



THE VISITOR

TOWNSEND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

275TH ANNIVERSARY

March 2009

Volume 32 No. 3

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

PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS:

Wednesday through
Sunday by appointment.

Visit our web page at
www.tccucc.org

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

**On Saturday, March 28 the
Sunday School is hosting an
Italian Buffet from 5-6:30.**

Last year we served chicken
tetrizzini, sausage and meatballs
with spaghetti, chicken & eggplant
parmigiana, and vegetable
primavera, plus salad, bread and
homemade desserts.

This is a great family event. Dinner
is just \$8.00; youth 3-12yrs \$4.00.
We can't wait to see you there.

The list of possibilities is limited only by your imagination. Be thinking about what you can donate!!!! We plan to advertise these items in the weeks ahead so you can be making your plans. See related article on page 6.

THANK YOU!

I'll soon have the final tally of our Shaw's Star Market fund-raiser. PLEASE do not give us any more receipts. The rebate plan is changing. It'll be easier to participate. Details to follow.

Sharlene Gugarty

SHARE YOUR PRAYERS!

Each Sunday the congregation lifts joys and concerns during worship. In order to share your prayer intentions with those who may have missed the service, please call or email the church office and your prayer requests will be included in the bulletin the following week. Thank you!

Sharlene Gugarty

**Auction, Auction, Auction
Tentative Date May 2, 2009**

Do you have a talent you could donate to the auction? Can you make a meal for 4, 6, or 8 people? Can you sew? Do You Quilt? Can you write a resume? Could you wash windows, rake leaves, dog or cat sit? Can you take pictures or video an event? Do you play in a band? Could you give music lessons? Do you have tickets to sporting events or concerts?

Do you have a summer home, condo, or a timeshare? Your church friends are dying to bid on it so they can see where you spend your time.

*Carrie's
2 cents*



The time has come for the baton to be passed to a new Minister for Finance. It has been an honor to serve you. In the next few months, I will reflect on this ministry and discern what will be my next ministry (you didn't think you'd get rid of me that easy did you?).

I will continue serving as your MforF through May. If you feel called to this ministry, I encourage you to include Pastor Shayna in your discernment.

Spring is a wonderful time of new beginnings. It reminds me that all things are possible.

Your Sister in Christ, Carrie



March 2009



TCC's Sunday School Grapevine

From Meg Genoter, C.E. Director



March 1: Baptism/Sunday school/
Communion in Fellowship Hall/ Youth
Choir

March 8: Sunday school/ Youth Choir Rehearsal

March 15: Sunday school/ Youth Choir Rehearsal

March 22: Sunday school/ Youth Choir Rehearsal

Sat. March 28: Italian Buffet Fund-Raiser

March 29: Sunday school/ Youth Choir Rehearsal

Linda Ireland, Minister for Education at
lcireland2263@yahoo.com or 978-597-0996.

**The Youth Choir & Children's Choir
will be singing in worship during**

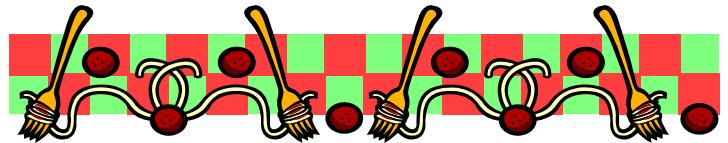
Lent. They will meet for a rehearsal at 9:15
in Fellowship Hall. Youth choir will continue
throughout the year with regular rehearsals
15 minutes after worship. Thank you to our
dedicated team who makes this happen, Lyn
Bennett, Nancy Clough, Mark Culotta, & Renée Fossey



Thanks

Thank you to all of you
who volunteered to teach
in February; Carole
Gustufson, Sharon
Hackler, Lisa Hunt,
Valerie Baker, & Diane
Thompson. Also thanks to

Cheryl Cutler, Jane Jackson, Pam Miller, Sheila Miller
Debra Reeves & Pam Snaith for shepherding this month.

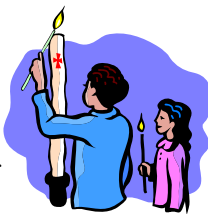


**On Saturday, March 28 the Sunday School has
volunteered to host a fund-raising Italian
Buffet for TCC.**

This is a great family event. Please
sign-up to donate your favorite Italian specialty &/or help
set-up, serve & cook or clean up. It is always a fun evening
and all proceeds go toward balancing our church's budget.

**Acolyte Training March 1
following worship!**

What is an acolyte? The definition of
acolyte is (Greek, "follower"). A lay
person, usually a child or young adult, who assist ministers in
worship services. At TCC this is the person who lights the
worship candles and extinguishes them at the end of service.
If you want to participate and are in 3rd-grade or older, there
will be lessons on March 1 following worship with Donna
Capone and Dave Bennett. Look forward to seeing you there.



**The Sunday School is always
on the look out for volunteers
to help with Sunday School.** If

you are in 9th grade or beyond you can
help in Sunday School as a teacher or shepherd. I started
teaching Sunday school when I was 16. Folks volunteer for
4 weeks every other month. This gives our teachers a chance
to participate in the worship life of our church as well as reach
out to the youth. Questions? Talk to your child's teacher or
see me. Give me a call at church 978-597-8520 ext. 12 or
reach me at home 978-597-2280. Volunteer today, our next
session begins March 8.



**Questions or Concerns Regarding
the Christian Ed. Program at TCC?**

Contact Meg Genoter, C.E. Director at
genoter@verizon.net or 978-597-2280 or



AS I SEE IT!

. . . Pastor Shayna Appel

I remember, in my youth, many a teacher or other involved adults in my life telling me that there were no such things as stupid questions, only stupid answers. Well, apparently not everyone received that message growing up!

Just the other day I watched as a local hero, (well, local if you're from our neighboring state of Connecticut or a hero if you're U-Conn Huskies fan) fell big-time from grace. Coach Jim Calhoun of the U-Conn Men's Huskies (basketball) team was asked about his salary during a post-game interview. There is really no way to describe what happened next but to say that Coach Calhoun 'lost it.' He became rude, arrogant, dismissive – in short, less than the man he could, and should be. He asked the young freelance reporter, "Are you stupid?" Then, Calhoun directed him to "get some facts." Coach Calhoun's excuse for his behavior? "This program (U-Conns men's basketball) brings in over twelve million dollars a year to the school."

Right ... so, if I follow coach Calhoun's reasoning I'm left with the old adage, "Money talks ... everything else can take a walk." Oh, and apparently if you are blessed with wealth, you are to be excused for abject rudeness! Talk about stupid answers. Well coach, sorry to disagree but I think those days are (thankfully) slipping behind us.

The truth is that Coach Calhoun is the highest paid employee in the State of Connecticut at 1.6 million dollars per year, before endorsements (Hartford Courant, Feb. 23. Calhoun Owes Answer, Not Refund). Let that one sink in a bit. 1.6 million dollars per year to coach men's college basketball. I don't know about you, but this fact makes me wonder about our priorities. Calhoun and U-Conn aren't alone in this practice of paying obscene wages to college coaches. The problem only gets worse when we get to the level of professional sports! And let us consider for a moment the times we are living in – faced as we are with huge cuts to our ranks of teachers, firefighters, police officers, mental health providers, and social workers as states confront monumental decreases in available funding, I think it may be time for us all to begin asking those tough questions of value and worth ... and not just of others but of ourselves.

I don't know about you but, living as we are in these times, I think the question posed by Krayske (U-Conn Law Student, political activist and freelance reporter) to Coach Calhoun was rather timely. We are living in interesting times and, it would seem, a time in which we are beginning to reexamine our priorities. We are also in the season of Lent, a time when reexamining our values also seems timely. So, let us question our priorities and values with abandon. It is good and right

that we do. And remember, there really is no such thing as a stupid question!

Blessings & Shalom-

Pastor Shayna

ORGANIST/CHOIR DIRECTOR APPRECIATION

On February 22 the members and friends of TCC,UCC joined together to honor Renée Fossey and her 10 years of service here. Due to generous contributions we were able to gift her with a two-day vacation at the renowned *Parker House Bed & Breakfast* in Quechee, VT, we had delicious cake, gave Renée a beautiful card hand-made by Glenda Homoliski, and the choir serenaded her with a song written by Chris Clish and set to the tune of "Joyful, Joyful". Some of those present did not catch all the words to this fun song and asked for it to be printed in this newsletter. The song is as follows:

Cathy Hill

"OUR MUSIC LEADER, RENÉE FOSSEY"



Singing, singing, we are singing
For our leader, for Renée.
It's been ten years she's been with us,
So we celebrate today.
Leader who is fun and loving
Always opened minded, fair;
She has such a love of music,
Talented beyond compare.

There are times when she will bribe us,
Cookies, chocolate and snacks.
There are days we're sure it's seeming
Like her job is herding cats.
Alto, soprano, tenor and bass,
So many personalities;
When the moon is full she braces
For the night's frivolity!

She is giving and forgiving,
Caring, loving, loyal friend,
Sense of humor and compassion,
Kindness seems to have no end.
She's our leader, and our teacher
Patience is her middle name.
Even when we sing the wrong notes...
Rarely does she get inflamed.

Even if we start to grumble,
If the music's seeming bland....
Always she will gently guide us;
'Conquer music, yes, you can!'
Always fair and open minded,
Compassionate and ever poised;
We will always love *Ms Fossey*
As we sing a joyful noise!

Christine Clish



THE 300 CLUB ENTERS INTO ITS SECOND YEAR

At this year's annual meeting held on Thursday, January 29 we once again thanked God for all our blessings. One of which was made possible by the generosity and kindness of this past year's 300 club. With the help from the 42 families of this club, we raised through donations over \$12,000 to help bust that \$30,000.00 deficit we faced for last year! Through those donations as well as the countless pledges and hard work of many throughout the year, and circumstances that made our expenses less than expected, we ended the year with only a \$99 deficit in our budget for fiscal 2008! Praises to our Lord! This year we are faced with, and have passed, an equally mind boggling task! At that meeting we agreed by consensus to accept the challenge of a budget with a \$43,000 deficit!

Why do we need to maintain and support our current budget obligations? (Which are kept lower by the volunteer help and frugality of many in our congregation who volunteer their time) First, our church buildings serve as our meeting place and an investment. Next (and this is only a very partial list) are the costs and joys of this church's discipleship!

*The staff – Our pastor, organist, secretary, sexton, and bookkeeper – These people we have promised to pay.

*Our council who have done a tremendous job serving their church.

*Our Sunday school – we are so blessed!

*The organizations that we either serve or use our church to meet: like the Village Common Children's Center, TEO, our music ministry, the youth fellowship program, the scouting program, the morning mothers group and on and on!

*Even those who have served or been served by our suppers, the band concert, the auction or our church fair. ... All experiences that are definitely more than fund-raisers!

*Anyone who receives comfort or joy from the Sunday services, visits from church members or warmth from belonging to a church that truly loves them.

As you can see we need to provide the funding so that our church friends and members can continue to serve and/or be served!

During the meeting, Pastor Shayna asked who was on the task team to run this 300 club. I am the team and this is how it works ...

The "300 club" is beyond our pledges that are already in place for this year. If you didn't get a chance to pledge, we would be thrilled if you would, but whether you did or not, here is a chance to help out.

I have a sign up sheet for everyone to be included. I understand that some can afford more and some can't afford as much, but the goal is \$300 as an average. The \$300 comes out to \$25 a month or less than \$1.00 a day.

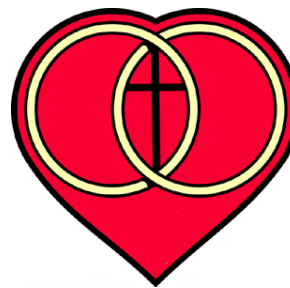
After you sign up, you can pick up the coupon page for the year. Each month, if you wish, simply cut the coupon from the page, write your name on it and write out your check. Place both in an envelope or your pledge envelope and put it in the collection plate. I only need to know who is participating. I DO NOT WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOUR PERSONAL GOAL IS! Just write your goal on the back of your first coupon so that Jodi Burnham, our assistant treasurer, can record your donation for tax purposes.

So that's it ... let's get rid of that deficit ... I'll see you at coffee hour! Please call me with any questions you may have, or if you won't be at church and would like to sign up.

Thank you for your time,

Wanda Wilson 597-6803

P.S. As of this writing, Linda Ireland has come forward to chair this year's Auction, which made \$4,000.00 last year, and 21 people have become this year's 300 club members! Through those two blessings, we have already cut our projected deficit by \$10,300.00! Our deficit is now in the low \$30,000.00 range. Please consider your blessings and join our mission by pledging if you haven't already, increasing your pledge or joining the 300 club, you'll be glad you did!



Marriage Covenant Ministry

Our blessings never cease (but you already know that).

The Spirit Spoke, we listened, we accepted.

We have changed our ministry from creating our Marriage Policy to creating our Marriage Covenant.

The covenant, a sacred agreement between TCC and the marrying couple, expresses how we treasure the deeply spiritual connection we have with our church and invites the marrying couple to respectfully acknowledge and honor that relationship; and, it will be sealed by verbal or signature agreement between our Pastor and both partners of the couple.

The next gathering of our Marriage Covenant Ministry will be held Wednesday, March 18 at 7:30 pm in room 4.

Prior attendance or participation is not required. We've had three emotionally and spiritually exciting meetings so far. Feel free and comfortable to attend and ask questions, share personal experiences, offer suggestions and ride with the Spirit as we create our Marriage Covenant in a way that embodies our beliefs, policy and procedures for those wishing to marry here at TCC.

Fred Spring 978-597-8837

Stewardship Message

Keeping What Matters

Then the king responded, 'Give the first woman the living boy; do not kill him. She is his mother.' (1 Kings 3: 27, full story 1 Kings 3: 16-28)

It was close to Valentine's Day and the confirmation class was tittering. To cut through the silliness I invited them to go around the circle and share a scripture about love to the best of their memory. I was impressed by how many "love passages" they knew, more than – love one another ... neighbor ... stranger.

Andy's unique choice was the story usually called Solomon's choice. Two women with newborns shared lodging. One infant died in the night and both claimed the living child. They screamed at each other. Solomon suggested the baby boy be bisected and each woman be given half. One woman said, "Fine." (Can you hear the teenaged boy say it?) The other said, "Give her the baby – don't kill him." Solomon gave this woman the child. Whatever the biological truth was – this was the mother!

"So, how is this a love story?" I asked.

"Well, if you really love something or someone, you know that cutting it in half will kill it." said Andy. A young woman (soon to get her driver's license) picked up the thought. "Also, if you really love something, you're willing to let it go."

These wise confirmands suggest some Solomon-stewardship for our churches. In a difficult budget time – cut, cut, cut is frequent advice, but there is much precious and vulnerable programming that won't survive the knife. Keeping what matters in our faith communities alive often requires personally sacrificial gifts – gifts without strings, ownership or naming rights – gifts of love.

Maren C. Tirabassi is Pastor of Union Congregational UCC of Madbury, NH. Her most recent book is God in My Life: How and Why We Share Faith Stories.



This resource is a free service and is made possible by your gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission.

Agapé Handbell Choir

The Spring session of the Agapé Handbell Choir will begin on March 4. If you are interested or have any questions, please call Wanda Wilson at 597-6803.



Wanda Wilson

CONFIRMATION



The next TCC Confirmation Class is now forming. Students who will be in 9th grade or older in the Fall of 2009 are eligible to join this exciting journey of discovery, learning and spiritual growth with each other, Pastor Shayna and the entire church family.

If you, your child or anyone you know is interested in being a part of this Confirmation class, please call Pastor Shayna or Linda Ireland (lindai2263@yahoo.com or call after 5pm 978-870-7730).

Linda Ireland

All are welcome to the STAR ISLAND LAITY WEEKEND CONFERENCE

Saturday, September 5 to Monday, September 7, 2009

If you've never been, the Star Island Conference Center is situated on the Isles of Shoals off the coast of Portsmouth, NH. It is a simple yet beautiful setting for time away.

This year the Laity Weekend Conference is titled The Parables: Never Ending Stories. This year's leader of the conference is Sharon Dietrich who is known to be a wonderful and inspiring speaker. Everyone loves a good story! Surprise! So does God. Jesus was a master teacher. His tales were simple, easy to remember and profound. Join us as we study the parables of Christ, those simple stories that reveal the deep truths of whom God is, what God desires and what life is really about.

The three-day conference is organized by members of the Laity of the United Church of Christ and includes speaker sessions and personal prayer time. In addition, opportunities abound for you to explore the rugged island's sights and rich history, to participate in a wide variety of activities ranging from tennis to board games, from music to softball, or you may simply relax on the porch of the Oceanic Hotel with old and new friends overlooking Gosport Harbor or watching a glorious sunset. Guests are invited to partake in any activity of their choosing, the weekend is yours to enjoy!

A supervised program for children and young teens runs concurrently with the conference sessions. Age appropriate children's activities are also provided. For many families and individuals, young and old, the Conference of the Laity has become an annual opportunity to recharge spirit, mind, and body.

Come enjoy the Island's beauty with us! If you have any questions, contact Lee McTighe, Melanie Ouellette or Lisa Hunt, Laity Weekend Steering Committee members. Brochures with all Star Island offerings are available on the web www.starisland.org

Lisa Hunt

"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:35

Women's Small-Group Covenant Ministry to Begin in March

Dear fellow church members,

Starting in March we will launch a small-group Covenant ministry here at TCC. Small groups are an integral part of many churches across the country and can help members get to know one another better while deepening their faith. This TCC small group will be for women of all ages. The group will seek to encourage women on their Christian walk through a variety of outlets, such as fellowship, study, encouragement, and mission.

During the first 20-30 minutes of each meeting, the group will break up into smaller groups to explore spiritual topics and share personal growth stories and concerns. We will plan out activities for the remainder of the evenings. If you want to consider joining, please begin to think about what activities you would like to see happen in this group. Possible topics for the meetings (to be discussed) include: Bible study and education, mission and outreach (tutoring children, helping to serve meals, fund-raisers, etc.), special interest nights (knitting, quilting, sewing, biking, walking, card games and other games, dancing, crafts, stamping, eating out, singing—karaoke, whatever), book studies, guest speakers, exercise evenings, shopping and entertainment trips, hobby nights, girls' nights out, and cookie exchanges.

No matter what your age or stage of life there will be a warm and welcoming place for you in this newfound women's group. Let's meet in Fellowship Hall for our first meeting on Tuesday, March 17, from 7 to 9 p.m. Bring a drink and a snack and be comfortable when you come. It would be helpful (but not necessary) to know if you are interested in attending prior to the first meeting. Please give me a call at 978-516-0394 or email me at gary@cs.uml.edu.

Michelle Livingston



SPRING CLEANING? THINK AUCTION!

The TCC Second Annual Auction is being planned, with a tentative date of Saturday, May 2. If you were there last year, I'm sure that you remember the fun and the excitement of bidding for treasures and bargains - I don't believe anyone went home empty-handed! This is a professionally run auction where you have a bidding number and raise your number high to raise the bid and - hopefully - win the item. Treasures last year included furniture, paintings, glassware, tools, toys, handmade items, baby items including cribs, a gorgeous handmade quilt, themed baskets, services from local merchants, certificates for services from talented church members and even a get-away to a summer cottage.

Please - think of the auction before you list that item in the classifieds or put it out on the curb! Pick-up of your item can be arranged, and although storage is limited, we will try to oblige if you can't store it yourself until May.

I would like to start an inventory as soon as possible...if you have an item for the auction, please call or send an email with your name, a contact number or email address, the items and whether pick-up and/or storage is required.

Thanks!

Linda Ireland, lindai2263@yahoo.com, or call after 5pm 978-870-7730

Note: Please do NOT drop off items at the church office or the old vestry. The vestry is not available to us this year for storage due to rental of the space.



THE 275TH ANNIVERSARY TASK TEAM WANTS TO HEAR YOUR GOOD IDEAS!

We will be joining forces with the Townsend Historical Society to celebrate our own 275th, the 200th anniversary of The Reed

Homestead and the 200th birthday of President Abraham Lincoln. What do you know about Townsend's past? Was one of your ancestors a 'Minute Man' or a soldier in the Civil War? Were you part of the LBS, hosting ice cream socials on the Common?

Please bring your old photos, bulletins and stories to our team so we can make them a part of our celebration. The team will be meeting **Monday, March 2** at 10:30 a.m. in Room 4. Everyone is welcome to join. Look for more information and more opportunities to join the team in this town-wide celebration. If you are unable to come to the meeting, you may call me at the church office or email me at writersharl@yahoo.com with your ideas and suggestions.

Sharlene Gugarty

300 Club - March

Here are a few suggestions to help everyone save for their donations for March! Since March is associated the color green give a dollar for every time you:

- Wear the color green.
- Water your houseplants
- Have a beer on St. Paddy's Day
- Eat corned beef and cabbage
- Thank God for all your blessings.
- See a robin!

Change all that cash into a check and send it along to the church! God Bless! Any questions? Call Wanda Wilson 597-6803

Wanda Wilson

Turn, Turn, Turn - A Time For Every Purpose Under Heaven

By Carrie I. Davidson, Minister for Finance

Hope is a powerful gift from God. In times of crisis, be it economic or otherwise, I look to God to carry me. I pray for guidance, remain hopeful and seek the light. I remember to everything, there is a season.

To everything - turn, turn, turn
There is a season - turn, turn, turn
And a time for every purpose under heaven

A time to be born, a time to die
A time to plant, a time to reap
A time to kill, a time to heal
A time to laugh, a time to weep

It's easy to get caught up in the media hype and noise. You may even have the winter blues. Yes, we are in a recession; but like all economic cycles this too will end. Take heart, have faith and be patient. Everything, including the economy, has its season. And winter always turns to spring.

To everything - turn, turn, turn
There is a season - turn, turn, turn
And a time for every purpose under heaven

A time to build up, a time to break down
A time to dance, a time to mourn
A time to cast away stones
A time to gather stones together

This song, which is taken almost verbatim from Ecclesiastes 3:1, reminds us that God has a plan and although we may not understand it or feel the timing is off ... we can find peace in knowing we are in good hands.

To everything - turn, turn, turn
There is a season - turn, turn, turn
And a time for every purpose under heaven

A time of war, a time of peace
A time of love, a time of hate
A time you may embrace
A time to refrain from embracing

You may feel *this time is different*. And to that I say, "that which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun." Ecclesiastes 1:9

To everything - turn, turn, turn
There is a season - turn, turn, turn
And a time for every purpose under heaven

As the saying goes, time heals all wounds. Or is it something else? "There is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of things that are to come by those who will come after." Ecclesiastes 1:11

A time to gain, a time to lose

The economy will rebound...it's only a matter of time. It's not *if* but *when*. There is a season.

A time to mend, a time to sew

As we continue moving forward through the seasons, remember 3 things: faith, patience and discipline. These 3

things will guide you through the good times and the bad times.

A time to love, a time to hate

In covenant with one another and with love in our heart, will we find our way together. God is with thee and so am I. With God, all things are possible.

A time of peace, I swear it's not too late.

Think spring! Peace be with you.

March



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



OPEN & AFFIRMING (ONA) - Looking Back and Moving Forward

"The arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice." Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

About a year ago we received our ONA certificate as the 732nd church in the UCC to become "official." As of January 2009 there were 775 open and affirming UCC churches. That sounds like progress but, at the same time, California's Proposition 8 overturned a previous decision and banned marriage between same-gender loving couples. The campaigns for and against Proposition 8 raised \$35.8 million and \$37.6 million respectively, showing what an intense and divisive issue this remains.

I remember Lyndon Johnson signing the Civil Rights Act in 1964, intended to eliminate racial discrimination. It didn't end discrimination but it was the beginning of a process now showing some amazing results that did not seem possible at that time.

As members and friends of the Townsend Congregational Church, an open and affirming congregation, we are called to take part in the process of building tolerance and valuing differences; to lay our hands upon the arc of the moral universe and bend it toward justice for all of God's children. But we know this process cannot be legislated - it can only be lived by people who have fearlessly searched their own hearts and made room for views that are not their own. Together we can.

Peace,

Pam Snaith, ONA Liaison

Remember to contact me if you have ONA concerns or ideas for ONA initiatives.

OUTREACH CORNER

Submitted by: *Melanie Ouellette, Minister for Outreach*

Old News: People who colored Mandalas and wish for them to go to the Lamontville Congregational Church in South Africa need to turn them into the office or to Melanie Ouellette by March 22. Thank you, and I hope everyone enjoyed coloring them.

My Father's House food drive was a success. Thank you to all who contributed. The socks, hats, scarves, and gloves for the homeless people in Worcester (Liz Magill's) ministry was greatly appreciated by the recipients. And thank you for the ongoing support with TEO. We are taught to serve others with gladness and we certainly have!

Outreach supported the students who went to New Orleans for a week of learning and community service. Money was also sent to North Middlesex School Scholarship Foundation for two \$500 scholarships in the spring.

New News: The Outreach budget received \$12,388 in pledges this year, plus rolled over some money from last year. Approximately 50% of the budget goes to support Our Churches Wider Mission (OCWM) and special support ministries. The four special support ministries are also supported with money received with special pledge envelopes. These ministries include: 1) One Great Hour of Sharing done in March, 2) Spread the Love, Strengthen the Church done in May, 3) Neighbors in Need done in October, and 4) The Christmas Fund done in December. A special project pledge drive may be done as indicated. Other funds go to support many needs including local needs, youth and higher education (including campership and scholarships) and special projects. Your financial support to Outreach touches so many people locally and around the world. Blessings to all!

"Townsend Cares" group has met with the United Way on February 26 to learn more about connecting volunteers with services needed.

Watch for a display set up later in March regarding Christian conferences offered at Star Island.

The next Outreach meeting will be March 18.

Melanie Ouellette, Minister for Outreach



SEEKING ADULTS AND/OR FAMILIES WHO:

- * enjoy walking (or running, skipping, etc.)
- * want to make a difference in the lives of people without making a long-term commitment
- * like to socialize
- * enjoy having fun
- * are willing to walk for at least two hours (time can be split-up) no matter what the weather
- * can attend a few short meetings
- * enjoy late nights or early mornings
- * like to camp out (or pretend to)
- * are available June 19, 20 or both days
- * are willing to raise a minimum of \$100.

IF THIS SOUNDS LIKE YOU . . . you will want to sign up to be a member of the Townsend Crusaders TCC's Relay For

Life® team who are walking in their 10th relay to raise money for the American Cancer society in the fight against cancer. See Carole Gustafson at coffee hour or call her at 597-6364. You can also email Carole at carolegustafson@verizon.net.

Carole Gustafson



Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline

1-800-645-8333 TTY: 1-800-377-1292

With the high cost of living in the Commonwealth and more than 522,000 people across the state struggling to put food on the table, chances are that a friend or neighbor of yours is having difficulty making ends meet this winter. Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline can help. The FoodSource Hotline is the only comprehensive information and referral service for the hungry in Massachusetts. Counselors can provide information and screen callers for food stamp eligibility, connect them to school meal programs, and direct them to emergency food resources right in their neighborhood. Counselors can assist callers in 160 languages and the calls are both personalized and confidential. Extend your goodwill and reach out to those in need. A call to Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline may be all it takes to provide comfort to someone who is struggling.

In response to the increased demand for help, Project Bread's Food Source Hotline has extended its hours to:

Monday – Friday: 8:00 A.M. – 7:00 P.M.

Saturday: 10:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.

Brooke MacKinnon, Project Bread

One man's loss results in many acts of kindness



Almost two years ago a man called the church office with a question about making a donation. "My wife passed away a few years ago and, well, it's time to clear out some of the stuff she had," he told me. "Maybe you can use some of it for your fair or something. I don't know what to do with the boxes. She's got ornaments and such." Our holiday fair was months away, but I couldn't turn away a donation. I told the man he could bring what he had to the office any day and that we'd see the items went to the right places. A couple of days later, he came to the office with a friend to drop off his donation.

"There's new stuff in there that she bought and never had a chance to use. Maybe you can sell it at your fair and then use the money like you do to help folks," he suggested as he brought in a huge Sterilite™ container. "She liked pretty things," he muttered as he went back to his car. The man and his friend made trip after trip from their car, each time returning with another plastic container full of treasure. Just when I thought there couldn't possibly be any more, the man brought in a huge cardboard box.

"Now, this box, and a couple of others have a bunch of yarn she bought. Maybe you can find somebody who knits or

something,” he said as he went for yet another box . . . and another . . . and another.

For about a week everyone who came to the office wanted to know what all the stuff was and why was the office so cluttered. Gradually the items were moved to storage for the fair and other ventures until all that was left in the office were three huge boxes of yarn. How could we possibly find a “home” for all of this?

The answer to that question came the following Sunday when Rev. Liz Magill came to worship and told us of her ministry among the homeless in Worcester and about her congregation and their needs. The next week notices went in the bulletin and in *The Visitor*. And members and friends of TCC started coming to the office to get a skein or two. A week or so later, they’d be back, exchanging a bag of hats or mittens or scarves they’d made for a few more skeins of yarn.

Shannon Ireland and *Give Hope* brought sandwiches and our hats and scarves to Rev. Liz’s congregation last winter and they were grateful. A dedicated group continued to knit and crochet so that we had several bags of hats to give to Liz when she came to our Holiday fair this past November. The yarn that had begun as three boxes that occupied all the spare room in the church office was long gone, and yet the hats and scarves kept appearing in the basket in the sanctuary. It was like the loaves and fishes – how many hats can 75 skeins of yarn produce? When would it end?

It hasn’t ended. A few weeks ago Ken Reed, Melanie Ouellette and others (sorry, I forgot who!) packed my little car with bag after bag of hats, mittens, gloves, clean white socks and juice boxes and my children and I went to Worcester to bring them to Rev. Liz and her congregation.

The courtyard behind City Hall where the congregation gathers on Sunday afternoons is a bleak and barren place in the winter. The wind seems to speed up as it whips around the open space. Even though it was a sunny day, the air was bitterly cold. We took the bags across the courtyard and I could hear the people gathered announcing our arrival, “Lunch is here!” I sheepishly explained that no, we didn’t have lunch, only hats and such. Apparently the lunch volunteers had forgotten. “Look at all these wonderful warm things!” Liz told the congregation. And everyone smiled.

Worship was beginning and we gathered in a semi-circle in front of Liz. One member passed out the order of worship bulletin. We began by singing *This Little Light of Mine*. A man sat on one of the benches, shaking a tambourine; another member explained to a late-comer about lunch and they stood and sang together. I looked around at the dozen or so people singing in the courtyard. They were smiling. The air seemed a bit less frigid as we all started singing *Marching in the Light of God*. The woman next to me was actually marching! I don’t remember the next hymn we sang. I know we read *The Serenity Prayer* and recited *The Lord’s Prayer*.

We slipped away as Communion was being prepared. By then, the congregation had grown to about 20 people. Someone shouted to us, “Tell your church thank you.” I waved, and if I weren’t crying, I’d have said it was they whom I should thank.

There wasn’t a fancy organ or glowing candles. The Communion set consisted of three pieces of white bread and what appeared to be medicine cups half-filled with white grape juice. And yet, I have no doubt that God was as present

there among that congregation as God was with us at TCC earlier that day.

I am so grateful to have had the opportunity not only to donate to ‘Outreach’ but to actually ‘reach out’ and connect with Rev. Liz’s congregation. There are many folks in the congregation (and you know who you are!) who have slipped a pair of socks or some mittens in the basket, put a cake mix in the box for Our Father’s House, slipped some paper towels in the barrel for TEO. My wish for you all is that you will one day have the chance to see the magic your gift brings. You needn’t make a long-term commitment – just an hour or two to deliver something, talk to someone or whatever. The UCC’s national ad campaign says that ‘God is Still Speaking . . .’ and He can speak through your actions, too.

Sharlene Gugarty



Messages from Lamontville

June Cloutier, Correspondent

It is high summer in South Africa and Flo says that the weather can be very warm and then cool rains at times. When I tell her that it has snowed here and that it is beautiful when the sun comes out later on the sparkling trees, she finds it hard to picture that as beautiful! Flo has been doing fund-raising for her different projects. Many children go to school hungry so they have started a group to supply foods for the students in the morning. Flo has approached many food companies in her area asking for donations. Ruthann and Jan Hall have been trying to help in this fund-raising, also.

They had recently had communion and laying on of hands as we did and different people were praying for the community problems and drug abuse. An 83-year-old woman in the church died of stomach cancer and had her last communion with their minister and was happy then. Their Sunday School had taken a break in January and was back in session again. Flo was thrilled to hear that Ruthann and Jan had been to Florida to see her granddaughter, Pamela, who is in college there. That meant a lot to her to have her wonderful friends visit Pamela.

Flo was very excited about President Obama's inauguration in January and was able to watch on television. She had been watching the campaign here, of course, and was happy for a new start for our country and sent blessings for us all as a nation. She is happy for our new ministry with Shayna and loves to hear our news, also. She closes with God Bless when we speak.



OUR BLESSINGS: We celebrated the baptism of Derek Hackler on Jan. 25, and the baptism of Raymond Alan Cutler on Feb. 15. On 1/28/09 Jane & Lorraine Misner became great aunts to twin girls, Kaylee Rose and Kori Elizabeth. We join with Wanda and Dave Wilson in welcoming Nora Elizabeth Wilson, their new granddaughter. Our January turkey supper netted us \$1,417 - this breaks the previous record of \$1,395 from October 2005.

Thank you to all the people from church that sent me flowers and cards while I was recovering from surgery. It's so nice to know we have so many caring people at TCC. Thanks again. Cheryl Simoneau.

CONCERNS: We ask for prayers of comfort and support for Cynthia and Paul Curley as they deal with Paul's declining health. We offer prayers of comfort and support to Beth and Don Klein following the death on 2/18/09 of Don's father, Phil. Michelle Livingston's sister, Julie. Alice Kay. Pauline Champaign. Robert Cloutier, Steve's father. Ruth Smith. Aunt Chris. Bob Allen. Linda Modica's mother. Harold Modica's parents. Cathy Hill's brother-in-law Russell. Sterling, a 9-year-old with chronic kidney disease. Gwen Shank. Dick Collette. David Wright. Ruth Colburn. Dave & Sam Dick.

CANCER FIGHTERS: Lindsay Kimball. Barbara Montville. Tahna. Doris Landry. Anne Marie. Julia. Patty Mahoney-Cloutier. Paul Miller. Michael Stewart. Margie. Ruthann Hall. Jean Whitcomb. Lexi. Sarah Rogers. John & Janet Swenson. Nancy Gero's mother. Michael Amadon. Ann Kelleway. Palma Coccia. Lisa Collins. Donna Howard's cousin, Marie. Jennine Borandi. Sally Waite. Cathy Hill's sister Morag in Australia. Marron Ryan. Arlene Connolly. Sam. Valerie. Jim O'Shea's daughter. Glenda Homoliski. Lisa Collins. Stephanie Herman. Kim Decker. Cynthia Blood. Cheryl. Jeffrey Lothrop. Ned Robertson. Betty Lou Brown. Bette Matters. Phil, Carole Gustafson's brother-in-law.

GROUP CONCERNS: Courage for those in broken relationships, especially those being abused, to get the help they need. Those struggling financially. Those in need of food, jobs, clothing, housing, and health care. Those struggling with addictions. All those dealing with ill/aging parents. Members and friends dealing with mental illness. Those dealing with AIDS. All those living in fear and anger. All those who have returned or are returning from Iraq. Victims of terrorism. Those assisting the elderly to continue living independently.

STATE AND NATIONAL CONCERNS: World peace. Christian Peacemaker Teams. Guidance for state and national leaders, for church leaders, and for the Church. The soul of our nation. Care for our planet as we confront our roles in climate change. Wisdom for the nations as they assist in ending the genocide in the Sudan. For the victims of the fires in Australia.

THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY: Colby Jane Morton. Patrick Elliott. Adam Thibault. Daniel O'Gorman. Christine. Shaun Jokinen. D. J. Canon. Joe Calore. Jon Staib. Eduardo and Amanda Zaragosa. Michael Cannava. Matt

LeBreton. Dawn Newman MacGregor and Ian MacGregor. Eric Jancaitis. Andrew Langone. Jared Rourk. Cassie Ayott. Travis Dery. Steve Ritter. Christopher Sherritt. Church Dunn. Christopher Dunn. James Low. Shelagh Dunbar. A. J. Kalil. Bill Taylor. Charles Millard. Andrew Nelson. Tim Fortin. John Wales. Trevor Moore. Andrew Walsh. Benjamin Dick.

TOWNSEND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC - COUNCIL MEETING, January 22, 2009



Present: Carrie Davidson, Jody Burnham, Lisa Hunt, Linda Ireland, Pastor Shayna, Fred Spring, David Wilson, Lorraine Quesada, Raul Quesada, Jane Jackson, Melissa Gruber, Grant Swenor, Carol Swenor, Art Vartanian, Nancy Clough, Nancy Lee, Melanie Ouellette, Nancy Shepherd, David Ryder and Glenda Homoliski.

Pastor Shayna opened the meeting with a devotion. The following items were discussed:

1. Bylaws agenda item for the Annual Meeting-- the Council will recommend that 2 very minor changes be made and that the proposed Bylaws be adopted as the actual Bylaws of TCC. The 2 minor changes to be made are:

On page one, the church address should read "3" Brookline Street instead of "7" Brookline Street; and in Article IX, Section 1B "Annual Meeting" should read "Annual Planning Meeting". The Council reminds everyone that the Bylaws document is a living document, subject to change.

2. Mission Spending Plan (MSP or budget) agenda item for the Annual Meeting:

Carrie went through the MSP for this year, stating that the budget numbers are conservative due to the economic situation. She believes the church needs to stop living with deficit budgets and suggested forming a "Vision Team" to plan for the future. The Council discussed various parts of the MSP and made some changes to be presented at the meeting on Thursday. The changes will be incorporated into the handouts for the meeting.

3. Pastor Shayna asked the Council to spend the Lenten period reading and discussing the book, "Unbinding the Gospel" by Martha Grace Reese. (The plan is to invite the Congregation to also participate some time after Lent.) She thinks the book will help with the focus on who we are, what our priorities are and where we are going (plan, vision and direction). The Council agreed to suspend regular meetings to study the book.

4. David Wilson, Minister for Property, said that the sprinkler pipes in the entry way to the VCCC burst last Sunday and flooded and damaged the floor and walls. The Fire Dept. responded as well as many volunteers and Servpro was called in. The insurance company has been notified. He needs help on a task team to get bids for repairs. Lisa Hunt and Melissa Gruber commented on the swift action of teachers and church people helping to alleviate the damage. School items were removed quickly and there was little loss. The Council blessed an emergency loan of \$5,000 from the line of credit to

cover the loss of income from the school (as a short-term loan).

5. Lisa Hunt, Minister for Gifts, and Pastor Shayna discussed ways TCC can work smarter and how to get more people plugged in. Lisa distributed a pamphlet she made up to help people see the possibilities.

6. Linda Ireland, Minister for Education, brought up her concern about TCC not offering confirmation this year. Pastor Shayna will meet with her to discuss a program for the fall.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 9:35.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Lee, Church Clerk



at 2am on March 8.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For any calendar items pulled from the MACUCC web site, there is a **MACUCC** notation at the end of the calendar item. If you would like more information on any event, please go to www.macucc.org

MARCH

Saturday, March 14, 2009

Mission Tea Party with Susan Sanders 3:00 p.m. at the Wollaston Congregational Church United Church of Christ, 48 Winthrop Ave., Quincy MA. 02170 617-773-7432 wollastonadmin@comcast.net. To register, please email Matthew Ministries at wollastonadmin@comcast.net with name of church, contact person's name, phone and email, and number of people who plan to attend; or mail info to: Matthew Ministries, Wollaston Congregational Church. **Please register by March 4.** **MACUCC**

Sunday, March 15, 2009

Minister & President Jim Antal Preaching, 12 – 1pm at Trinitarian Congregational Church, UCC, 54 Walden Street, Concord, MA **MACUCC**

Sunday, March 15, 2009

Colossal 2009, 2 – 6pm at First Congregational Church, 19 Church Road, Shrewsbury, MA. A gathering for pastors, educators, church school superintendents, teachers and lay people to learn and share what we all want to know about faith formation and teaching ministries. **MACUCC**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <h1 style="font-size: 2em; color: purple;">March 2009</h1>					GOD IS STILL SPEAKING 	
1 Worship/SS COMMUNION Baptism of Joshua Patterson Euchar. Ministers, rm 4	2 10:30am 275th task team, rm 4	3	4 6pm Lenten Bible Study 6:30pm Handbells 7:30pm Snr Choir	5 7pm New members, F.H.	6	7 3-5pm Prayerful Writing at the Davidson's
8 Worship/SS Daylight savings begins.	9	10 10-12:30 Rm 3, Nashoba Nursing & Hospice	11 6pm Lenten Bible Study 6:30pm Handbells 7:30pm Snr Choir	12 7pm Music Team - Quiet Rm	13	14
15 Worship/SS	16	17	18 6pm Lenten Bible Study 6:30pm Handbells 7:30pm Snr Choir	19	20	21
22 Worship/SS Youth Group - Centerpieces for buffet	23 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE - NOON -	24 10-12:30 Rm 3, Nashoba Nursing & Hospice	25 6pm Lenten Bible Study 6:30pm Handbells 7:30pm Snr Choir	26	27	28 5-6:30 ITALIAN BUFFET DINNER hosted by the Youth Group
29 Worship/SS	30	31	E-MAIL ADDRESS FOR NEWSLETTER EDITOR, CATHY HILL: newsletter@tccucc.org Questions? Home # 978-597-5864			

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 Sharlene, 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)

