



The Tidings

A Publication of Tabernacle
Congregational Church, UCC
December 2008



'Twas the month before Christmas
and all through the church,
Elves and fairies were busy making plans
for the search.
For God was expected to come to the earth
How? was unknown, though angels claimed
through a birth.

Decorations were laced through the
sanctuary with joy,
In hopes that the greens would enhance
girls and boys
Who were readying their hearts for God's
surprising arrival
On a cold winter's night, in a starlit
sheep stable.

When what to our wondering eyes
did appear,
Four candles that welcomed little Jesus,
sweet and dear.
The first one for **hope**, which brings
in good cheer;
The others for **love, joy and peace**
all the year.

So come to our church
all good folks of this place
Cause here you will find kind friends
and a space
Where you can welcome angels and
shepherds and saints,
And a baby whose birth will restore
all our faith.

Happy Advent to all
And to all a blessed journey back to Christ.
Very truly yours,
Rev. Laura Biddle



December Worship Themes

Dec. 7: **2nd Sunday of Advent -
Calm/Peace - Communion**

Scripture Lesson:
Isaiah 40:1-11
Mark 1:1-8

Sermon: *The Gift we Give Ourselves*

Dec. 14: **3rd Sunday of Advent -
Laughter/Joy**

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Scripture Lesson:
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
John 1:6-8, 19-28

Dec. 21 **4th Sunday of Advent -
Warmth/Love**

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

Sermon: *A Daughter's Love*

Dec. 23: **Blue Christmas Service-7:00pm**

Dec. 24: **CHRISTMAS EVE!!!!**
Children's Christmas Eve Service
4:00pm
Christmas Eve Service ~ 7:00pm

2008 Pledge Update

Amount Pledged for 2008:
\$166,129.00

Amount Received to date:
\$143, 291.75

**86% of Tabernacle's pledges
have been received to date.**

Sacred Arts is Back and Beautiful!

Mark Your Calendars for the following programs which the Sacred Arts Action Group will co-sponsor:

Zumba Dance Class beginning Monday, December 1 at 9:00am.

Family Christmas Service with Folk Music and Puppets. December 24 at 4:00pm.

Music with a Mission Concert
Saturday, January 10th
Benefit to raise money for The Salem Mission. Suggested donation is \$10.

Drama Ministry in January and February

Shamrock for HAWC Concert
February 14

Artist in Worship Series during Lent.

If you would like to learn more or join the Sacred Arts Action Group please contact
Bridget Sullivan at
basullivan@verizon.net

Children's Christmas Eve December 24

Inside this issue of the Tidings you will find a flyer for our Children's Christmas Eve Service. We ask that you post the flyer in your local day care, school, library, grocery store, hair salon, gym etc. We want to let the community know about our Children's Christmas Eve Service at Tabernacle.
Thank you.



Midweek Pause

Midweek Pause was held seven times in October and November. On the average 9 people have taken advantage of the opportunity to pause each week from daily activities to find a period of peace and reflection and to take communion. The sessions are informal and those who want may participate by reading scripture or some special poem or other reading that they find meaningful. Sessions begin at 5:45 and end by 6:15. Chants are played for quiet meditation beginning at 5:30. Entrance is through the front door on Washington Street. If you're late it doesn't matter. Come when you can.

Annual Reports!

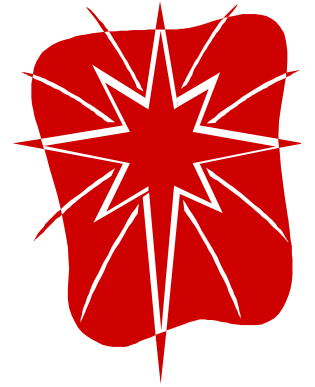
To all Council Members and Committee Chairs: It is that time of year again! **Annual Reports** will be due to Liz Nelson on

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 2009!

Please note, due to time constraints I cannot accept any reports handwritten, they must either be emailed in an attachment or put on a CD! Thank you, Liz Nelson



Advent Offerings



Monday Morning Bible Study

Join Rev. Biddle on Monday mornings, December 1, 8, 15 and 22 at 7:30am. Start your week in conversation with God and one another. The Theme is "God's Daughter's."

Monday, Noon Time Bible Study

We will meet on Mondays at 12:00pm on December 1 and continue through December 22. Our theme for this Advent Bible Study is "Traditions".

Advent Bible Study

Thursday Evening Bible Study

If you haven't studied scripture with friends at Tabernacle this is a great opportunity to quench your spirit during the hectic holiday season. We meet on Thursdays evenings during Advent beginning December 4 and will continue on December 11, and 18 at 6:30pm in the Ministers Study. The Theme is "Spirit and Soul."

Sunday Morning Bible Study

We will also hold a "Adult Sunday School" Bible Study. Join us on Sunday December 7, 14 and 21 from 11:30am-12:15pm. Each week we will read and discuss the Sunday Scripture passages.

St. John's Preparatory School 14th Annual Christmas Concert at Tabernacle Church!

Wednesday December 17, 2008 at 7:30 pm

St. John's Preparatory School Annual Festive Christmas Concert
Featuring the 60-voice Men's Chorus, Travel Choir, and Chamber Orchestra with special guest mezzo soprano Diana Jacklin. Traditional Joyous Music of the Season in the Sanctuary **on Wednesday, December 17 at 7:30 pm**
All welcome - Free!





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



Children's Christmas Pageant December 14 ~ 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 21 ~ 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, and there will be special music!



Christmas Sunday Worship



Blue Christmas
Service

Blue Christmas Service December 23 ~ 7:00pm

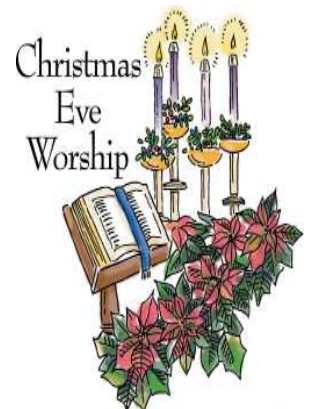
Holiday Cheer can be difficult if you've experienced loss. This Worship Service will be an opportunity to light candles, sing songs and remember the ones you love. Expressions of sadness and grief can find a home at this Blue Christmas Worship Service.

A Children's Christmas Eve ~ December 24 ~ 4:00pm

This 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 ~ December 24 ~ 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 people, friends! Please join us on this festive evening to sing, to pray, to hear the Christmas Story and to welcome God into the world!



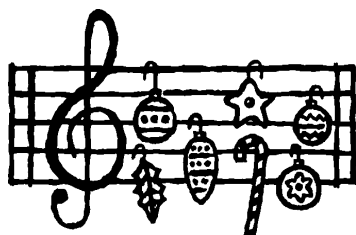
Friendship Fair/Silent Auction

Friendship Fair/Silent Auction a success.
Thanks to everyone who helped make it such a success!

We made **\$4,688.46**, and all the proceeds will go to the following local missions:

The Salem Mission
HAWC (Help for Abused Women and their Children)
The Plummer Home for Boys
The Northeast Animal Shelter

Thanks again from your missions committee.



From Our Music Director

Chancel Choir Update!!

The Advent and Christmas music is in

our folders! If you would like to join us for this season please give Valerie Peterson a call or email her. Our rehearsals start promptly at 7:30 PM in the Bigelow Room. Sunday mornings we rehearse at 9:00 for the 10:00 service.

Junior Choir Update

The Junior Choir will not rehearse until late December. We will sing in the church service on Epiphany Sunday 2009!!!! Any third grader on up is welcome. Just let Valerie Peterson know you are interested.

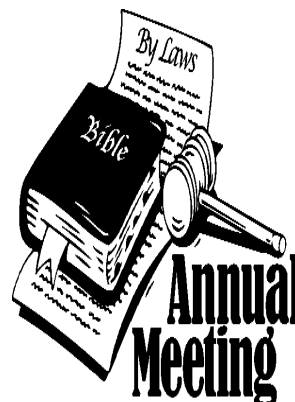
Offertories

We would love to have you share your talent during the worship service. Offertory music, dance or poetry is a great way to be a part of worship. Please sign up in the Bigelow Room.

Valerie Peterson, Music Director

Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 25, 2009

Make every effort to attend this very important meeting in the life of our church.



Family Service Christmas Band Rehearsal December 21 at 12:30pm.

Singers, Guitars, Brass and Fun! Call Rev. Biddle if you are interested!



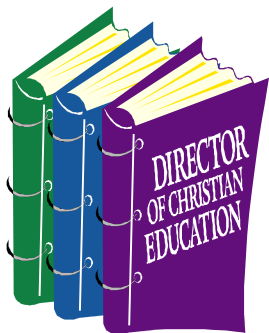
Tabernacle Church Christmas Party

Tabernacle Christmas Party!

Everyone is invited to the home of Jenn and Gary Santo, 25 Washington

Square North, Salem on **Saturday, December 13, 2008 at 7:00pm** for the Tabernacle Church Christmas Party!!

We ask that you bring an Appetizer or a Dessert to Share. No Reservation is necessary and this fun-filled evening is for all Adult Church Members and friends of Tabernacle Church. If you have any questions, please contact Jenn Santo, or MaryJo Bennett.



From The Christian Education Director

Greetings and Salutations!
Advent (from Latin, *adventus*,
meaning "coming towards") is
a four-week season of

preparation for Christmas. The First Sunday of
Advent (November 30) marks the beginning of
the church's year. (From iUCC.org) Isn't it
curious how we begin a new year at church just
as the chronological calendar is ending?

As the hours of light are shortening and the
darkness lengthens, we decorate with lights and
candles to brighten the long nights. The lights we
put on our homes serve to invite our guests,
named and unnamed, into our midst. The
brightness in the darkness of night heightens the
anticipation of our waiting for the baby Jesus.

Also during this season, we sing songs that are
often slower in tempo and brooding in melody.
The words speak to us about the long nights, the
waiting and watching for a bright new beginning,
of the promise found in the Old Testament that
God will deliver us from the darkness of not just
the days, but of our spirits. God will send us a
Messiah.

Messiah literally is Anointed One (Daniel 9:25;
John 1:41; Matthew 16:16) Messiah transliterates
the Hebrew word that refers to the ruling King or
coming Savior. Christ transliterates the Greek
word for the Anointed One or Messiah. (From
The Student Bible Dictionary, 2000 Edition)

From ancient times, one way to celebrate
Advent – not only in church but also at home – is
by lighting candles on an Advent wreath. The
wreath was widely used in northern Europe long
before Christianity as a symbol of life and hope.
Made of evergreens, it symbolizes the circle of
the year that would turn from winter to spring,
from shadows to light. During the Middle Ages,
Christians adopted this symbol and reinterpreted
its meaning:

the lighted candles symbolized the light of
Christ shining in the night, and the evergreens
represented the new life that Christ brings into
the world. (from i.UCC.org)

As we wait for Jesus who was sent from God
as our Savior and King to come, the Christian
Education Action Group (CEAG) invites you to
join them at Tabernacle Congregational
Church UCC. Participate in one or more of
the opportunities offered to gather us together
in God's name.

The first offering by (CEAG) for the season is
the traditional **Advent Workshop on
November 30, 1:30 – 4 PM**. Come **make an
Advent wreath for your home**, including all
the greens and candles. We will start with a
brief worship service. An offering of canned
food items for the Salem Mission Food Pantry
will be collected. Children, parents,
grandparents, and singles are all invited to join
together for the afternoon. (see separate
announcement in weekly bulletin for more
details.)

CEAG's second offering is helping the children
of the church present their **annual pageant on
Sunday December 14, 2008 at our 10 AM**
worship service. Come see the children
interpret that special day when Jesus was born
to Mary and Joseph. There will be rehearsals
during Sunday school and other days. (See
the separate announcement for those dates
and times.)



The youth groups, **PYF and JYF**
will be singing Christmas carols
and playing party games with
folks from the Essex on Church
Street on **Sunday, December
14, 3 – 5 PM**. All children grades
3 – 8 are invited to attend this fun
event with their leaders, Tania Skeffington,
Mary Reardon, John Hauber and Betsey
Bennett.

Shalom, *Betsey*



Pageant Practice Schedule For 2008

Sunday, November 30:
During Sunday school for grade
3 - 6. Speaking parts will be
distributed and practiced

Sunday, Dec. 7: During Sunday school
(we might stay late) Sunday
All speaking and singing parts
will practice. Dancing angels &
sheep will have classes

Monday, Dec. 1: 6 PM – 7:30 PM
& **Wed. Dec. 10**

All speaking parts will practice

Saturday, Dec. 13: 9:00am
All speaking parts report at 10:15am.
Dancing Angels and non speaking roles
report at 11:00am
Final Run through dismissal at Noon

Sunday, Dec. 14 Report to Emerson Hall
at **9 AM** for costuming and pictures

YOUTH GROUP ACTIVITIES

PYF for Grades 3 – 5
meets Tuesday, December
9, at 4 PM to bake for the
party on Sunday, Dec. 14 at
the Essex.



JYF for middle high grades meets Sunday,
December 7, at 3:30 PM to practice their song
to be performed on Sunday, December 14
during the Offertory.

Both groups meet at the Essex on Sunday,
December 14, at 3 PM for Christmas caroling
and a party with the residents of the Essex.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ACTION GROUP
meets on Thursday, December 4, 2008 at 7 PM

TEACHERS' MEETING on Sunday, December
7 at 9 AM, juice and muffins provided.



From Your Mission Action Group

The Missions
Committee is
sponsoring a
“Christmas

Giving Tree”. Please see the tree in the
Bigelow room with special tags indicating items
needed for Christmas giving by local
organizations serving people in need: HAWC,
the Salem Mission, the Plummer Home for
Boys, The Inn Between/Inn Transition and the
Northeast Animal Shelter.

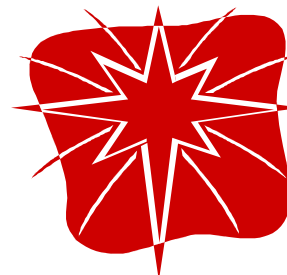
You are invited to pick a tag and purchase the
item indicated on the tag. Please place the
items under the tree (unwrapped) by December
14th, and we will deliver the items to the
organizations. Thank you for your support.



DVD's of our Sunday Services

Have you missed any of
our Sunday Services?

Church member Joel Richardson has been
taping our Worship Services. If you would like
to view the Sunday Worship Service DVD's are
available for on Monday morning's. Please
contact Liz in the church office if you would like
to pick up the set of DVD's.



Did You Know?



Rev. Harris G. Hale was the minister of Old North Church in Marblehead from 1925-1930. He was chosen for one of the speakers at the 200th Anniversary of Tabernacle in 1935. He writes so well and as if he had always been a part of Tabernacle, and indeed he may have been a member at some point! I found this article in the material in the vault and thought it was interesting and feel it should be part of our historical writings. You will find his longer article in the book of our Tabernacle history.
Kay Piemonte

The Tabernacle Church The Church Endures Tuesday Evening October 28, 1941 Rev. Harris G. Hale

Address given by Dr. Hale on the evening of a large Parish Social, when our church silver, manuscripts, records and articles of historic interest were on display.

Those of us who have spent years in Salem and Marblehead are quite accustomed to "antiques." Objects so marked we see in almost every other shop window. Sometimes we know they are true. Sometimes we know they are false. Those of both sorts are well tagged, "antiques."

We sometimes see them also walking our streets where they need no tags.

Our familiarity has made us discriminating. We know the fake from the real. This gives us the ability to recognize the real antiques, which have been brought together here by the diligence of your committee. They are intensely real to us, because of their intrinsic value, and because they suggest historic associations which are very dear.

My purpose now is to remind you of the stability and continuity of the church. These objects have come to us out of troubled times. They suggest changes, which have been revolutionary.

But through all these, the Church has gone on, and still survives. If these objects could speak they would tell of times, which would be almost unintelligible to us, as we could tell them of experiences, which would be wholly unbelievable to them. But one institution means essentially the same to us as it did to them – the Church.

In this hasty sketch most things must be left to be filled in by your imagination.

When the Third Church in Salem was organized in 1735 George Washington was a boy of five, playing around under the as yet un-hacked cherry trees and the sense of responsibility – as the Father of his Country was resting very lightly upon his young shoulders.

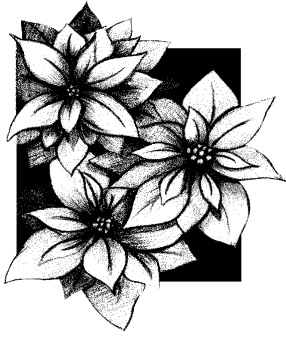
Did I say that one thing has endured? There is another – taxation. Even in 1735 the Colonies were already very much disturbed about it. They did not object to paying taxes for their own defense. We today are to have a good taste of that. They did object to paying taxes for the peaceful support of the mother country in the Parliament of which they had no representation. In the midst of such a troubled period the Third Church of Salem came into being.

So time moved on and evening-by-evening:

*"Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows
of heaven,*

*Blossomed the lovely stars, the
forget-me-nots of the angels."*

*Stay tuned next month for more
"The Church Endures....."*



December Memorial Flowers

December 7: **In loving memory of Harvey & Martha Bailey and Arthur & Lucille Bouchard** by Jim & Claire Bailey.

December 14: **In loving memory of Bill Ives** by his wife, Marjorie.

December 21: **In loving memory of our Mothers, Katherine Ring and Margaret Curtin** by Carol and Ed Curtin.
Memorial Poinsettias will also be listed in the Sunday Bulletin.

December 30: This Sunday Service will be held in the Bigelow Room. Poinsettias from the Christmas Service will be used.

December Birthdays

The following members and friends are celebrating birthdays this month:

- 1 John Kapnis
- 1 Ed Burge
- 2 Ian Clark
- 2 Jim Ayers
- 3 Aaron Carter
- 6 Betty Lutts
- 7 Alice Wathne
- 8 Patricia Lev
- 8 Holly Fulton
- 9 Amy Everitt
- 9 Brian Jamieson
- 10 Jim Dillon
- 13 Carol Schaufler
- 13 Winnie Hauber
- 14 Gretchen Clark
- 17 Steve Chevoor
- 19 Jean Tanch
- 19 Grace Harrison
- 21 Dana Strom
- 23 Kevin White
- 25 Amy Chevoor
- 28 Mary Reardon
- 29 Tyler Skeffington



Happy Birthday,

Church Steeple Lighting

The Church Steeple is lit for the month of December in loving memory of **My Husband, Joseph Kamon, by Mrs. Iris Kamon.**



Steeple Lighting Available

I have several months available for lighting our Church Steeple during 2009. Please contact Liz Nelson in the church office.

T.W.A. News....

The TWA Christmas luncheon will be held at Jane Dionne's house on **Tuesday December 16th at 11:30.** Please bring a Yankee Swap gift with a maximum of \$10.00 and plan to have a good time.

Our January meeting will be a special treat. On Tuesday January 20th at 10:30 in the Bigelow Room we will serve refreshments and then our own Bob Anthony will be showing slides and conducting us on a trip around China through slides. Bob was a guide for Americans in China for many years; we are fortunate that he has agreed to guide us. As always guests are welcome and we hope to see many of you there.

Don't forget to save your pennies and other coins as we plan to join with the Sunday School in their Heifer Project next spring.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Take the month off to work on your own Christmas projects at home and then won't you plan to knit a prayer shawl in 2009. There is a need in our church for this ministry and we would like all of you who have started shawls to finish them as your New Year's Resolution.

GEMS

The next meeting of *GEMS (Gourmet Eating Men's Society)* will be held on **Wednesday, December 17** at 12:00noon at the Lyceum