



# The First Congregational Church of Reading

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST • AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

Produced by our Church Family

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## First ChurchNEWS

### Statement of Purpose

We gather as a faith community to love and magnify God.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, we will love our neighbors as ourselves, advocating for peace and justice.

We will go out and share our faith in Christ, inviting others to join us.

We will be nurturers of the spirit and teachers of the Word.

We will welcome and provide sanctuary to all.

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### Rev Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

City Mission Society announces that the second annual MLK Day of Service will be held on **Saturday, January 17**. Volunteers from churches all over the area will perform services throughout the city, from painting and cleaning at service sites to packing up books and other items to be shipped to people in need.

Last January, 140 CMS volunteers from two dozen churches came together to emulate Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King's message of peace instead of simply commemorating it. Last year's volunteers said: "Saturday was a wonderful experience for all of us. It provided an outlet to honor MLK that appealed to those of us who want to 'do something'."

To register or for questions contact Linda Ananian from the Outreach Commission at [icananian@aol.com](mailto:icananian@aol.com) or Rev. Bendroth at [revnorm.fccr@verizon.net](mailto:revnorm.fccr@verizon.net). Confirmants are expected to participate. We will car pool and travel together and gather at the United Parish in Brookline at 9:00 am for opening worship.

### Peace Workshops: "Jahmol's Vision for Youth Peace"



City Mission Society produced the film "Jahmol's Vision for Youth Peace" and continues to offer the Peace Workshops, including public speaking training, to youth who wish to follow in the legacy of Jahmol Norfleet.

On **Monday, January 19**, the teen producers of the film and friends of Jahmol Norfleet will be presenting the film and speaking at the Reading Memorial High School Performing Arts Center for the town-wide Martin Luther King Jr. The breakfast, sponsored by the Reading Clergy Association, will begin at 9 am and the program at 10 am. Music will be presented by the Reading Community singers,

the Korean Church of the Nazarene and the Reading High Chorus. Families and children are welcome and encouraged to attend, and Confirmants are required to attend.

Jahmol was 20 when was shot to death outside his Roxbury home on November 28, 2006. Jahmol was exceptionally charismatic, and in the year prior to his murder he led a peace movement among the youth of Boston. Mayor Thomas Menino hailed Jahmol as an important architect of the gang truce that prevailed the summer before he died.

The film follows Norfleet's friends as they carry through on his commitment to peace, including participation in Peace Workshops around the city and meetings with prominent area residents including Deborah Prothrow-Stith, Harvard School of Public Health, Ambassador Charles Stith, and Professor Charles Ogletree, Harvard Law School. But the video really belongs to the youth themselves, as it movingly traces their development from a state of mourning to becoming powerful advocates for the reduction of youth handgun violence. Read about the project in USA Today, [http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2007-03-05-gangs\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2007-03-05-gangs_N.htm).

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## The In-Between Time...

### *EPIPHANY: A Season to Let Your Light Shine*

The first time I went to an Epiphany service I was not certain what to expect. Having been raised in a non-liturgical tradition, I didn't know the meaning of the word epiphany. But I looked it up and discovered it meant "an appearance or manifestation, especially of a divine being." It was also interesting for me to discover the word had special meaning in the ancient world because it was used to describe the appearance of a ruler. The same culture that birthed the Bible and the early church celebrated the visit of its ruler with great pomp and circumstance. The ruler's visit was always a lavish affair marked by feasting and a celebrative mood. I assumed the service was going to celebrate the Epiphany, the appearance of Jesus, and do so in a lavish fashion.

I was immediately drawn up into the meaning of the service and into the place it played in the unfolding drama of the mystery of salvation as we stood to sing:

*What star is this, with beams so bright,  
more lovely than the noonday light?  
'Tis sent to announce a newborn king,  
Glad tiding of our God to bring.*

Again, the meaning of why I was there struck my mind and heart as the minister prayed: "O God, who by the leading of a star didst manifest Thy only begotten Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know Thee now by faith, to Thy presence, where we may behold Thy glory face to face; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen." (From *The Book of Common Prayer*)

In the early church the feast of Epiphany originally celebrated the birth of Christ. However, after the birth of Christ was placed on December 25th to replace the pagan feast of the birth of the sun, Epiphany was designated as the event that manifested Jesus as the Son of God, the Savior of the world. In the East, Epiphany was appointed as the day to celebrate the baptism of Jesus. However, in the West, Epiphany became the day to celebrate the manifestation of Jesus through three great events: the visit of the Magi, the baptism of Jesus, and the marriage feast of Cana.

Today Epiphany brings us to the end of the Christmas cycle, completing the great rhythm of expectation and fulfillment that defines this period of time. It also points to the beginning of Christ's manifestation to the world, a ministry that not only happened in the first century but happens now within the church and within us as we travel through the unfolding of the paschal mystery of the liturgical year.

On Sunday, January 4 we will not only celebrate Holy Communion but also the Epiphany. Then on Sunday, January 11, The Baptism of Christ, we will provide an opportunity to renew our baptismal vows. There will also be opportunities to practice the "ethics of Jesus" on our Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service on Saturday, **January 17** sponsored by the City Mission Society (more details on the front page) and the Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast sponsored by the Reading Clergy Association and the Town of Reading (again, see front page article).

May this season of Epiphany be full of "ah-ha" moments for you as you discover the hidden God in surprising places.

Blessings,

Rev. Dr. Norman B. Bendroth, Interim Pastor

### Newcomers Classes to Meet

A Newcomers Class will be scheduled for four Sundays during January and February (January 11, 18, 25 & February 1) for those interested in exploring membership at the First Congregational Church of Reading, UCC. Our first session on **January 11** will be a Welcome Brunch held after worship. Child-care will be provided. This is an exploratory class and participation does not require membership. Please speak to the interim pastor or call the church office if interested at 781-944-0205 or [office1.fccr@verizon.net](mailto:office1.fccr@verizon.net).





**Sunday, January 4, 10 a.m.**  
**Second Sunday after Christmas**  
Holy Communion  
Ecclesiastes 3: 1-15  
*Happiness and Happenstance*

**Sunday, January 11, 10 a.m.**  
**The Baptism of Christ**  
*Renewal of Baptismal Vows*  
Mark 1: 4-11  
*Jesus' Baptism and Ours*

**Sunday, January 18, 10 a.m.**  
**Third Sunday after Christmas**  
John 1: 43-51  
Deb Adams preaching  
**Sunday, January 25, 10 a.m.**  
**Fourth Sunday after Christmas**  
Mark 1:14-20  
Karl Gazarian preaching

### NOW Meeting January 19 and Potential Timeline to Reorganizing

The NOW Group meets on the third Monday of each month—with the next meeting at 7:30 on **Monday, January 19th**. The NOW group uses their energy to back any ideas that supports Nurture Outreach and Witness.

Our January agenda will focus on reintroducing the Mother's group and considering a large group read (like town-wide) and having the author come in to discuss his/her writings with us.

We will also be establishing a timeline for discussing our church's reorganization, leading up to the annual meeting. We are asking each committee and commission to identify what is essential so we can ensure that the essential roles are covered during the transition. By identifying the essential, we can hold off on non-essential roles or find a "sprinter group" to manage them during the interim if they have a passion.

In January, we will invite another speaker to talk about their restructuring (TBD). In February, we will hold some forums on restructuring—how we plan to finally test out a new organization, while continuing to run the church. We will talk about how we will formally propose at the annual meeting a plan to officially suspend certain parts of the bylaws. In March we will pick a day for workshop on a flexible organizational structure, and the plan is to develop a straw man organization to consider. In April, we will present a straw man for feedback and revision. In May, we will present the proposal for suspending bylaws related to committee/commission structure, and propose a new organization at the annual meeting.

It was decided at the last annual meeting that the NOW group would spearhead this reorganization. NOW is a loose group of interested people interested in moving the church forward using the navigational tools created in the Golden Days meetings. You are a member of NOW if you are interested in moving the church forward. So please join us or contact Linda Ananian, [lcananian@aol.com](mailto:lcananian@aol.com).

### Book Group Selections for December and January

#### January 6 – Replay by Ken Grimwood

Bev Cook will guide discussion of this novel where the main character, Jeff Winston, lives and dies again in a continuous twenty-five-year cycle. It provides opportunities to speculate about the nature of time and it asks the question: "What if you could live your life over again?"

Thus it fits well with the self improvement thoughts many of us have at the beginning of each New Year!

#### February 3 – The Faith Club

by Randy Idliby, Suzanne Oliver, and Priscilla Warner

Jennifer Souza and Judie Williams will engage the group in discussion of the interfaith dialogue shown in this book by three women representing Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. The writers began their "faith club" after 9/11. Each woman came with her own prejudices, her unique faith story, and with personal stereotypes and misconceptions. The authors hope that others will engage in similar dialogue.

The Book Club meets on most Tuesdays from 7:30 to 9:00 in the church parlor. Please contact John or Mary Ann Lape if you have questions (978 664-3583).



## ACEs in the Autumn

FCCR's ACEs continued as usual through the autumn. This on-line group focuses on scripture and prayer, primarily prayer. The lectionary for the upcoming Sunday is posted each week, and a hardy soul volunteers some thoughts on the readings. Occasionally others chime in.

The prayer component is more popular. Each day during the week a member offers a prayer to the group. The prayer assignment is based on a schedule, and is, naturally, opt-in. It is a good way for developing one's own ability to converse with God, and also a good way to connect one's concerns with the larger church community.

During the autumn, we had a series of Prayers for Peace from a dozen major faith traditions, coming from the Peace Abbey in Sherborn, MA. We also considered various approaches to understanding the nature of prayer. Of course, most importantly, our members continued to provide their own prayers.

No special requirements are necessary for you to participate. Some members of the group participate by reading the prayers and thoughts of others; some participate by providing prayers or thoughts; and some do all, read, pray, provide thoughts. Whatever is most comfortable for each individual. You can read people's prayers and musings on line at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FCCR-ACE/>. You can sign up to become an active participant by sending an e-mail to [FCCR-ACE-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:FCCR-ACE-subscribe@yahoo.com). If you have questions or concerns, contact Larry Piper [[larry@lgpiper.net](mailto:larry@lgpiper.net)].

Here are some prayers from the autumn:

### Buddhist Prayer For Peace

May all beings everywhere  
plagued with sufferings of body and mind  
quickly be freed from their illnesses.  
May those frightened cease to be afraid,  
and may those bound be free.  
May the powerless find power,  
and may people think of befriending one another.  
May those who find themselves in trackless, fear-  
ful wildernesses,  
the children, the aged, the unprotected,  
be guarded by beneficent celestials,  
and may they swiftly attain Buddhahood.

### Gay W. -- 20 November 2008

A Life of Many Colors...even better than a coat!

Days mixed up with joy found in growing relationships, of work that feeds the soul, of growing up (at last!), with a sprinkling of sorrows in loss, and change that is not always welcome.

Dear God you know me so well - without the sprinkling of sorrows, the joys would not take on such depth of hue or brightness. So thank you today for the variety of life: for laughter and for love, for tears that come when hearts connect; thank you for memories that sustain, wisdom that enriches, and forgiveness that frees.

Gracious God, color me thankful today.

### Joan K. -- 3 November 2008

Today, I pray, Oh God, for discernment in the voting booth.

We are so often bombarded with slick, sharply worded negativity about one candidate or another that it is hard to determine what is truth and what is propaganda. We get so tired, especially this year, when the campaigns began much earlier than before, of the banter that we may tune out all the voices, taking a chance that an important one will not be missed.

These are very important times for our elected and appointed officials and the constituents they serve. We must choose our next leaders wisely and trust that they will, in turn, choose advisers and confidants who will best aid them in shaping a better future for all of us. I pray that politicians and government staffs at all levels will hear your call to work together for the good of all

your people, here and in the world at large. I also pray that journalists and those who serve our leadership will use their positions to keep the process of governing open and accountable. Help all of us to use our best efforts to support what is good in government and to speak out when we feel in our hearts that something is not right.

At the end of the day (or however long it takes), may our country come to together and prove to ourselves and you, that we are willing to work towards goals which will serve well all your people.

Amen

## Planning Ahead for Reaching Out



We are starting the new year with a calendar for Outreach for the first three months of the year. So, as you start filling in your 2009 calendar and make your new year lists, please mark down a few of the Outreach projects. We plan to offer many different Outreach opportunities for the year—please pick out the ones you like to support, we hope others will support their favorites and together we will make a difference.

**Monthly Collection for Reading Food Pantry:** Beginning in January, we will be supporting a monthly focused donation for the Reading Food Pantry, concentrating on collecting on the first week of the month. Of course, all items are needed at all times, but we thought if we established a routine, for ourselves and the church, we would be thinking about our contributions on a scheduled and routine basis.

In January, we will be collecting **White** paper goods – toilet paper, napkins, paper towels and Kleenexes (they don't have to be actually white).

In February, we will be collecting **Red** for Valentines Day – catsup, red juices, salsa and spaghetti sauces.

March will be St. Patrick's Day **Green** – canned spinach, relish, olives.

In February we will also be collecting linens and bedding for Emmaus House in Haverhill. They were so appreciative—and so needed— the 3 big boxes of toiletries we sent. We will be collecting towels, twin sheets, and pillows (must be new). Look for more information and a box in February, but do take advantage of the sales in January.

Around Mother's day, Outreach and CWF will be sponsoring an "All Church Collection" of **Gifts of the Heart**. These Hygiene Kits for Church World Service Kits are distributed anywhere in the world in response to global emergencies and disasters. In the face of natural disasters, violence, or grinding poverty, a Hygiene Kit can mean the difference between sickness and health for struggling families.

The Outreach Commission will be making and serving **lunch to participants in the common cathedral** on Boston Common **Sunday, March 22**. . We need people who would be willing to make the lunch and accompany us into Boston.

**One Great Hour of Sharing**, one of MAUCC collections, will be held on **March 22**. OGHS Supports partners in more than 70 countries with ministries that fund development projects, feed the victims of famine, provide services for displaced people, and respond to natural disasters. These ministries are the responsibility of Wider Church Ministries, Global Sharing of Resources.

### Operation Christmas Child a Success!

A big thank you and amen for 33 shoeboxes decorated and filled. Thank you to everyone who donated items and money for shipping and to the church school kids who helped to decorate and fill the boxes. We had great fun "shopping" the tables of toys and supplies to fill the each box for a needy child to enjoy. Start saving those extra party favors and hard candy for next year's collection.

### Advent Collections Report

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to any of the 4 Advent collections sponsored by Outreach last month! We delivered 3 large carloads of gifts for adults and children to the City Mission Society's Christmas Shop drop-off point; 3 large boxes of toiletries went to the shelter Emmaus House in Haverhill; and the collection for the Reading Food Pantry was amazing. Outreach sincerely appreciates all of the support you provide, at this time and throughout the year.

**Women 'n' Stitches....**The winner of the beautiful hand-quilted quilt, made by Anne Cusolito for Women 'n' Stitches, was Frank Easton (a friend of Eleanor Grant). Frank generously bought \$200 worth of tickets to support our cause so we are happy that he won. The winning name was drawn by Samantha Gibbs during coffee hour on 12/14. We raised \$462 for CWF and the money will be used to purchase needed items for the kitchen to help meet the "safe kitchen" standards. Thanks to everyone who bought a ticket to support our fundraiser.

**CWF—Board Meeting - January 14** at 7:30 in the Library

**Circle Sunday** - Breakfast for all women, especially Circle members—**February 1** at 8:45 (please note new time) - in the Dining room food provided by Circles

**Ham and Bean Supper - February 7** at 6:30. There will be a Coffee House following the supper, featuring a group of Irish singers.

## YOU Are the Link!

Yes, you!! When someone you know someone from our church family - or even in your own family - is ill or hospitalized, please let the office or Rev. Norm know. We depend on you to keep Rev. Norm and the care giving team at FCCR alerted - it is our joy to visit, to provide meals or rides, indeed to pray for folks who are not well. If you know of someone who has not been well or has had to make a hospital visit, don't worry if you think you'll be the fifth person to let Norm or someone else know. The news is important - so important that hearing it "seven times seventy" would not be too many! Thank you for your help and your care.

### Piglets and Packages of Delight!



Many, many thanks to Carol Johnson for once more orchestrating our care packages to college students in our church family. Carol speaks of having great fun finding the perfect "toy" to include in the mailing - this year a squishy pig that we understand could be tossed in the air and stick to the dorm ceiling (at least it stuck for a while...). Along with the toy went cookies - with thanks to Shirley Osborne for her baking, and to countless others as Carol was able to reap the benefit of Cocoa & Cookies bounty - and various snacking items to help the kiddos through the long hours of exam preparation. Twenty-two packages were mailed. We are grateful as well to CWF who underwrites the cost of this now much-loved seasonal ministry.

### FCCR and Peter Sanborn Place

On Wednesday evening, December 10th Martha Goodman and the Jubilate Choir packed up their belongings and traveled to Peter Sanborn Place to offer an evening concert of Christmas music. Gay Williams is currently leading worship services at Peter Sanborn twice a month and had extended an invitation to Martha to bring the bell choir. About thirty residents came out to enjoy the sounds and to sing along as well. Many thanks for the gift of time and talent from our bell choir and director!



Our church and Peter Sanborn have a long history together—it may be that folks new to our church are not aware of the connection. Way back in the mid-1970's a committee of church people were invited by then Pastor Rev. Paul Barnes to think about building a facility for senior independent living in Reading. Rev. Barnes continued to be a driving force for this project. The committee of which our own Lorna Knapp was a member) met over the course of years researching this possibility. In 1979 a group of members from this church along with support of the community founded and incorporated United Church Homes of Reading, Inc. for the purpose of developing low-income housing for seniors. Lorna relates that UCH first looked at a property behind Parker and then learned about a piece of property that Curt and Sally Nitzche owned (they too are members of this church). The Nitzches sold UCH the property at less than market value and in 1983 UCH opened the doors at Peter Sanborn Place.

Many folks from FCCR have served on the board at Peter Sanborn. On the original board were Herb and Ruth Converse, Lorna Knapp, Bill Denhard, and Rev. Barnes. Over the years since that time there has been an effort to involve more people from the community on the board. However, among our local heroes at PSP are Judie Williams, Dan Hall, Dave Brigham, Bruce Haakanson, Joe Kingston, Ernie Livingstone, Gene Takach, Liz and Dan Swallow, Eleanor Grant, Doreen Gardner, Hazel Piper, and Alan Bond who served for a number of years as an ex-officio member. Coming by this list has not been easy so if someone has been left out please 1) forgive us and 2) let the church office know so we can make corrections.

As we take further steps in our Reading Cares venture - as well as our own Outreach opportunities—it would be great to find ways to continue to build on and support this significant relationship with Peter Sanborn Place.

# Confirmation Retreat: Practicing Resurrection

January 30-31-Grotonwood Retreat Center, Groton, MA

*"This whole weekend rocked. I loved the whole thing." --Youth participant*

Retreats begin **PROMPTLY** at 7:00 pm on Friday and concludes at 4:00 pm on Saturday. The cost is \$115.00 per person which includes program expenses, lodging, breakfast, lunch and snacks. Leaders should be sure their groups arrive on time and are ready to go!!!

*Retreat Facilitator:* Heather Ramsey, Youth Minister at The First Church of Christ in Marblehead, MA

*Retreat objectives:*

- To help youth recognize that in a faith filled life they encounter challenges, but are not alone in facing those challenges.
- To help youth understand how God gives us strength and tools to face and break free from these
- Challenges and influences that can often cause us to get "stuck."
- To help youth consider how the life, example, and teaching of Jesus, as well as the theologies, traditions and history of the UCC, teach us to free ourselves from those things that restrain us from a deeper faith in God, and from a greater love and service to others.
- To help youth discover how they as individuals and as part of a larger faith community can help others find freedom from the challenges and influences in life that restrain them, their faith, and their ability to have a close relationship with God.

## What to Bring

- Sleeping bag or sheets and blankets
- Casual clothes
- Sleepwear
- Toiletries
- Towels
- Flashlight
- Snacks
- Medical Release Form, signed
- \$5.00 cash for "Spirit" T-shirts



## Confirmation Schedule

### Sunday, January 4, 2009

Dinner at 6 p.m.  
Chapel  
Topic: *God Creates, chapter 8*

### Saturday, January 17

MLK Jr. Day of Service  
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Brookline and Boston

### Sunday, January 18

10:15 in the Youth Lounge  
Topic: *God Seeks and Saves, chapter 9*

### Monday, January 19

MLK Jr. Breakfast  
9 a.m. to 11 a.m.  
RMHS Performing Arts Center Jah-

mol Norfleet Video Project & urban teens sharing about non-violent alternatives to conflict resolution.

### Friday & Saturday, January 30-31

Confirmation Retreat  
Grotonwood Retreat Center  
Groton, MA



**The Christmas Eve Pageant**—Each year the members of our church rise to the challenge of sharing the story of the night of Christ's birth with our friends, family and neighbors. This year was another beautiful evening filled with smiling donkeys, camels and sheep under the watchful eyes of the shepherds (and some adult spotters as children jumped to the stage!) They, along with adorable angels, very wise men, a dashing innkeeper and much-welcomed travelers all basked along with the angel Gabriel in the shining light of new life and several hundred glow sticks. Our thanks to all who participated, in speaking roles, as actors and as musical performers. Many served in more than one capacity! Our thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make this special night even more wondrous, including the audience who was so spectacular. And, thanks as always to our esteemed director.

## *Poinsettias are given in loving memory of:*

*Ernest Degel by his family*

*Loved ones by Carol Patterson*

*Jacque Little by Gordon Little*

*Dorothy Scheib by Beverly Cook*

*Gina Frasca by the Gibbs Family*

*George P. Elliot by Phyllis R. Elliot*

*William P. Larkin by Sandra Larkin*

*Family and Friends by Judie Williams*

*Tom Ofenstein by Sharon Ofenstein*

*Eleanor Winham by Adelaide Winham*

*Maurice Sanford by the Sanford family*

*Larry Wood by Don and Ponny Wood*

*My beloved wife, Elizabeth "Bette" Pack*

*Our parents by Arthur and Lorna Knapp*

*Roger Wilder by Betty and Mark Wilder*

*Russell F. Winham by Adelaide Winham*

*Andrew Wilder by Betty and Mark Wilder*

*John and Esther Kane by Sharon Ofenstein*

*Christine Zwicker by Don and Ponny Wood*

*Francis M. Kiley by his sister, Norma Hailey*

*Kevin Desmond by his friend, Norma Hailey*

*Our parents by Peter and Ingrid Liebermann*

*Karen and Martin Gibbs by the Gibbs Family*

*Our grandparents by Tom and Jane McCord*

*Helen Walls Jardine by Kathy and Alan Ulrich*

*Muriel, , Bill and Donald Meyers by John Meyers*

*Our dear friends by Peter and Bonnie Newhall*

*Departed loved ones by Tom and Jane McCord*

*Mrs. Jeremiah J. Breen by Betty and Mark Wilder*

*Friends and Family by Everett and Virginia Blodgett*

*My parents, Ruth L. & Ralph L. Hobbs by Diane Cain*

*Inez and Russell Daley by Bob and Lorraine Oliphant*

*Thomas Corkery by Jack and Judy Austin and family*

*Hazel, Evelyn and Winsor Bruce by the Bruce family*

*David V. Osborne by David, Shirley and Patti Osborne*

*Peg and John Austin by Jack and Judy Austin and family*

*My parents, Roland and Edna Russell by Janet Colclough*

*Carl and Josephine Oliphant by Bob and Lorraine Oliphant*

*Charles and Evelyn Chase by Burt and Jean Carr and family*

*Mr. and Mrs. Carl Wood (Mickey) by Don and Ponny Wood*

*My aunts, Mildred Wormwell and Mabel Heintz by Diane Cain*

*My parents, Dorothy and Stephen Dodge by their son, Bob Dodge*

*Tom's parents, Donald and Ruth McCord, by Tom and Jane McCord*

*My aunt and uncle, Helen L. Huber & John W. Huber by Diane Cain*

*Nellie and Henry Bates & Ruth Samuels by Peter and Bonnie Newhall*

*Russell, Jean, and Ralph Sturtevant by David, Shirley and Patti Osborne*

*Isabel and George Newhall & Hazel Nelson by Peter and Bonnie Newhall*

*Mary and Joseph Komidar by Cindy Crampe & Kate and Travis Komidar*

*Eva Corkery Buskirk & George Buskirk by Jack & Judy Austin and family*

*My parents, Norman & Gladys Dickinson by their daughter, Norma Hailey*

*My grandparents, Ida G. & Frank S. Hobbs & Mae E. Heintz by Diane Cain*

*Ann and Cliff Baker from their children, grandchildren & great-grandchildren*

*Our parents & grandparents, Bob & Elsie Holden by Shirley Holden & Christine Garvey*

*Marjorie Orpin by Judith Woelke*

*All who serve and have served our country by the Cresseys*

*Our nieces, Kendall and Kelsey, by Tom and Jane McCord*

*Our brave and cheerful aging parents by Hazel and Larry Piper*

*Don and Ponny Wood, for all their love and support, by Jenn LeConti*

*Our pastor, Norm, who serves, comforts and inspires us*

*Our musical ministry, led by Chad, that enhances our worship so beautifully*

*All who teach & support our youth, led by the ministry of Karl Gazarian & Linda Jerrett*

*Our support staff, Marilyn, Tim, Bruce and Jim, who keep our Church running so well*

*All in our congregation who work so tirelessly on committees, programs, and activities, sharing their gifts to make our Church a vibrant example of God at work in this world, whether it be within our Church or within the community.*

### ***Holiday Greetings from those who have sent cards to the church for the enjoyment of all:***

*Ginny Davenport*

*Marge Merrill*

*Nancy Ballantyne*

*The Maiella Family*

*Shirley Holden*

*The Viegas Family*

*Dan and Liz Swallow*

*Phyllis Elliott*

*The Wilder Family*

*The Sanford Family*

*Dr. Fred Grosse*

*Burt and Jean Carr*

*Adelaide Winham*

*The Cressey Family*

*Ruth Converse*

*The Imrich Family*

*Gay Williams*

*Eris White*

*Carol Patterson*

*Sharon Ofenstein*

*The Bendroths*

*Arthur and Lorna Knapp*

*John and Shirley Fairchild*

*Janet and Doug Colclough*

*Marilyn and Dennis Hossman*

*John and Mary Ann Lape*

*Judith Woelke*

*Kitty Jones*

*Ruth and Barry Mitchel*

*Noreen and Richard Conlan*

*The Jerrett Family*



Daily prayers are invited for all of our friends and members-especially those who are dealing with these special joys and concerns. They and their families are most grateful for your spiritual support and cards of greeting.



We pray for healing, recovery, and strength for:

- ✓ For a husband undergoing spinal surgery December 1st.
- ✓ Marjorie Orpin who is in a great deal of pain (ease her suffering)
- ✓ My sister-in-law who faces surgery to remove a growth on her colon.
- ✓ Successful cancer surgery for Marcie and Alice.
- ✓ Linda Pederson's brother who had a cyst removed and has no health insurance.
- ✓ Patti Sereno's nephew Brian, who has a brain tumor and has started chemotherapy.
- ✓ Successful knee surgery for my Mom.
- ✓ Leslie Fuller who is suffering with Parkinson's and a stomach ailment.
- ✓ Dave Osborne who is having spasms in his legs after having a cyst removed.
- ✓ Shirley Osborne who will be having back surgery in January.
- ✓ Gary DeLong who had a heart attack.

We pray for those who are grieving:

- ✓ My cousin, whose husband took his life after coping with depression.
- ✓ Liz Swallow's family on the loss of a much loved uncle in Iowa.

We also pray for the following special concerns:

- ✓ Health for Marcie.
- ✓ A daughter struggling with depression.
- ✓ My son whose whereabouts seem unknown.
- ✓ Please keep Ken in your prayers.
- ✓ The LeConti family for strength and hope with Bryce's everyday challenges.

- ✓ My sister as her mother-in-law enters the final stage of incurable cancer. Be with her and her family.
- ✓ Peace for Christina, a friend, whose sister, and her sister's family died from carbon monoxide over Thanksgiving.
- ✓ My sister's mother-in-law who is in the final stages of her hospice journey. Be with her and her family as they care for her.

There is much in our community for which we thank God and we pray in celebration for:

- ✓ Marcie Atkins on her retirement.
- ✓ Thank you for the gift of music to sing and to hear.
- ✓ The beautiful music of this special season.
- ✓ The music of the Season and sharing it with caroling with Congo Club.
- ✓ In thanksgiving for our wonderful Christmas Pageant and thanks to all those involved.
- ✓ The wonderful Sunday School teachers of this church.

Our prayers continue for those who are in need of ongoing nursing care or assisted living:

- ✓ Bertha Babb (Susan Suarez's mother) at Bear Hill.
- ✓ Doris Torppa (Susan Torppa's mother) at Bear Hill.
- ✓ John Weston at Longwood Place.
- ✓ Libby Hodges at son's in Connecticut.

And those who are cared for at home:

Jane Rice Peter Thorstensen  
Molly Rowe Grace Faulkner

Please call the church office for these addresses if you would like to send a card or visit these friends.

## Altar Flowers in December

- Altar Flowers are given** in loving memory of Meron Ananian by his family.
- Altar Flowers are given** in loving memory of Frank and Marion Ward by their family.
- Altar Flowers are given** also given in loving memory of Shirley E. Hylan by Gary and Christine Hylan and family.
- Altar Flowers are given** in loving memory of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. James Fairchild and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Mills by Mr. and Mrs. John Fairchild.
- Altar Flowers are given** in loving memory of Ruth and Ralph Hobbs by Diane Cain and family.



### Dear Members of the Prayer Shawl Ministry.

Thank you for the lovely blue prayer shawl you provided for my brother Joseph "Joe" Pallazola. We appreciate the support of your prayers.

While the skill of the surgeon is vital, we know that his skill is a God-given ability, one aided by prayer.

The words of the Prayer for Comfort by Cathleen O'Meara Murtha are truly inspired, and combined with the prayers said by those who held the shawl, are truly a source of strength, comfort, and hope for us. The work of your ministry is certainly a reflection of God's love through you, his caring, faith-filled people. We shall always remember your kindness.

Sincerely, Betty Mitchell (writing for her brother Joseph Pallarola)

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