



**January 2012**

Volume 35 No. 1

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**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:**

Tuesday - Friday  
9:00am - 12:00pm.

**PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS:**

Wed. 10am-noon; Thurs.  
4-6pm; or by appointment

**Visit our web page at  
[www.tccucc.org](http://www.tccucc.org)**

**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:  
MONDAY, JANUARY 23 - NOON**

# THE VISITOR

## TOWNSEND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*At the Heart of the Community - With the Community in Our Hearts*

**"I will praise God's name  
in song and glorify him  
with thanksgiving."**

*Psalm 69:30*

Our most heartfelt thanks to Renee Fossey who put so much time and love into organizing the music program throughout December. Already a moving spiritual journey toward the birth of our Savior, the wide array of sacred music made each Sunday a truly amazing worship experience. Thank you, Renee, and to all those who contributed to our Advent/Christmas program!



### BIBLE STUDIES FOR ADULTS

→ Coming soon to a woodstove heated dining room near you! A Bible study on the book of Genesis, hosted by Dianne Lowe, Wednesday mornings at 9:30 am beginning, (as in "In the beginning...") on January 11, 2012! Learn lessons of faith from the lives of God's children - Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You will be challenged to exercise more faith and take risks in order to live a life that is more pleasing to God. This study runs for 14 weeks. Stay tuned for more details, and if you are interested, e-mail Dianne at [kdrclove@gmail.com](mailto:kdrclove@gmail.com), or call the church office and register with John Mims, our Administrative Assistant.

→ "The Lord's Brew". Save the dates: Tuesdays from March 6 to April 3, 5:30 to

6:30. We will share what the Lord's Prayer means to us over our favorite beverage at a local tavern. Come to one or come to all. Invite a friend. Watch for more details to come. Facilitated by Andy Gustafson.



### SATURDAYS AT 7

The First Saturday of the Month Team gathers to do odd jobs around the inside and outside of the Church. We appreciate everyone's help and look forward to growing the team. The start time is 7:00 am. If you would like to participate, please contact Paul Martineau, 978-300-5048, [pjmcjm@comcast.net](mailto:pjmcjm@comcast.net), the Church Office, or just show up.



### Church Supper January 28

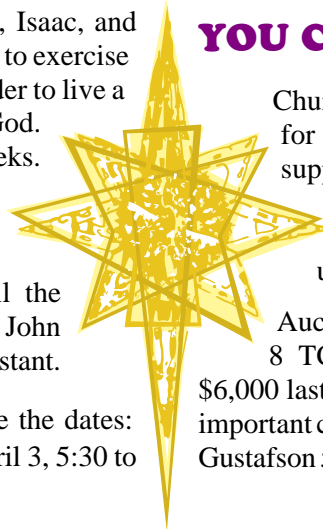
Fellowship, community and fun! Turkey with all the fixings. Sign-up sheets to work the supper and/or donate food will be out starting January 8.



### YOU CAN HELP!

Church supper coordinator needed for February 25 and April 28 suppers. Coordinator gets to choose the menu! Contact Andy Gustafson 597-6364 or [uccgus@gmail.com](mailto:uccgus@gmail.com).

Auction coordinator needed for May 8 TCC Auction. We raised nearly \$6,000 last year through this fun-filled and important church fund-raiser. Contact Andy Gustafson 597-6364 or [uccgus@gmail.com](mailto:uccgus@gmail.com).



## EPIPHANY



## The Interplay of Shadow and Light ... by Pastor Shayna

UCC pastor Jim Tilbe is the current Chief Chaplain of the Massachusetts Corps of Fire Chaplains. In an e-mail dispatched a few days ago to the Corps, Pastor Jim was reflecting on recent events in the State of Massachusetts. He wrote, "We have

struggled with tornadoes, floods, and snow in October that took out power to thousands, violence, disease, and death. In the past few weeks the fire service in Massachusetts has been hit by the death of FF Jon Davies in Worcester, untimely deaths of Captain Al Briand in Norton, Firefighter Ronald E. 'Goose' Gosselin from Attleboro and Firefighter Rob George in Methuen. Just two days before Christmas Firefighter James Rice from Peabody died from injuries sustained at a three alarm fire."

We are in a season that is celebrated with lights in many ways by many people. Just a few nights ago, some of us sat bathed in the soft candlelight of our 11:00 Christmas Eve Service as we remembered the Light that is life that came into our world. Around the globe, Jewish people are lighting their menorahs each evening to remember the light that did not fail them. Many of us have hung festive Christmas lights to ward off the blues during this time of short days and long nights, and some may have even burned a Yule log in hope of spring's quick return.

It seems that, amidst this season of light and darkness, we are reminded yet again that wherever there is light, there are also shadows. We might also be noticing how frequently our lives are touched by these shadows.

Maybe then it is a good time for us to remember also that the light whose presence we celebrated just a few short nights ago came into the world and the darkness **did not** overcome it. For those with faith, the promise is not that we will have no shadows. The promise of Jesus our Christ is that the shadows in our lives will not win out over the love poured out for us.

Throughout this coming new year I pray that you all continue to find ways to make God's love real and alive for everyone. Whether it be by serving in some way here at the church, or by serving as you do in so many ways out in our community, may your perseverance over life's shadows continue to reflect the true light, which enlightens everyone.

**Happy New Year All ... and to all a good night!**

*Pastor Shayna*



Thank you for your overwhelming support of our greens table this year, we hope you have enjoyed your arrangements throughout the holiday season. When you're all done with your arrangements,

consider saving the baskets and containers, picks and non-perishable ornaments (that still look good) and giving them back to the church to reuse in next year's arrangements.

*Wanda Wilson*

## WINTER SHOVELER POSITION

TCC/VCCC is in need of a shoveler during/after all snowstorms for winter of 2011/2012. This job includes all shoveling/blowing of snow in/on all steps, walkways and other areas pertaining to the Church and its facilities. (The Church provides snow blower.) Job also includes sanding and salting all entry ways to the Church and its facilities during and after storms as well as each Sunday morning before 9:50 service.

For information, contact Paul Martineau 978-300-5048.

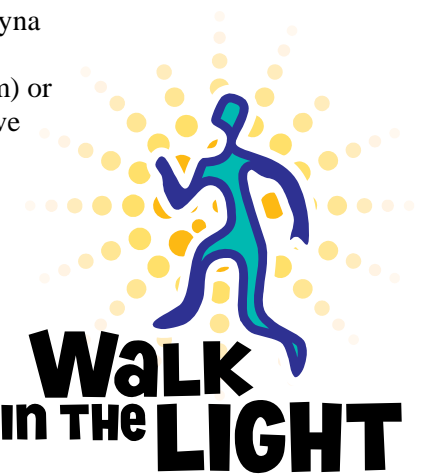
**The Eyes on Owls program is coming to TCC! Stayed tuned for more information!**

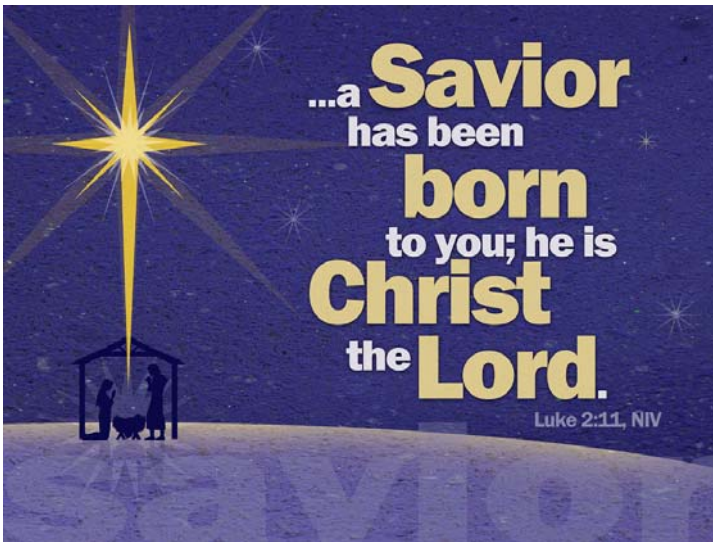
## NEW MEMBER CLASSES NOW AVAILABLE!

We will be offering new member classes regularly on the second Sunday of the month following worship. The next class, however, will take place on January 15, 2012 as Pastor Shayna will be away from January 4 to January 13. A

light lunch will be provided and childcare can also be provided upon request. The closing date for registration is one week prior to the class. (In other words, the Sunday prior!) New member classes are for anyone wishing to join Townsend Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, or for anyone who has been a member for a while but is still unclear about how TCC's governance structure works, wants to know more about the history of the UCC or of TCC in particular!

Please contact Pastor Shayna (978-597-0157 or kshaynaappel@gmail.com) or John Mims, Administrative Assistant (978-597-8925 or secretary@tccucc.org) to register! Sign-ups will also be available at worship.





*Birthdays  
to  
Celebrate*

**In January:** 3-Linda Modica; 8-Nicole Beauchesne; 12-Michelle Busler; 13-David Wilson; 17-Bob Lorenzen; 18-Jane Misner; 24-Nancy Lee; 28-Linda Hatch; 31-Cindy Moseley.

## OUTREACH & MISSION HAPPENINGS

*Submitted by Carole Gustafson, Minister for Outreach*

Thank you members and friends of Townsend Congregational church for all your support this past year for outreach programs. You have given your time, talents and money to support those in need and those who need a helping hand.

**MISSION 1**, the national UCC campaign to address hunger-related issues, was an overwhelming success! All goals were exceeded and other initiatives by member churches have sprung up. We are in the initial planning stages of hosting a free will offering community meal. If you have any interest in helping with this project please contact Carole Gustafson.

**PROJECT SOCKS** for the Worcester Area Mission Society has been a project we have supported for the last few years. New, white, crew socks are needed for the homeless men and women in Worcester. A box is set up near the doors at the rear of the church for your donations.

**Volunteers wanted!** I am compiling a list of individuals who would like to help with Outreach programs and projects. Please speak with Carole Gustafson to learn more - 978-597-6364.

## THE MINISTRY FOR WORSHIP IS LOOKING FOR A FEW WORSHIP LEADERS

Have you ever wanted to share a piece of your faith journey with your community here at TCC? Periodically during the year our pulpit needs filling. There are ministers and seminary students who are available for these periodic pulpit supply opportunities and we are grateful for their availability, but we'd also really like to hear from some of you! Pulpit supply preachers have the choice of preaching from the lectionary or on the topic of their own choosing. If you have done this before and would like to do it again, please contact Michelle Enright, Minister for Worship, at [miche@net1plus.com](mailto:miche@net1plus.com). If you have never done this before but are interested and would like to know more, please contact Pastor Shayna at [kshaynaappel@gmail.com](mailto:kshaynaappel@gmail.com).



All gifts come from God. Let us thank God for these gifts by being gifts to one another.

In Peace-

*Michelle Enright, Minister for Worship*

## LAY ASSISTANT SIGN-UP

If you would like to help by being a Lay Assistant, please contact Michelle Enright, our Minister for Worship, at [miche@net1plus.com](mailto:miche@net1plus.com). She also has the sign-up sheet every Sunday morning.



## Townsend Ecumenical Outreach

*"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7)* We are collecting non-perishable food items, toiletries and household paper goods in the basket beneath the Communion table to help Townsend Ecumenical Outreach provide for those who are in need. There is an additional collection barrel at the rear of the sanctuary for your convenience.

## HABITAT FOR HUMANITY HOME

Habitat for Humanity North Central Massachusetts is building simple, decent and affordable homes in our region and we are looking for families who may be eligible to apply for low- or no-interest mortgages to purchase these homes. Applicants must attend an informational meeting at the Fitchburg Fire Station (33 North St, Fitchburg) in order to find out more and begin the application process. Meetings are scheduled for Wednesday, January 18 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, January 21 at 10 a.m. See the attachment for more details.

Applicants must meet three criteria established by Habitat for Humanity International.

1. Applicant's current housing is unsafe or provides inadequate living conditions.
2. Applicants can demonstrate a steady income, but not make enough to qualify for a standard mortgage (e.g. a family of 4 would have an annual of income of \$24,650 - \$49,260).
3. Applicants must have a willingness to put in hundreds of hours of "sweat equity" in the building of their home or the homes of other Habitat families.

Please contact the Habitat office at (978) 348-2749 or at [office@ncmhabitat.org](mailto:office@ncmhabitat.org) with any questions.



## THE PASTOR PARISH RELATIONS TEAM

(PPRT) seeks to foster open and healthy communication between the Pastor and the congregation to enhance the effectiveness of the church's mission. The PPRT is available to anyone in the congregation, regardless of membership status. Please feel free to contact any member of this team: Lee Duckett, Eric Gruber, Nancy Lee or Pam Snaith.



**OUR BLESSINGS:** Prayers of thanksgiving that Mary J had her baby and they are both well. Prayers of gratitude to all those who volunteer their time with TEO. Sarah G gives thanks for still having her grandparents with her, they are all in their 90's now. We celebrate with Shayna and Robin as they

rejoice in 10 years together.

It is a joy that we are part of a greater community of faith that can make such a difference in the lives of others. We are thankful that Melanie O's heart tests came back with good results. Kathy D gives thanks for all the traveling prayers offered on her behalf this year. Gary H

gives thanks that, although his sister-in-law Carol is experiencing her third go-around with cancer, she is on a brand new drug that is showing good results. Michelle M and Tammy B are celebrating their new home in Fitchburg. We offer congratulations to the local football team that is traveling to Florida for the next level of competitions. The Reeves family give thanks for the tremendous response to the annual Greg Reeves road race, it raised \$11,114.68 this year. Thanks be to God for the return of our troops. Congratulations to Beth K who received her Masters degree on 12/17/2011. Congratulations also to Jean & Michael S who are celebrating 50 years of marriage. We give thanks for the wonderful holiday concert at VCCC. Thanks also to all those who bring us such joy through the children's music ministry, primarily Lyn, Valerie and Renee. Thanks to God and all those who help to make Christmas brighter for those in need. We also give thanks for a friend who is recovering after successful heart surgery. Prayers of thanks to all those who work on Christmas day to care for us and to keep us safe.



**CONCERNS:** We keep the people of Vermont in our prayers as many of them still struggle with the aftereffects of the hurricane. We also keep in our prayers all those who are displaced by natural disasters. Prayers for the safety of Linda's mom and brother who are traveling. As we collect envelopes to guide us in our gift-buying for those families less fortunate than our own, we pray for the children that they may receive all that they need throughout this coming year. We pray for Mike who is sick and for Shakira who has a troubled pregnancy. We hold the Matson family in our prayers as they mourn the recent loss of their mother. Prayers of comfort to Steve and Mary H as they mourn the loss of their daughter Sarah. We offer prayers for all those who feel that suicide is the only answer. Prayers for Dana P who is on dialysis and not doing well. Prayers of healing for Alice K who is still experiencing headaches although recent tests results show that whatever is going on is not life threatening. Prayers for Fran A who was taken to the hospital at the beginning of December. Prayers of healing for Sylvia B who is struggling with some new health challenges. Prayers of healing for Tammy B who is experiencing medical issues with one of her eyes. Prayers for a teacher, Mrs Noble, who experienced a medical emergency at work in early December and was rushed to the hospital. Prayers of comfort and hope for all those who struggle with depression. Prayers for Lisa who had an emergency c-section in an attempt to handle a life-threatening

situation in early December. Prayers of comfort and strength to Shawn who's mother has been diagnosed with a terminal illness. Connie G fell and dislocated her shoulder, she is currently in rehab. Prayers of healing for Michelle E as she recovers from her fall. Prayers for the people of the Philippines as they deal with the aftermath of recent storms. Prayers of comfort to Daniel as he mourns the loss of his wife. Prayers for the safe travels for Karin C's brother and his wife. Prayers of Comfort for the family and friends of Ted Faulker who passed away recently. Prayers for the safety of all children with abusive caretakers. Prayers for a 15-year-old with an enlarged heart who is undergoing testing. Prayers for the family and friends of Alma who passed away on 12/23.



| Sunday   | Monday   | Tuesday                                    | Wednesday                        | Thursday                     | Friday   | Saturday  |
|--|--|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------|--|---|
| <h1 style="text-align: center; color: purple;">January 2012</h1> |  |  |                                  |                              |  |   |
| <b>1</b> Worship/SS<br><i>COMMUNION</i>                          | <b>2</b>   | <b>3</b><br>7:15 pm By-laws<br>Review Team | <b>4</b><br>7:30pm Snr Choir     | <b>5</b><br>7pm Council rm 4 | <b>6</b><br><i>Epiphany</i>  | <b>7</b><br>7am Saturday at 7<br>team               |
| <b>8</b> Worship/SS  | <b>9</b><br>7:15 pm By-laws<br>Review Team               | <b>10</b>                                  | <b>11</b><br>7:30pm Snr Choir    | <b>12</b>                    | <b>13</b><br>5 pm Christian<br>Education   | <b>14</b>   |
| <b>15</b> Worship/SS<br>New Members<br>Class                     | <b>16</b>  | <b>17</b>                                  | <b>18</b><br>7:30pm Snr Choir    | <b>19</b>                    | <b>20</b>  | <b>21</b>   |
| <b>22</b> Worship/SS   | <b>23</b><br><b>NEWSLETTER<br/>DEADLINE<br/>- NOON -</b> | <b>24</b>                                  | <b>25</b><br>7:30pm Snr Choir    | <b>26</b>                    | <b>27</b>  | <b>28</b><br><b>CHURCH<br/>SUPPER<br/>5-6:30 PM</b> |
| <b>29</b> Worship/SS   | <b>30</b>  | <b>31</b>                                  | <b>GOD IS STILL<br/>SPEAKING</b> |                              | <b>TO CONTACT THE NEWSLETTER<br/>EDITOR, CATHY HILL:<br/>email: newsletter@tccucc.org<br/>or call 978-337-0638</b> |   |

Townsend Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
3 Brookline St., PO Box 487  
Townsend MA 01469-0487

Worship, Sunday School & Nursery at 9:50am



**SHARING OUR SPACE WITH THE COMMUNITY AND FRIENDS**

Weddings, Child Dedications, Holiday Parties, Baby and Wedding Showers, Family Reunions, Organization Meetings



We are blessed with a beautiful sanctuary and great space within our building for use that we are able to share with others. If you or someone you know is looking for a location for an event, contact our church secretary at 978-597-8925. This use of our building helps support the maintenance of our facility.



## OUR OPEN & AFFIRMING STATEMENT

Townsend Congregational Church, UCC is an Open And Affirming congregation. God loves you. Christ invites you. We embrace you. People of all sexual orientations and gender identities are unconditionally welcomed into the full life and ministry of our congregation.

We are committed to ministering through the use of our gifts, learning to live the Christian way of life, and being together in Christ by seeking to fulfill these three commandments of Christ:

To love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength (Mark 12:30)

To love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:31)

To love one another as Christ has loved us (John 13:34)

