

# The Tidings

A Publication of Tabernacle  
Congregational Church, UCC  
December 2011



**“Let the  
children come  
to me.**

**For theirs is the kingdom  
of heaven.”**

Anticipating Christmas is a way of being children again, every year. Of course, most of us adults forget what it feels like to be children. We forget how to use our imaginations to hear sleigh bells in the snow. We forget how to smell pine needles on the tree. We forget how to delight in the sumptuous taste of eggnog. Because, we forget how to use our imaginations. But if we were to be who we really are, *children at heart*, the season of Advent might be like the kingdom of heaven on earth – full of hope, joy, love and promise.

One family in the church spends the last day of Advent, Christmas Eve, charting the path of Santa Claus on the computer. Apparently, you can see when he is leaving Nova Scotia and predict approximately when he will get to Salem Massachusetts. I never had such a wonderful GPS system when my children were young. And I certainly never thought about charting Santa’s route when I was a child. Though I do remember hearing those reindeer hooves on the roof, as clear as a church bell. But what a thrill it must be to watch Santa’s movements by satellite!

Anticipating the coming of a man dressed in foreign garb with blessings for all people is fun. It’s down right child-like! Whether his first words are “I am the light” or “HO HO HO,” waiting with enthusiastic anticipation feels good.

In fact it feels like heaven. Advent is a time to be inspired by our heaven-sent imaginations. Like children, we are urged during this season to imagine God’s entrance into our lives. Imagine what God might look like for you. Imagine what God’s voice might sound like for you. Imagine what God’s arms wrapped around you in a hug, might feel like.

Advent is a time to be children at heart, with imaginations and great expectations. I hope you enjoy this season.

With peace, love, and joy in my heart,  
Rev. Laura



**Christmas Eve  
Worship  
Services  
December 24!**

**A Children’s Christmas Eve ~ 4:00pm**

This ever popular Christmas Eve Service is designed especially for young children and their families. It will feature Christmas Carols, Puppets, Story Telling and Candlelighting. Please join us and tell your friends.

**Christmas Eve Worship Service  
~ 7:00pm**

We love Christmas Eve at Tabernacle! Our beautiful sanctuary will be decorated with poinsettias, luminaries, candles and wreaths. But mostly we love to sing Christmas Carols with friends! Please join us on this festive evening to sing, to pray, to hear the Christmas Story and to welcome God into the world!

# December Worship Themes

December 4, 2011

Second Sunday of Advent ~ Candle of Peace

*Peter and Linda Davis light candle of Peace / Nancy Savy to testify to the darkness*

Communion by Pew

**Scripture:** Isaiah 40:1-11; Mark 1:1-8

*"See, I am sending a prophet ahead of you, who will prepare your way." John didn't know that he was the prophet preparing the way for Jesus. He knew that he was not the Messiah; but he couldn't possibly have believed that HE would baptize the Messiah. Charged by the Holy Spirit and a deep sense of justice, John prepares the way for Jesus proclaiming repentance and forgiveness. That is how we begin again!*

**Sermon:** Advent Sanctuary

December 11:

Third Sunday of Advent ~ Candle of Joy

## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

December 18:

Fourth Sunday of Advent ~ Candle of Love

Mary Sunday

*Netherine & Bill Chan to light Candle of Love / Rob Maier to testify to darkness*

**Scripture:** Luke 1:26-38; Luke 1:46b-55

*Mary receives a visit from an angel named Gabriel. In those days, young people like Mary, were considered especially spiritual and able to see and hear the realm of angels. Gabriel said to her, "Don't be afraid..." Her world was about to be turned upside down. Everything about her life, her dreams, her hopes, were about to change. And the word from the spiritual realm was "Do not be afraid..." As we look at our world changing dramatically, we might be as comforted by these words as Mary was comforted.*

**Sermon:** Don't be Afraid

December 25:

Christmas Day! Please enjoy this day with your family



## Annual Reports!

To all Council Members and Action Group Chairs: It is that time of year again! **Annual Reports** will be due to Liz Nelson on

**Friday, January 6, 2012!**

Please note, due to time constraints I cannot accept any reports handwritten, please email in an attachment!

Thank you, Liz Nelson



## Don't Miss the Christmas Services This Year

There are three very special services coming up at Christmas time and I hope you will join us for all of them this year. Last year I had the opportunity to attend all of these services and I found it to be a great way to stay in the Christmas spirit throughout the holidays.

Blue Christmas gets us started at 7:00 on Friday, December 23. This service is designed especially for those who have suffered a loss this year and may be celebrating this Christmas without a loved one. But I have found that it is just what I need to re-center on the true meaning of Christmas. The Christmas season is so complicated for most of us that even the most festive moments can become sources of stress, confusion and anxiety. In the face of all of the negatives that enter our lives at this time of year there is no better place to get into the true spirit of the season than at Tabernacle.

Blue Christmas is a less formal service that focuses on healing for those of us who feel loss at this time of year. But that feeling of loss need not come from a death or a relationship ending or any specific event. The stress of the season is itself a loss, and this service is just the right way to start dealing with that loss in a positive way. It's okay to shed some tears at this service, but mostly we'll sing and shed the anxiety and stress together in the Tabernacle way. I think I appreciate the Christmas Eve service more having been to the Blue Christmas and I think you'll feel the same way.

The Christmas Eve Family Service at 4:00 is the candle light service made accessible for children of all ages. Instead of a choir and string quartet, this service features Rev. Laura on guitar and her wonderful troupe of puppets. And it does include a candle light ending. So bring your young children or children who just can't sit still for an hour, because at the Family Service vocalizing and moving are encouraged. This is an entirely guilt-free service for parents and caregivers so come and enjoy this special time for children whether you have children of your own or not.

The Christmas Eve Candle Light Service at 7:00 is the service that prepares us for Jesus's arrival Christmas morning. There will be wonderful music, lessons and carols, Silent Night sung by candle light, and this year we have a Harpist to offer the angelic voice of angels. You'll go out into Christmas Eve night filled with the spirit.

These three Christmas services provide different points of view on the Christmas story and each of them is special. I know that I need all of these to keep the meaning of Christmas with me. We all are assaulted by the secular/commercial side of the season on a daily basis. Let Tabernacle provide the balance that we all need at this time of year. We'll all have a brighter Christmas if we spend a little more time together at Tabernacle.

Rob Maier for the Deacons



**Christmas**  
**Traditions**





**Preparing for Christmas  
with your family  
Join us for these Holiday offerings**



**Children's Christmas Pageant  
December 11 ~ 10:00am**

Our ever so popular Children's Christmas Pageant will be held during the worship service in our sanctuary. Don't miss this spectacular presentation put on by all the children of the church!

**Christmas Sunday Service - December 18 ~ 10:00am**

Come join us as we continue preparing for Christ's birth. The sanctuary will be filled with beautiful red and white poinsettias, which are given in memory of or in honor of our loved ones. Special Music will be offered by the Tabernacle Choir.



Christmas Sunday Worship



Blue Christmas Service

**Blue Christmas Service December 23 ~ 7:00pm**

Holiday Cheer can be difficult if you've experienced loss and are feeling sad and teary. This Worship Service will be an opportunity to light candles, sing songs, and focus on the peace and love of Christmas. Come hear words of comfort and pray for peace in your heart.

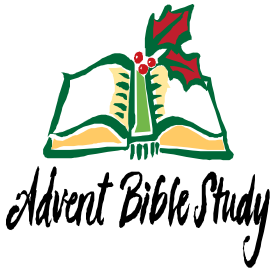
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## Advent Bible Studies

Our Advent Bible Studies have begun Join us for **Monday Morning Bible Studies on Monday, Dec. 5, 12 & 19** at 7:30am during

that time we will take a closer look at Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Using texts from four Gospels we will discover more about this woman who accompanied her son from birth to death.

Our **4:00pm Monday Afternoon Bible Studies on Dec. 5, 12, & 19** will look at the men who influenced young Jesus. Looking at his birth and early journey to Egypt, and exploring who were the prominent men in Ancient Palestine and in this young boy's life.

Bible Studies will be led by Rev. Biddle and will meet in her office. Please join us!



## Tabernacle Dress Up Christmas Party!

The Hospitality Action Group & Friends, invite all Tabernacle Church goes to the **"Tabernacle Dress-Up Christmas Party on Sunday December 18, from 11:30am - 1:30 pm.**

Formal attire is encouraged. There will be a lunch buffet, singing, games for the kids and an optional cookie swap. If you would like to participate in the cookie swap, just bring a batch of "home-baked" cookies and they will be transferred to trays and then you will fill *your* container with an assortment to enjoy with your family. Be prepared to write the name of your cookie on an index card, and to indicate if it contains nuts for those with allergies.

We'll be looking for volunteers to help decorate and set up on Saturday 12/17 at 9:30.

If you like to help, talk to any of the ladies in Hospitality. **Jen Pszenny, Gretchen Clark, Jenn Santo, & Vicki Morrison**

We hope to see you all there.

## MISSIONS HOLIDAY GIVING

Many thanks to so many people who took tags from the Christmas tree on Sunday. Due to such a wonderful response, the Missions Committee will be placing new tags on the tree for Sunday, December 4.



HAWC and the HEIFER PROJECT will be benefiting from your generosity locally and globally. In addition to the gifts from the tree, the basket by the tree can be a place to put gift cards. These cards would greatly benefit mothers at HAWC so they can do holiday shopping for their children. We also are going to conduct a food drive to supply non-perishable food for Christmas dinners donated to HAWC families. As a reminder all gifts, gift cards, and food supplies need to be under the tree by Sunday, December 11.

Extending our own holiday cheer, the Missions Action Group encourages those who do not know what to give to family and friends to consider a donation to the Heifer Project where the gift keeps on giving in the spirit of this program to those around the globe. Catalogs and order forms can be found in the Bigelow Room.

Again we thank you for your participation to put God's promise into action.





**DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES** From Our Christian Education Director

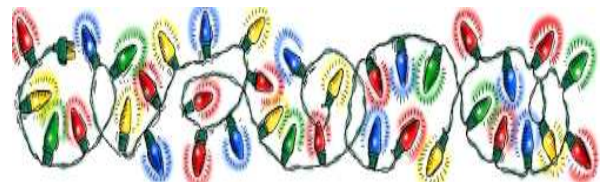


## **NOVEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup> ESSEX ASSOCIATION**

### **YOUTH EVENT A SUCCESS!**

**Mission: 1, Challenge: 11 was a huge success! As of November 29, 2011 The National Office of the UCC reports that all goals have been met and exceeded!**

40 Youth and 15 youth leaders from six different North Shore churches gathered in Topsfield to play games, learn about hunger, eat pizza, and finally load a car with 265 canned goods using a fire brigade approach. The UCC national numbers for Mission: 1 was hugely successful. During the first eleven days in November, United Church of Christ churches collected 1 million food items for food pantries by Nov. 10; 1.4 million items by 11/22. Sent 11,111 letters to senators and representatives in Washington asking them to continue to advocate for hunger-related causes worldwide; 37,000+ by 11/22. The Neighbors in Need (NIN) challenge for Mission: 1 was \$111, 111. As of early Nov. 22, total giving was at \$113,398 and rising. The final goal for East Africa famine relief is \$111,111. This collection is nearing that total. If you feel called to give go to [UCC.org](http://UCC.org) and look for the Mission: 1 tab.



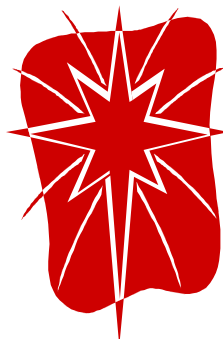
Dear Members and Friends,

"Tarnished reputations, shattered lives, jobs terminated. Who would have thought this of Joe Paterno and the others at Penn State? This has prompted me to think seriously about the child protection policies we have at our church. Does everyone know what they are? Do they know what to do? Do I know? I mean, do I know and clearly understand every so-called "minor detail" of our policy?" ***From Today's Children's Ministry***

This article on my email has given me pause to think about Tabernacle's "Safe Church" policies and Handbook. Did you know we have a Safe Church Booklet? If you would like a copy of the full document, ask Liz in the office for one.

To highlight our policies, I will begin 2012 with a volunteer orientation that focuses on our **Safe Church policy**. We will meet together to go over the booklet in the month of January. Teachers, youth leaders and action group members are strongly encouraged to attend this important time together. Keeping our church and our meetings safe for all is important and should not be neglected. We will meet on **Tuesday, January 17 at 6:30** for one hour.

Just so you know how important this topic is, if you are an action group member and/or have a key to the church, you are a legal representative and agent of the church. If the church is sued there could be legal repercussions for you. Please understand that we want you and everyone at Tabernacle to feel safe and protected.



Shalom, Betsey



## Christmas Pageant

### **CHRISTMAS PAGEANT, SUNDAY DECEMBER 11, 2011, 10 AM WORSHIP**

We are into Pageant season. The children have begun working on their lines. The schedule was

emailed to all parents from Betsey.

**Here it is again.**

**Pageant practices will be:**

#### **Sundays**

11/27 lines during SS

12/4 lines during SS

12/11, 9am for Costumes and photos, pageant is worship service.

#### **Thursdays**

12/1, 6:30pm **Singing ONLY**

12/8, 6:30pm Singing and lines

#### **Saturdays,**

12/3, 10-12 Costuming

12/10, 9-12 Dress Rehearsal

Cast list is available from Betsey. Our directors are: Jessica Reardon, Doreen Marquis and Jenn Santo. Our children and youth have really stepped up this year and volunteered for parts and singing.

Bring your friends to see the Pageant. Please support our kids as they give us their interpretation of the Christmas story.

***We will have a real baby Jesus!***

### **YOUTH GROUP FOR GRADES 6 -9, DECEMBER EVENTS**

**Dec. 4:** Meeting from 12-2PM to finish up items/ornaments for sale to support our white water rafting trip.

**Dec. 11: Pageant Sunday:** we will serve coffee and sell our items at coffee hour, 11 - 12 PM.

**Dec. 26:** Join Joe Bennett and Betsey and Ed Bennett at the Lifebridge shelter to serve dinner

## ***Above and Beyond Plaque***



The church now has a plaque on the wall in the Bigelow Room to recognize people who have gone **Above and Beyond** in their financial support of Tabernacle. The plaque has room to list 16 names of people willing to go **Above and Beyond** with their generosity. You can join this **Above and Beyond** Campaign by speaking to Dick Lutts about adding Tabernacle as a bequest in your will. The first person listed is Iris Kamon who is giving the church \$10,000.

## **TWA or Pan AM Tabernacle Women's Association**

Is reforming, revitalizing and re-generating itself. We would like to have a Saturday morning brunch for all Tabernacle Women. Stay tuned for a date. TWA is the longest standing group at Tabernacle Church while the television attends to Pan Am Women lets attend to the TWA.



## Did you Know???

We tried to eat some supper and then sat out in the garden watching and wailing till midnight, when another alarm rang in and we could see another fire starting in South Salem, (this side of Warrens) with the wind blowing toward us, the other now burning the hospital, looked as if it were coming toward us. We were heartsick. Ezra and Annette were tired out, and poor Alice went to work, like another Trojan and packed sheet after sheet full of clothes, emptied bureau drawers, all in the dark (as the electric lights had been cut off) except the lightness we had from the fires which made it as light as day outdoors. They said the water was to be turned off so we drew some to drink and filled our [?] nearly full. Alice thought if we had to go, we could wet our blankets and cover ourselves and our goods to keep from catching fire by firebrands, as we had concluded that we would take all we could, and go down on the dump beyond our garden, if necessary. We seemed to be right between the two with both coming toward us. Our [?] was full of people taking refuge there, but when this new fire broke out the cinders and brands were all around [?] and indeed we knew we had to go somewhere else; but it didn't burn, Thank God! We didn't have to go!!

Ezra's brother "Bert" is an A1 fireman and had been working all day and all night; but when he saw the South Salem fire, and knew it was blowing toward his own home and ours, he left where he was [???] get out ladders and watched. Aunt Abby's house caught twice, but he was there to put it out, and he just saved us all from going. We learned afterward that the City stables caught, also a roof on Williams St. We think Uncle Bert saved Ward 2, for if Aunt Abby's house had gone we would all have gone, down to Beverly Bridge, as there was no engine [???] to save us. Oh! How thankful we ought to be!! Bert's wife and his son's wife and two children went to Beverly! The Kitts our next door neighbors went – bag and baggage in an auto-truck to their son's in North Salem, beyond the fire and having to go through Beverly and around over Kernwood bridge as they could not go through North Salem.

Our assistant-pastor and his wife were with [??], to Beverly into a church there. Beverly Bridge was the only exit we had from the city. They say the North Salem fire was set by looters, and they went into the houses and ordered out the occupants, who were packing up, and one or two of them were recognized by the police and driven away; another fire was set in Town House Square. The North Salem fire was handled splendidly by the Lawrence firemen and in about one hour was under control. About two o'clock we were all tired and we went to bed except Ernest and Annie Geary, it being the understanding that papa would get up a little later and relieve them. When papa did come down he found that Ernest had just gone upstairs, as it seemed safe to leave then, but Annie was still up. He sent her to bed then went himself. Papa and I slept very well until morning, but the others hardly slept at all. Friday and Saturday nights just when we were all settled down to sleep the fire alarm rang in, and of course we were all nerved up. The fire Saturday night was quite a fire and we could see the flames from our chamber windows. It was a house on Summer St. very near where the fire in that section had stopped. It was put out in a short time but of course, we were all excited about it and it was hard to get to sleep. Last night we all slept very well until about three o'clock when we were awakened by quite a heavy thunder shower.....

Stay tuned next month for more from "The Salem Fires" by Kay Piemonte

# Altar Flowers

## December Altar Flowers

December 4: **In loving memory of our mothers, Katherine Ring and Margaret Curtin** by Carol and Ed Curtin.

December 11: **In loving memory of Harvey & Martha Bailey and Arthur & Lucille Bouchard** by Jim and Claire Bailey.

December 18 and December 24 the Sanctuary will be decorated in Poinsettias.



## December Birthdays:

The following members and friends are Celebrating birthdays this month.

Young at Heart

- 1 John Kapnis
- 1 Ed Burge
- 2 Ian Clark
- 3 Aaron Carter
- 6 Betty Lutts
- 7 Alice Wathne
- 9 Amy Everitt
- 10 Jim Dillon
- 13 Carol Schaufler
- 13 Winnie Hauber
- 14 Gretchen Clark
- 17 Steve Chevoor
- 19 Jean Tanch
- 19 Grace Harrison
- 25 Amy Chevoor
- 28 Mary Reardon
- 29 Tyler Skeffington

## Steeple Lighting



The church steeple is lighted for the month of **December in loving memory of Our Son, Jeffrey Boisselle, by Patty & Jim Dillon.**

## TWA



The TWA voted at their November meeting to give the money that you donated last spring to Heifer as planned. The difference is that we merged our \$360.00 with the money connected at U2charistic

and that made their total over \$1000.00 which can make a bigger difference than our separate donations. We will be asking for money for Heifer again this year so start saving your coins and dollars.

Our December meeting will be on **12/20**; we will celebrate Christmas with a luncheon at the home of Barbara Bowman. Ladies are asked to meet at the church at 10:30 and we will carpool to Barbara's. Bring \$10 for our Charity Yankee Swap.

## Prayer Shawls

We have only on Baptismal Blanket, a lonely blue one sits on the shelf. If you can knit a blanket for us it would be appreciated. We would hate to have a Baptism without the baby getting a blanket. These blankets take only two skeins of yarn and don't need fringing. For yarn and directions contact Jane Dionne at 978 745 1324. Thanks so much.