



March 2011

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**Visit our web page at
www.tccucc.org**

**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:
MONDAY, MAR. 21 - NOON**

THE VISITOR

TOWNSEND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

275 Years at the Heart of the Community - With the Community in Our Hearts



**March 13,
2011**

ASH WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday is March 9th and we will have a service to support and encourage one another in our Lenten journeys at 7:00 p.m. Communion will be offered. All are welcome! Children who can be up that late on a school night are especially encouraged. The service is pretty brief ... usually 30-45 minutes.



HOW IMPORTANT IS THE LIFE OF THIS CHURCH?

Our annual meeting turned out to be two real roll-your-sleeves-up-and-get-to-work sessions for all who attended.

The first order of business was to finalize our Provocative Statement. After much discussion, consensus was reached with the following: *Being in an intimate relationship with God in the present, we are an ever-learning, action-oriented, justice-seeking, community-caring church. Our purpose is to use our gifts to make God's love real and alive for everyone.*

Awesome!

We accepted the newly proposed by-laws of VCCC, and the updates to the Disbursement Policy. Kathy Duckett is stepping down as the interim Church Clerk, is this something you might be interested in doing? Cathy Hill is looking for a partner to help organize

the annual church fair – anyone interested?

The Mission Spending Plan has turned out to be quite the challenge! We started off with a potential deficit of over \$64,000. It was amazing going over all the possibilities – the people who stepped up with new ways of making or saving money for our church. In just a few hours, 40 people managed to reduce the deficit by \$33,000! **However, with all these amazing gifts, we still have a deficit of \$31,000.**

The truth of the matter is - our church is in crisis. We know that there are many participating people of faith who are not contributing fiscally to the life of our church, or are not giving what they are able, and for many reasons. This is the time to consider your faith journey in relation to your chosen house of worship. **How important is it to you that TCC have a full-time pastor?** We are facing the very real possibility of reducing Pastor Shayna's hours to half time. So she will be reduced to preparing and delivering the weekly sermon and pretty much not anything else. **How important is it to you that our music director be paid a fair wage?**

If 6 people started pledging \$100 a week, there would be no deficit; or if 12 people started pledging only \$50 a week, there would be no deficit.

Our church is a vibrant, living testimony to our belief in the love and healing powers of our Savior, Jesus Christ. It will take every member of our faith community working together to maintain that living testimony. **What can you do to make it happen?**

Cathy Hill

Do you realize that if you go digital with the newsletter, in addition to saving the church printing and postage costs, you get to see it in glorious color?



"The Times They Are A Changing" ... by Pastor Shayna

Bob Dylan's now famous tune "The Times They Are A Changing" served as a clarion wake-up call to anyone who, in 1963, was either still really clueless about the social revolution taking place across America, or simply pretending to be.

Interestingly, as I was giving some thought to this article, the song's title came to my mind. Initially, I thought, "Well, yes ... the times they are a changing. We've already had a brief taste of Spring, the ice dams on our roofs are starting to let go, (sometimes with dire consequences!), the days are now markedly longer than they were even one short month ago, and we are about to begin the season of Lent on Ash Wednesday which falls on March 9th. For sure, the times they are a changing!"

But then, curiosity got the best of me and I 'googled' the lyrics. The final verse of Dylan's song is rich with imagery of the 'kin-dom' of God. See for yourself ...

*The line it is drawn
The curse it is cast
The slow one now
Will later be fast
As the present now
Will later be past
The order is
Rapidly fadin'.
And the first one now
Will later be last
For the times they are a-changin'.*



The slow one now will later be fast ... and the first one now will later be last. Sound familiar? How about the story in Matthew's gospel concerning the rich young man who came to Jesus wanting to know what he must do to enter the kingdom of heaven? Jesus explained it to him, and later was unpacking this teaching with his disciples who quickly became concerned that they too would be kept from entering the kingdom. In Matthew 19:29 Jesus attempts to reassure them with these words: "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and will inherit eternal life. **But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.**" (Mark also recounts this story in his gospel in chapter 10, verses 17-30.)

In Verse 20, Matthew recounts a story in which the laborers in the vineyard who showed up late ('the slow') were paid the same wages as those who showed up on time ('the fast?'). When the later group protested to the landowner, he said to them, "Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous? **So the last will be first and the first will be last.**" (Matthew 20:14-16).

Images of God's kin-dom, which radically defies social convention, were entirely appropriate for our nation in 1963. For sure, to many it must have felt like up was down and down was up, like in was out and out was in, like the first were destined to be last and the last were now frontrunners for first place. In light of the radical social revolution that was taking place on our streets regarding the Vietnam War and the movement for women's and Civil Rights, I can see why Dylan opted for images of the 'kin-dom' of God.

Today we live in a nation that is still divided along many lines, but the social upheaval has gone largely underground. Many people are still hurting, still angry, still oppressed, still at risk, but acts of civil disobedience and mass protests have not been seen for some time now. So, it would appear that we are a nation at relative peace with itself.

This, however, does not change the fact that God's 'kin-dom' still radically defies social convention. And if we are going to be builders of this 'kin-dom' we will need to come to grips with the hard fact that social convention still informs more of our collective thinking than does the gospel message of Jesus our Christ. For far too many of us the last are last because they are too lazy to do anything to lift themselves up, and the first are first because God wills them to be. We see clearly the distinctions between Christian and Muslim, and call the God of the Hebrew Scriptures an angry God. We are uncomfortable with those who are different from us and at times seem constitutionally incapable of accepting that our personal perspectives are not universal. We are far more comfortable 'talking about' others when 'talking with' would be far more productive. And, we are quick to protest when the church fails to meet our personal needs, but far too quiet when it fails to meet God's.

Thank God, then, for the season of Lent. A time for us to get ourselves into the 'spiritual gyms' of our faith lives and take an honest look at where we are failing to live fully into the lives Jesus calls us to. Lent is a time to sacrifice, to give some things up, and to take some things on. It is a time for preparing ourselves to receive the astounding gift of eternal life that awaits us all on Easter morning.

Towards this end, I hope you will take advantage of Robin's adult education course on the Purpose Centered Life (see Robin's article for more information on this) during the season of Lent. It is being offered on Sunday mornings before worship from 8:45-9:45am (March 20, 27th, and April 3, 10, 17) and on Tuesday evenings from 7:00-8:00 pm (March 15, 22, 29 and April 5, 12). I hope you will, with the other members of your household, declare your commitments for the season of Lent, and support one another in living fully into them.

I pray for us all that God will guide, support, and bless us in our Lenten journeys as we seek to be more fully the people we were created to be.

*Blessings and Shalom-
Shayna*

HOLY WEEK



Holy Week takes place during the week of April 18. This year our Methodist brothers and sisters will be offering the Maundy Thursday Service and we will be offering the Good Friday service. I will need some readers for a modified 'Stations of the Cross' service and would **REALLY** like to have some young people assist ... tweens and teens especially but younger children who are strong readers are also encouraged to get involved. (Perhaps they would get involved if their parents would! Think about it!!!) Please email or call Pastor Shayna if you can help out.



Family Game Night

Please join us for an evening of fun and games some time in March (watch the Sunday bulletins for a date) from 5:30 to 7 pm in Fellowship Hall. Imagine a cross between Family Feud and A Minute to Win It ... it could be hilarious! If you haven't seen "A Minute to Win It" yet, it involves completing a deceptively simple task using common household objects in less than a minute (Google it!). Hope you can join us for the fun and fellowship.



Children's Moment Leaders Wanted!

This year the lectionary readings for Lent have us largely in the gospel of John. The stories are mostly about people who met Jesus and how that changed their lives. When did you first meet Jesus and how did that change your life? (Answering this will take some thought! Take your time!) Now, would you be willing to tell your story to our children on a Sunday morning in worship as we gather for the Children's Moment? Think about it ... how cool would it be for our children to hear from members of the church that the stuff their teachers are teaching them in Sunday school is real? And if they hear from you that you have a personal relationship with Jesus, don't you think they'll want one too?

Maybe your first encounter with our Savior was a little 'iffy', as in, you really weren't sure what was happening then but when you looked back at it as an adult it became clear. Imagine some child hearing that and suddenly realizing he or she too has had that experience! How would your story help accelerate their spiritual journeys? Maybe the first time you met Jesus it was more of a feeling ... perhaps you saw something and just knew God was with you in a time of need. Wherever it happened, whenever it happened, this kind of witnessing to our faith is powerful ... **POWERFUL!**

Please speak with Pastor Shayna if you would be willing to offer a Children's moment ... and/or if you need some support in discerning when that first moment happened.

Celebrating a



MARCH: 1-Amanda Vogel; 10-Dianne Hagan; 11-Brooke Valigangas; 12-Sasha Gay; 14-Carrie Davidson; 14-Christine Doherty; 15-Virginia Ball; 18-Kathy Duckett and Heidi Stadler; 20-Donald Miller and Sherrie Cloutier; 22-Shaun Doherty; 23-Lee Duckett; 24-Gloria Vogel; 25-Cy Kendrick; 26-Chris Clish; 26-Joy Mixon; 27-Jody Burnham, Laura Guba, Bonnie Lucente and Nancy Morse; 30-Zachary Wilson; 31-Susan Mills and Christopher Peterson.



THE "MYSTERY" OF SUNDAY SCHOOL

from our Minister for Education, Linda Ireland

Each week you see the Sunday School children begin worship together with the congregation, gather at the front of the church for their "Young at Heart" moment, and then leave with their teachers corralling them out the door. You don't see them again until they return as smiling, snack-eating bundles of energy at Fellowship Hour. Did you ever wonder what happened in the 30-45 minutes that they went missing?

The first thing that we do is gather in a large circle in Fellowship Hall. The adults look around making sure that all is well: the scheduled teachers and shepherds are all present and new children are identified and welcomed. One of the children is chosen to pass a large plastic bear around to collect the Sunday School Offering. Important announcements are made, such as recent birthdays or the results of the Unicef collection. We may take a moment to comment on the children's singing or other participation in Worship, or give the children a chance to react to the Pastor's message. Then we recite the Lord's Prayer together. Next the teachers for each grade are identified one-by-one, and the classes are invited to follow them down to their classrooms.

Next month, we will share a little bit about what happens in each upper grade's classroom. Today I will ask you to take one of the littlest one's hands and join us down in the Pre-K/Kindergarten classroom.

First we sit on the rug for our lesson and welcome the children individually. One child is chosen to "light" a votive candle and reminded that the light helps us to remember that God is with us. We remind them that all the stories that we hear in Sunday School come from one book, the Bible. Then the teacher shares the Bible story for the day, often adding props or motions to make the story come alive. We may sing a song or repeat a Bible verse. This winter's verse has been "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Activity time is next ... it can be a game, an activity or a craft project. Some things we have done this year: become a living advent wreath (including wearing foam "flame" hats made by Heather Mulrenan), made projects with paints and glitter-glue and lots and lots of stickers, played Hokey-Pokey (And that's

what God's Love is All About) and learned in many different ways that "God Loves Me." They loved hearing about Jesus telling Simon to throw the nets in the water to gather the fish, and we ate goldfish, glued sand on blue paper and added paper fish and string nets for a great completed project. Their pray flags for Lamontville were made with love with painted sponge shapes or handprints and foam decorations.

Lastly, if we are lucky enough to complete our work before Worship is finished, we gather our take-home projects and head into Fellowship Hall to await the parents. Another successful week ... and you'd be amazed at how much they remember and understand, even at this young age. Just ask them ... what did you do today in Sunday School?



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 is March 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!



OUTREACH MISSION TEAM HAPPENINGS

by Carole Gustafson, Minister for Outreach

NEW PROJECT: Care packages for military members who are stationed overseas, especially in Afghanistan, Pakistan and other remote locations. Please provide names and addresses and relationship to you. We will be assembling packages of goodies (the Girl Scouts have given us some cookies for this) and other useful items to make their days brighter. Leave a note in the Outreach box in the office or email Carole Gustafson at: carolegus@gmail.com. Deadline is Sunday, March 13.

SEEKING: Two members to be delegates from our church to represent us at the Central Association and Massachusetts Conference, UCC events. Delegates have an opportunity to bring our membership's wishes to meetings on resolutions from the Conference and National levels. This is a great way to learn more about the UCC and how it works as well as being a wonderful opportunity to network with other UCC folks. Speak with Carole Gustafson if you are interested or would like more information.

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY RELAY FOR LIFE cancer walk is scheduled for Friday night, June 24 through the night until noon on Saturday, June 25 at the Ayer High School track. Our church team, the Townsend Crusaders, will once again be walking. This is our 12th year making a difference in the fight against cancer. We are looking for more walkers, survivors and volunteers to join us! Some of us are "seasoned" walkers and others are new to the event. Maybe you would like to start your own team of friends and family or co-workers. Maybe you have an hour to volunteer at the event or contribute help with fund-raising etc. We'll help you get started. Please speak with Carole Gustafson or Jodi Robinson, Co-chairs of the Townsend Crusaders team.

GREG MORTENSON, who wrote the #1 New York Times bestseller, "Three Cups of Tea", is coming to speak at the Hanover Theater in Worcester on Tuesday, May 3. The mission of his organization is to promote and support community-based education, especially for girls, in remote regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan. I highly recommend you read his book if you haven't done so. It's an easy read and very enlightening. He recently wrote another bestseller, "Stones into Schools". Tickets are expected to sell out quickly. There are no specific seats for this event. Cost is \$51.50, with proceeds from the event providing funds for a new school to be built in Afghanistan and to support an after-school program in Worcester. For more information about Greg Mortenson visit his website at: www.gregmortenson.com. To order tickets, and for more information, contact the Mechanics Hall box office by phone at (508) 752-088 or online at: www.mechanicshall.org. You are also welcome to bring your copies of his books for signing. Carole Gustafson and Nancy Lee are car pooling and have room for two more. Greg will then be speaking at a 3 day conference for pastors and members in discernment sponsored by the New England Conferences of the United Church of Christ.

The ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING special offering will be collected in church on Sunday, April 3. Special envelopes will be placed in the pew racks by March 20. One Great Hour of Sharing is a special offering collection that provides support to people in over 80 countries. Your gift to this offering aids in refugee, disaster relief and community development efforts of the UCC in the US and internationally.



We were thrilled to welcome Flo Madlala from our sister church in Lamontville, So. Africa to our congregation on February 6! Flo spoke to us of her deep faith and life's journey and was able to share communion with us. Flo was presented with prayer shawls to take back, a banner from our Sunday School students to hers and a gift from Outreach for her work at church and her care center. She gave us fifteen beautiful aprons made by women at their church decorated with symbols from our two churches. Flo was here to visit Ruthann and Jan Hall and visit the parishes in the association of So. African sister churches. It was a special service with her to further strengthen our bonds.

June Cloutier

Living Into The Dream Newsletter

**Townsend Congregational Church
UCC, Townsend, MA**

Robin Lunn, M.Div.
Church Development Coach and Consultant



Upcoming Events!

March 6th **TCC COUNCIL**
12-3PM **WORKSHOP DAY**

The Council will gather to continue to learn and grow together as we seek to Live Into the Dream that is your new bylaws

March 20 **SERMON – LISTENING**
9:50-11AM **TO PETER**

This will be the Fifth in our 8-part sermon series on Biblical Leadership

Lenten study **YES! ³**

7-8PM Tuesdays An adult study designed
3/15,22,29, 4/5,12 to help you **Create a**
8:45-9:45AM **Purpose Centered Life**
Sundays in which you can say...
3/20,27, 4/3,10,17

*YES! to God
YES! to Your Neighbor
YES! to Yourself
See more inside!*



A Life of Purpose

In the last decade we have seen a rush of book titles that seek to move us, as individuals and as communities, to become "purpose driven." Rick Warren, mega-church pastor and author of the mega-million copy "*A Purpose Driven Life*", sparked this movement and inspired many people to find a faith practice that is passion-inspired and Spirit-led.

Warren and many others know that as people of faith we need to move or be driven from our purpose and our passions if we are going to find peace amidst the challenges of our lives. Moving from our passion and purpose is not about success as the world defines it. It is about living a fulfilled life knowing you are doing what it is that God has created you to do.

The same is true for a congregation! If a church is not living into it's purpose as divinely given then it is nothing more than a "noisy gong and a clanging cymbal". 1 Cor. 13:1

On February 17, 2011 the TCC adopted its "Provocative Purpose Statement." This statement is designed to be the lens through which your ministry and mission decisions are made. It is the way that you put on God's purpose for you, as a congregation, so that you are always letting the *Spirit* lead and not getting caught in the *worldly* ideas of what a successful church is supposed to be.

"Being successful and fulfilling your life's purpose are not at all the same thing; You can reach all your personal goals, become a raving success by the worlds standards and still miss your purpose in this life." Rick Warren

Continued on page 2

We give of our time and treasure but do you think about your talent as a gift? The gifting God has given you a gift to share. What gifts do you bring to offer Jesus and your family here at the TCC?

Kathy Duckett, Minister for Gifts, has a Gifts inventory that she will be asking members and friends to complete. Thanks for giving!



YES!³

CREATING A PURPOSE CENTERED LIFE IN WHICH YOU CAN SAY:
YES! TO GOD
YES! TO YOUR NEIGHBOR
YES! TO YOURSELF

YES!³ is a five-week experiential program designed by Rev. Dr. Rob and Dr. Kim Voyle to provide you with an opportunity to discover and create a purpose-centered life based in the **Appreciative Way**[™]. This small-group study will teach you the core elements of the **Appreciative Way** as well as help you craft your personal "Provocative Purpose Statement". Rob and Kim offer these words about the program...

"Learning when and how to say YES! is a process that develops over time. Part of this process is learning when it may be unwise or inappropriate to say YES! to something. The YES!³ program is designed as a series of exercises, conversations and reflections that will help you through this process. It is not designed to impose a YES! on you, nor tell you what to say YES! to."

You have two opportunities each week to participate in this program:

Sunday mornings from **8:45-9:45AM** and **Tuesday** evenings from **7-8PM**.

There will also be a retreat day scheduled by the group once the program begins. Materials for the program are \$25 (two books) and a commitment to all five sessions is important, though you can come Sunday or Tuesday as your schedule allows. Resource scholarships will be available so that no one will be turned away due to financial limitations. Contact the church office for registration.

A Life of Purpose

Continued from Pg. 1

In my sermon on January 16th 2011 I laid out the differences between a Mission, Vision and Purpose statement. (You can get a copy of my sermon outline in the church office or online [here](#).) The differences are:

- a. **A Vision statement** is - Aspirational and about human *being*
- b. **A Mission Statement** is - Action oriented and about human *doing*
- c. **A Provocative Purpose Statement** is about declaring *who* we are at our best or greatest, *what* calls us to our best or greatness, and what is the *purpose* for our best or greatness!

In the TCC's Provocative Purpose Statement you declared that, **at your best**, you are a faith community who...

Being in an intimate relationship with God in the present, we are an ever-learning, action-oriented, justice-seeking, community-caring church. Our purpose is to use our gifts to make God's love real and alive for everyone.

You, as a congregation, have now declared that, **at your collective greatest**, this is what God wants to do with your greatness in the world.

During Lent I invite you to explore these same questions for yourself so YOU can move from your God-Given purpose, both in the church and in the world. When you know who you are at your best, what calls you to your best, and what the purpose of your best is for this world, you will be free to say YES! to those ministries and callings, both in the church and outside of it, that God needs your particular best for in order to achieve fulfillment of God's plan for this world.

I invite you to begin living into this declaration that the TCC is an **ever-learning** church by engaging in the practice of growing and deepening your faith as individuals and as a congregation. I invite you to take on this Lenten practice of learning together as you take one more step toward Living Into the Dream that God has laid on your hearts.

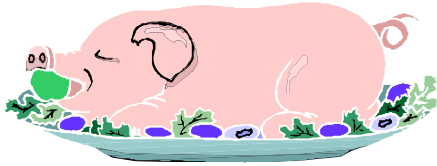
I hope to see you during Lent as together we discover our personal YES! and live into God's YES! for TCC and the world!

LET'S CELEBRATE SPRING

with a

ROAST PORK DINNER

With all the Fixin's



Mashed Potatoes ❖ Sauerkraut ❖ Peas
❖ Applesauce ❖ Gravy ❖ Rolls ❖
Homemade Desserts

March 26, 2011

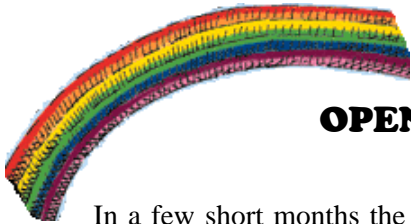
5:00pm to 6:30pm

Townsend Congregational Church
Fellowship Hall

\$9 for adults, \$5.00 for youth 3-8 years

Holiday Questionnaire

- In the past, we had a Christmas Pageant. It was difficult to get volunteers and children to participate, so for the past 2 years, children were involved throughout Advent in worship. Do you like this approach?
 - Yes
 - No, I want a pageant.
 - I would be willing to volunteer to help with a pageant and/or to have my children available for rehearsals.
- We had more music each Sunday than in the past. I thought the amount of music in the service was:
 - just right
 - too much
 - not enough
- This year there were Christmas Eve Services at 7:00 pm and 11:00 pm.
 - I like these times for services.
 - I prefer the earlier service at 4:00 pm
 - I attended:
 - 7:00 pm
 - 11:00 pm
 - Neither (If neither, why?)



OPEN & AFFIRMING (ONA) NEWS

In a few short months the snow will be gone and it will be fun to be outside again. Here is a letter from Kathie Carpenter with one idea for celebrating!

Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Peace,

Pam Snaith

Dear Friends,

Let's gear up for Boston Pride! The Boston Pride Parade and Festival are Saturday June 11, 2011. This year we will again have a MA Conference UCC Open and Affirming Churches marching contingent. We will have a fabulous rhythm band, streamers, and individual brightly colored small church signs for each church and the Conference ONA banner. The ONA Task Team will register the group, pay the registration fee, provide marshals, and provide church signs. We want you to provide the energy, the singing and chanting and to dress up to match the occasion (more info later). We provide the small

church signs because there can be only one main banner for a marching group.

If you want to carry your own church banner or have a float in the parade, you must register your own church at <http://www.bostonpride.org/about/pride-parade/>. Registration discounts apply until Feb 10, 2011.

To join the Conference group, please email Kathie Carpenter at kacarp@comcast.net, tell me the church name and town and give one contact person with email for the group. Let's beat last year's total of 75 marchers in Boston! If you think now that your church will march, let me know. If you are not sure yet, check with folks at your church and let me know within the next month.

Thanks and blessings!

Kathie Carpenter



New Prayers Format

This newsletter edition marks the first month that there will be no "ongoing prayers". It is the task of the Minister for Hospitality to maintain these prayers so that they are pertinent and up to date. In the absence of a Minister for Hospitality, our list had become out of date and difficult to manage. For the time being, the prayers in this newsletter will consist only

of the cumulative prayers recorded on Sunday mornings and any that are requested individually. I know I miss some of the prayer requests on Sundays, so if there are any joys or concerns in your life that you would like especially to have the church family praying for, please do not hesitate to pass them on to me and I will record them for the newsletter and pass them on to our church secretary for the next Sunday bulletin. Please do not ever underestimate the power of prayer, let the powerful faith of our church family be put to work for you and those you care about.

Cathy Hill



OUR BLESSINGS:

Thanks be to God for all our wonderful new members and for Cullen Skerritt who was baptized during our service on 1/30/11. Our sister church in Amherst recently voted

to become an ONA church. Brian who is enjoying his newfound freedom with a driver's license. Prayers of thanksgiving for having RuthAnn Hall and Flo Madlala with us on February 6 - they have since expressed their great joy in being with us that day. Prayers of thanksgiving for Paul Martineau's recent good fortune, one part of that is being employed again after several months out of work. Alice Kay is responding well to her new treatment and is expected to be fully healed by the end of February. Although Melanie Ouellette's mom is still experiencing serious health issues, we give thanks for the recent reconciliation between her and her son. Thanksgiving for the music program in our school district and for all the children who are able to share their musical talents through this program. Thanks be to God for the participation of so many of our Scouts in worship on 2/20/11. Thanks also for the dedication of all the Scout Leaders. Prayers of thanks and for continued healing for Auntie June who has now been released from hospital. Thanks for the blessings of friendships both old and new.

CONCERNS: Prayers of healing for Steve St Jean who is recovering from a car accident; for Paul Martineau who is experiencing back pain; for 13-year-old Jake who fell down stairs while texting and broke his hand; for Paul Martineau who has been diagnosed with an ulcer; for Alice as she continues to heal after surgery; for Melanie Ouellette's mother who has pneumonia and continues to decline in health; for Kevin who recovered from brain surgery a year ago and now has lung cancer; for Pearl Selfridge who is still in Apple Valley; for Olivia, a 16-year-old who was struck by a car, has a shattered hip, and will most likely be in a wheelchair when she is able to return to school; for Robin Lunn and for all those who are dealing with seasonal illnesses; for Janice Young, who is struggling with multiple forms of cancer; and for RuthAnn Hall as she continues her battle with cancer. Prayers of comfort to all the family and friends of Mark Culotta who passed away on 1/29/11, and prayers for the

Culotta family as they embark on a new life without Mark. Prayers for the recovery of Rosa, a four-year-old who got sick with the flu and wound up in a coma. Prayers for Paul Martineau as he goes through the lengthy process of probate. Prayers of comfort to the family and friends of Caitlin Wilson's fiancé who recently lost a loved one. Prayers of comfort also to all the family and friends of Don Amadon who recently passed away. God be with Pastor Mark in his various ministries with his congregation. Prayers of peace for Dot who is nearing the end of her life. John and his family. Prayers for the people of Egypt that they might experience a peaceful transition. Prayers of comfort to the family and friends of Phil Bertoni who recently died, he was a teacher at NCCS. Prayers of peace for June Pelletier. Prayers of comfort for Lorraine Quesada's granddaughter and her dorm mates who recently encountered a suicide. Prayers for all those who are unemployed and underemployed. God be with Ann Marie who is in a bad relationship. Prayers for all those with mental health issues and their caregivers. Meg Gugarty. Cathy Hill's sister Morag and brother-in-law, Russell, both in Australia. Rev Dr Mingus, one of our former pastors who is now suffering with ALS. Prayers of peace to the family and friends of Aunt Celia who passed away recently.



My beloved TCC family,

To 'thank you' is woefully insufficient; instead I accept your blessed love offered me through your presence, prayers, cards, flowers, turkey dinner for my family and lemon meringue pie.

You, and Pastor Shayna with her countless hours and prayers by my side, opened my family's hearts to the powerful miracles of our Christian community and thereby beautifully contributed to their divinity.

I've been home for one week after my second hospital stay and improving daily. Hope to be back at worship in a few weeks.

Blessings, Peace and Love, Fred Spring



To the Members of TCC and the Outreach Committee,

Thank you so much for the scholarship money you gave to me. I'm halfway through my freshman year at Fitchburg State, and the money really helped me with my tuition bill. I thank you all very much!

Sincerely, Kylie Thompson

COMMUNITY NEWS

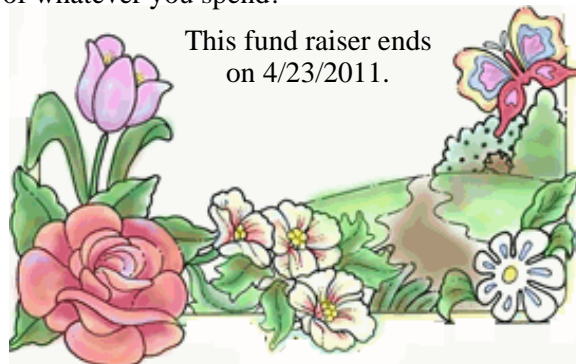
Free Income Tax Assistance MOC, a community service agency located in Fitchburg, is offering free assistance with income tax filings for both the federal and state returns for individuals and families with incomes of \$49,000 and less. If you are interested in this service, you can contact MOC at 978-343-5706.

The next Townsend Community Garden meeting is scheduled for March 8 in the TEO building.

Let the Townsend Public Library Help with Your Spring Garden Planning!

The Friends of the Townsend Public Library are trying something new that will help them – and help you beautify

your garden! As a precursor to the annual Book and Plant Sale that will occur on May 7, the Friends of the Townsend Public Library have teamed up with “Flower Power Fund Raisers, Inc.” to offer a large selection of bright and beautiful plants for your garden. To take a peek, please go to the web site: http://www.flowerpowerfundraising.com/campaign?campaign_id=5069 and see what it’s all about - just remember those few selections on the home page are just a sampling, click on “shop now” to see the full catalog. The Friends will receive 50% of whatever you spend!



| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| March 2011 | | | | | GOD IS STILL SPEAKING | |
| Lent | | 1 6:15 VCCC | 2 6:30pm Handbells 7:30pm Snr Choir | 3 7pm Council, rm 4 7-8pm Court of Honor in Sanctuary | 4 | 5 7am Saturday at Seven team |
| 6 Worship/SS COMMUNION | 7 6:30 Open Sew | 8 | 9 Handbells practice 7pm Ash Wed. Followed by Snr Choir practice | 10 6pm VCCC Rm 4 7:30pm Music Team-Quiet Rm | 11 | 12 |
| 13 Worship/SS New Member class | 14 | 15 6:15 VCCC rm 4 7p Lenten Study | 16 6:30pm Handbells 7:30pm Snr Choir | 17 | 18 | 19 9am-4pm Lenten Retreat |
| 20 Worship/SS 8:45a Lenten Study Robin Lunn preaching | 21 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE - NOON - | 22 7p Lenten Study | 23 6:30pm Handbells 7pm Boy Scout leaders, rm 4 7:30pm Snr Choir | 24 | 25 | 26 Roast Pork Supper 5-6:30pm |
| 27 Worship/SS 8:45a Lenten Study | 28 | 29 6:15 VCCC rm 4 7p Lenten Study | 30 6:30pm Handbells 7:30pm Snr Choir | 31 | E-MAIL ADDRESS FOR NEWSLETTER EDITOR, CATHY HILL: newsletter@tccucc.org Questions? Cell # 978-337-0638 | |

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)

