

THE BELL is published on the last week of the month.
Deadline for the next issue is Wednesday, January 18th, 2012

Groveland Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
4 King Street
Groveland MA 01834

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THE BELL

January 2012

Newsletter of the
GROVELAND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
4 King Street at Perry Park
Groveland, Massachusetts 01834
978-372-3463 gccucc@verizon.net
www.grovelanducc.org



Sunday, December 18

10:00 Morning Worship
Sunday School Christmas Pageant

Christmas Eve

Saturday December 24th

5:00pm Family Worship
11:00pm Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols

Christmas Morning

10:00 am Worship

Journey of Christmas
Journey of Peace

As we journey through the coming new year
may we live with courage
love with compassion
and be the voice of justice and peace on earth!
May you know the healing presence of
the Prince of Peace
at Christmas
and throughout the coming year!

Lance, Gretchen, Josh & Seth Dallaire

From the Pastor's Desk...

The Night Watchman

Paul Huntington, the night watchman for a large department store, was making his usual evening rounds late at night after the initial Black Friday sales rush. He noticed a large bulge underneath one of the counters; so he shone his light on the object. There he discovered the body of a man; trampled in the Christmas rush. Evidently he had crawled under the counter to seek protection from the rush of Christmas shoppers. The body was that of a man, perhaps in his early thirties. He was poorly dressed, wore only sandals and had identification on him; which made it nearly impossible to ascertain who he was. But there was one thing about the unidentifiable stranger which perplexed the authorities and left them speechless. The authorities could not explain the nail holes in the man's hands.

Prayer: O God, in our greed and rush for possessions please help us not to trample on others nor Jesus. Amen!

Pastor Lance

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

During the last few weeks I have found myself reminiscing about Christmas seasons of previous years. Maybe this is because I am getting older and my mind tends to wander, but I prefer to think it is because I have some pleasant memories from those years with my parents and brothers when I was a child, and the years as a younger adult with my wife and children.



I remember the smell of my mother's fresh baked cookies, shopping at the department stores downtown, seeing Santa, walking thru Christmas Wonderland, riding Santa's train, going to Church, being in the Christmas pageant, and playing in the snow (where I grew up we usually had plenty of snow before Christmas). During the years when our children were younger, my wife and I were able to share most of those same activities with them. My wife also had a tradition of baking a Birthday cake for Christmas to celebrate the birth of the baby Jesus. We also spent many a Saturday or Sunday procuring the right, although not always perfect, Christmas tree. Contrary to what my daughter might tell you, we did not get up at 4 AM, drive 300 miles and spend 6 hours walking 50 miles into the woods to find these trees each year.



The disturbing part of the last few weeks, or should I say the last several years, is that I detect a feeling that too many people are building their Christmas memories on the new flat screen TV, latest smart phone, most up-to-date computer or I-pad, or some other electronic devices. Don't get me wrong. Some of these things are great, but that's not what Christmas is all about.

Let us remember that God gave us the greatest gift ever, His son. Let us continue to give as best we can in the same manner.

In my present life I am still collecting pleasant Christmas memories with my adult children, my grandchildren, and my family at Groveland Congregational Church. I am truly grateful and blessed. May you and your family be also.

Ron Mertens, Stewardship Committee

A super big THANK YOU to all who helped to make the Capital Campaign table at the Snowflake Fair a HUGE success! We appreciate all who donated items as well as all who shopped at this table. A very special thanks also to Kelley and Abigail Boland, Kara and Cameron Keene, and Mikayla Tilden for helping and providing great things to sell. Thanks again, Lisa Quinnan and Sandy Keene

p.s. keep us in mind when you are putting away your holiday decorations, spring cleaning or organizing.

All are invited to the annual Martin Luther King Service at Temple Emanu-El on Friday, January 13, 2012 at 7:30 pm
514 Main Street
Haverhill, MA 01830

A New Year!

If you have been thinking about singing with the choir, now would be a great time to try it out. We are just beginning a whole new set of repertoire, now that the Christmas season is past. Come on down any Wednesday night at 7:30 - no obligation! Questions? Speak to Linda Paulet or Kathleen Tucker Gustafson.



Time for Taize

In the bleak midwinter...what better time to give yourself the gift of Taizé: a candlelight meditation service in our beautiful sanctuary. Our winter service will take place on Sunday evening, January 29th at 7:00 PM and will consist of Scripture, prayer, songs, petitions and a period of silent meditation. If you have transportation problems, call the church office at 978-372-3463.

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Missions News

Thank you to all who participated in the **Adopt-A-Family** project. Your generosity provided over 80 gifts to sixteen children from the Department of Children and Families who needed some joy this Christmas. Also, to all who ordered cakes and cookies or contributed to the **Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless "Bed for Every Child"** bake sale. Your Missions Committee also funded \$1000 for **Aide to Local Families** through our local elementary schools. We give ten families identified by three Pentucket elementary school principals (anonymous to GCC) a fifty dollar gift certificate to each Market Basket and Walmart. The spirit of GCC is shared with these children and families through your caring and involvement. Missions also made a contribution to **Laurel Dumas' Mission trip to Honduras** this coming winter. She is very excited about this opportunity and happy to share her plans.

The Missions Committee will be hosting "**Walk, Sister, Walk**" on Sunday, January 22nd, 2012 when they will share the pulpit and join us for a brunch following service. This is a presentation by four women peace builders from Chile, Paraguay and the U.S. who will share their stories of personal resilience and community transformation following the devastating earthquake and tsunami in Chile in February 2010. Their tour is sponsored by the Mission Partnership Committee of the MACUCC and we are privileged to be included in their schedule.

Our financial picture as of November 30, 2011

PLEDGED INCOME: \$123,309.00
COLLECTED PLEDGES: \$115,509.00
OUTSTANDING PLEDGES: -\$7,800.00
TOTAL INCOME: \$196,082.72
TOTAL EXPENDITURES: \$194,670.44
CASH BALANCE: \$1,412.28

Christian Education Reminders

December 25-No Sunday School classes
January 1-No Sunday School classes
January 8-New unit "Lost and Found" begins

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Pray for one another...

Asa Beckwith Sr.
Ackerman Family
Tom Collins (*Holden's son in law*)
Gordon Driscoll (*Lisa Quinnan's father*)
Tressa (Terri) Callaghan
Ernest Gilford
Martha Lee Savage
Nancy Anderson (*Jean Mansell's friend*)
Norm Baker
Warren Kroll (*Glazier's brother in law*)
Harry Takesian
Bob Mertens (*Ron's brother*)
Bill Fenton (*Sue's brother in law*)
Karl Seitz (*Anneliese's father*)
Tom MacLaughlan (*friend of Bob Kent's*)
Kate Patterson (*Nancy Fitzgerald's friend*)
Jena Roy
Ron Thomas (*Rod Warner's relative*)

McInnis Family (*Larsen's family*)
Seth Dallaire
Brenda Cross
Mark Rogers (*friend of Seth's*)
Jim Shuttleworth (*Caryl Haley's father*)
Susan Pundt (*friend of Ron Mertens*)
Virginia Carpenter (*Bill Forsyth's sister*)
Barbara McGovern (BEAM)
Maureen Johnson
Dawn Porter (*Laurel Dumas' niece*)
Barbara Hart (*friend of Linda Prescott*)
Fred Neal (*friend of O'Leary's*)
Andrea Crowe (*friend of Gretchen Dallaire*)
Ryan Family (*friend of Stephenson's*)
Fenton Family
Joyce Kershaw (*Sue Fenton's mother*)
Sherri Gould (*Ann Moriarty's friend*)

In memory of all family we have lost - Love, The Larsen Family

Merry Christmas - Joan Ellwood

In celebration of the season from Katie, Emma and Caroline

In loving memory of my wife, Barbara, by Ron Mertens

Sharing Christmas love with all - Lew and Barb Harrold

In memory of Arthur and Marilyn Spaulding by Steve and Khankeo Spaulding

In memory of loved ones in Thailand by Steve and Khankeo Spaulding

Peace of Christ to all who are in need - Lance and Gretchen Dallaire

In remembrance of parents and grandparents by Lauren and Kevin Sullivan

Merry Christmas by Ruth Gilford

In loving memory of Nick Latham by Doug, Betsy, Alex and Chris Latham

In loving memory of Douglas, Beatrice and Alexander MacIntosh by Doug, Betsy, Alex and Chris Latham

In memory of our parents and grandparents by the Stephenson Family

Celebrating the Season by The Fudges

Merry Christmas to All - Lou and Sue D'angelo

From the office:

Final giving statements for 2011 will be prepared in mid-January and will be available in Fellowship Hall. To help reduce our postage costs, they will only be mailed upon request.

I'm asking for all reports from the Boards and committees by Monday, January 23rd so I can start putting it all together for you in time for the Annual Meeting which will be March 4th, 2012.

Merry Christmas everyone!



In the event that church services need to be cancelled due to snow, there will be an update available on our website www.grovelanducc.org as well as on our outgoing telephone message. We will also announce any cancellations on WCVB's Channel 5.

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Thank you to all who ordered poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary for the Christmas services. At such a special time of year, these plants continue to be a special way to remember our loved ones and to pass along our holiday spirit to others. *Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!*

In loving memory of Charles J. Valcour – We love and miss you – The O’Leary Family

In loving memory of Denise and Rick Vescovi by The O’Leary Family

In memory of John and Martha Statom by John Statom

In memory of loved ones by Sue Hamden

In memory of our loved ones with gratitude for God’s many blessings – The Gustafsons

In loving memory of Del and Laura Emery from The Fabri Family

In memory of my husband, Joseph, by Joyce Ingham

In celebration of the season by Marilyn and Bob Kent

With thankfulness for my wonderful family by Sandy Daniels

In memory of Michael Reagan by Chris Reagan

In loving memory of Don and Eileen Wile and Clement Heddleson by Nancy Wile

In memory of loved ones by Linda and Bob Paulet

Remembering all our loved ones at this joyous season – Beth and David Balford

In loving memory of Anita S. Perry – wishing Hope, Peace, Love and Joy to all – The Keene Family

From the Deacon’s Bench

Where did the old 2011 year go? It just can’t be 2012 already! Time has a disconcerting way of getting ahead of us and leaving us far behind.

We always think that we have plenty of time to get things done and that we can take care of it tomorrow but suddenly tomorrow is staring us in the face. Added to this is the hard fact of life that tomorrow is not a guaranteed thing for any of us.

As we start out this New Year, let us make a commitment to ourselves that we will take care of the important things in life today and not wait until tomorrow. What are some of the important things in life? Most of them are not earth shaking and some of them are simple and easy but some of them are difficult and hard.

Hug your children, hug your parents, call your children, call your parents, kiss your spouse, and comfort a friend. Forgive those who have offended you, ask forgiveness from those who you have offended, stand up for what is right, and help those in need, pray for guidance when facing difficult decisions. These are but a few examples of what is really important in life.

Make your New Year’s resolutions mean something. All of them should focus on improving your relationship with mankind and with God. You cannot truly do one without doing the other.

John Statom



A Kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom of children while they were drawing.

She would occasionally walk around to see each child’s work.

As she got to one little girl who was working

diligently, she asked what the drawing was.

The girl replied, ‘I’m drawing God.’

The teacher paused and said, ‘But no one knows what God looks like.’

Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, ‘They will in a minute.’

