not be inserted into the Monthly Newsletter.

Office Hours

The office will be closed on Tuesday, December 25th and on Tuesday, January 1st.



****OFFICE HOURS****



Monday - Thursday 9:30 - 2:00p.m.

REMEMBER TO CHECK THE MONTHLY CALANDER FOR
COMMITTEE AND BOARD MEETING TIMES AND DATES!!!



Light the Church Fund



Contributions for lighting the church edifice can be made on a monthly or weekly basis, either in memory of loved ones, or in honor of someone special. Contributor and names of loved ones will be listed each week in the bulletins and also in the Monthly Newsletter. For one month's listing, the suggested donation is \$100. You may send contributions to the church (P.O. Box 200) and to the attention of our Collector.

Lighting of the Church for the month of December was made in memory of
Susan Johnston
From her husband Earl Johnston

Lighting of the Church for the month of December was made in memory of
James F. Callahan, loving husband and father.
From Nancy, Kirsten and Tyler Callahan

Lighting of the Church for the month of December was made in memory of
Richard Oatway
From Barbara Oatway and Karen, Steve, Jason and Alicia LeBlanc



Happy Birthday Wishes



December Birthday's

Diane Townsend - Dec. 1st
Bridgit Bratland - Dec. 7th
Jody Moore - Dec. 12th
Betty Bruce - Dec. 13th
Rex Kelly - Dec. 16th
Erik Bratland- Dec. 17th
Carol Sheehan - Dec 25th
Donna DeSisto - Dec. 29th
Emily Moore - Dec. 30th



Birthday Roses



Donald Gordon - Dec. 11th
Evelyn Hills - Dec. 27th
Wayland Thompson- Dec. 28th
Evelyn Boose - Dec. 28th

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Church School Class Schedule with Lesson Topics

Sunday, December 2

STUDENTS BEGIN IN CLASS

Focus Scripture: Isaiah 2:1-5

Prophets of Peace

This is the first Sunday in the liturgical season of Advent. During Advent we prepare ourselves for the coming of Jesus Christ in our lives (sometimes referred to as the “second coming”) while commemorating his “first coming” as a newborn baby at Christmas. Christians view this reading from Isaiah as a description of the second coming of Christ. He will come as a judge and a peace maker. Nations will beat their swords into plowshares and put an end to all violence and war.

Sunday, December 9

STUDENTS BEGIN IN THE SANCTUARY

Focus Scripture: Isaiah 11:1-10

Dare to Hope

This prediction was written during a time when Israel’s Davidic dynasty (beginning with King David) was in jeopardy. The prophet Isaiah predicted that a future king will come who possesses God’s spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge and respect of God (often called fear of God). During this king’s rule, the oppressed will receive justice and peace shall reign over all creation. Even the wolf shall live in harmony with the lambs. Christians believe Isaiah was referring to Jesus and God’s future reign on earth.

Sunday, December 16

NO CHURCH SCHOOL

Intergenerational Christmas Pageant: Our church school students, along with others from the congregation, will present the story of Jesus’ birth.

Sunday, December 23

NO CHURCH SCHOOL

Intergenerational Worship Service

Sunday, December 30

NO CHURCH SCHOOL

Christmas Carol Sing in the Sanctuary: Come sing your favorite carols during this hour of worship.

Classes Resume on Sunday, January 6, 2008.

To learn more about our church school and sign your children up for classes, please speak with Pastor Eric Marean.

NEXT TEACHERS’ MEETING: Sunday, December 9, 9:30 a.m.

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

Sunday, December 2nd

Tree decorating following worship

Sunday, December 9th

Pizza Party and Yankee Swap at the church
3:00-5:00

Sunday December 16th

Regular meeting at church 3:30-5:00
Possibly gingerbread houses or holiday craft TBA