

TCC News

Tewksbury Congregational Church

February 2007

For those who work ... for all of us... we are taking some time apart to listen to God and be encouraged in faith... on Saturday morning, February 10th.

Dear companions in faith,

Let's take a moment to talk about your leadership and mine at church and beyond.

My leadership vision has been growing by preaching this month from an Old Testament book called Nehemiah. Nehemiah, the leader, has strengthened me. He rebuilt the walls of a city and the hearts of a people. He was flexible in heart, and developed his plans step by step with others. Nehemiah was a fighter and a poet... someone who worked hard to not lose the big picture in the challenge of every day affairs. Nehemiah wanted God to do something quite special and important in his lifetime and beyond.

So many of you are wonderful leaders in your home, at work, or in the church! You pour out your time and energy for the good of others... and for our church. If you lead a board or committee you wrestle with the big challenge of helping a lean organization feel rich in spirit and ready for action. You work through a treadmill of details and congregational concerns and complaints. How do you grow spiritually as you give leadership in some part of your life, or as you lead a crucial part of the church's ministry?

Jesus called his disciples to take some time apart to gain perspective. For that reason we are having a leadership retreat this month. On February 10th we will gather at South Church in Andover for a morning apart. We will listen to scripture and to each other and will get coaching on leading a strong meeting. Our leader is Rev. Ellie Richardson. Ellie is a great colleague and specializes in this kind of retreat leadership. It will be a strong morning, a chance to remember that we are not alone in the tasks of the work of the church and that God's love is with us in our work.

Come join us for this retreat...as you lead a board or a committee this year... or as you give leadership in some other part of your life!!

Warmly in faith,

Your pastor,
Jonathan

From the Pastor

Submitted by Jonathan Goodell

This is our last monthly newsletter for this year!

Starting in March we will begin to publish “*Faith Notes*,” weekly news issues with short articles from boards and committees. Our weekly deadline will be Thursday morning at 10am. For those who use email we will send a fresh edition of “*Faith Notes*” to you by 3pm that afternoon. It will then be available for everyone who comes to worship that Sunday after worship.

We hope that the weekly pattern will encourage a simpler and faster flow of information and help each of you know what is happening at our church on a timely basis.

Faith Notes will be available by mail in several ways.

- For shut ins of our church we will mail it out weekly.
- For members and friends who do not come to worship and who do not want to get it by email we will mail it out on a monthly basis experimentally. We hope to keep our monthly mailing to those who need a sense of connection with TCC but don't worship regularly with us...and who don't use a computer.

We need your email address. As you can see it will be very helpful for us to have a complete email address list. Please fill out the form in the newsletter and send it to the office. You can indicate that you would rather NOT receive the weekly bulletin by email. Otherwise we will mail it to you electronically on a weekly basis.

We also would like your birthday(s) and anniversary dates. We will publish a monthly calendar for pickup on the 3rd Sunday of the month. When there is room and as we have time we will list kids' birthdays (but no dates) for the month and also have a 'landmark birthday' (and anniversary) column (*no further details ... like your exact age ☺... will be given! Promise!!*)

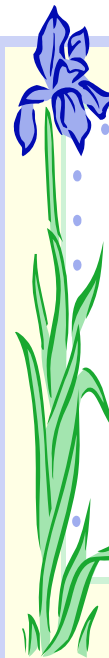


Letters received from:

Gordon Bryant thanking everyone for their kindness sending him Christmas and 'care' cards during the year.

Dottie Belida telling us she is so grateful to get so many letters and cards during her stay in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Ella Thomas who writes often. She writes that she is very happy at Billerica Crossings. She enjoys the company of her sister, **Barbara Buckley** who visits often. Ella will have eye surgery in May for removal of a cataract.



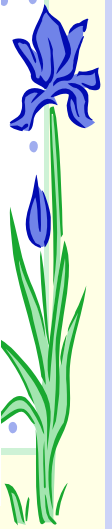
January flowers:

January 21:

Al and Christine Bland in memory of **Fred and Lily Bland, Christine and John Colbert,** and **Catherine MacLeod.**

January 28:

Eleanor Riddle and family in memory of **James and Luke Riddle.**



Of note...

Of special note:

*From our Church Clerk,
Christopher Jenkins*

"The **26th General Synod of the United Church of Christ** is coming to New England the last full weekend of June! Being so close to home and being the 50th anniversary celebration for our denomination makes this truly a once-in-a-lifetime event, which you won't want to miss. All visitors must register and will have access to all the activities: speakers, workshops, music, worship, and business meetings.

The General Synod consists of delegates chosen by each conference and is the highest governing body of the United Church of Christ.

Massachusetts visitors are encouraged to stay at the Crowne Plaza in Cromwell, CT, where our own conference's Annual Meeting Part I will also be held, and there will be shuttles into Hartford.

TCC's three delegates to Massachusetts Conference will be chosen at our own Annual Meeting in May on the same slate as our other officers and committees.

The entire event lasts from Thursday to Tuesday, but different rates are available for staying just a part of that time.

For more information and to register online, please visit
<http://www.macucc.org/annualmeeting/index.htm>
and www.ucc.org/synod.

See you in Hartford!"

Staff Corner

Submitted by Sue Howard

The Best Cook in Town

I love to read articles whereby writers tell their readers what they have learned about the best cook in town. That's a feature article in this month's *Yankee* magazine. I often think about the best cooks that I've known and my mother and mother-in-law are pretty high on the list along with my paternal grandmother who could make the best-tasting raviolis in Framingham!

There are some very good cooks at TCC which is evident by the number of women who bring baked goods to many of our church events. When Dorcas Kitchen was in session, no one could resist spreading butter on one of Linda Wieselquist's rolls hot out of the oven

Women in various churches have been known to publish cookbooks filled with their favorite recipes – including here at TCC – and I once attended a tasting event at St. Thomas' Catholic Church in Wilmington where the ladies published a cookbook and then gave us a sampling of some of their prepared food for 10 cents a taste! That was a great money making idea and it sold many of their books.

When reading the Bible, the subject of food is often brought up—at the feeding of the 5,000, the Wedding at Cana, Jesus dining with Levi, the tax collector and dining with Lazarus six days before the Passover. It would appear that food was just as important then as it is today.

My mother would often bake many small loaves of banana bread and store them in her freezer. Whenever visitors would come to her home in Framingham, and before leaving, she would give them a loaf of banana bread. My sister-in-law often called this my mother's 'banana bread diplomacy'. How I wish it was that easy for us to use food as a medium to bring a diplomatic peace to this world.

Ladies Aid

*Next month:
Cookies for
shut-ins*

Auction Went Well

Members of the Ladies Aid met in January for a delicious meal and a social auction. Ninety-five dollars was raised by auctioneer, Eleanor Corey, as members were given the chance to purchase home-made rice pudding, a special jar of Meyer lemon marmalade made by Natalie's son and his wife, some jewelry, a spaghetti cooker and various other items. Usually two auctions are held during the year and it is always a fun time.

Next month, each member is asked to bring two dozen cookies to the meeting. Following lunch, members will divide the cookies into containers and bring to our shut-ins.

Friendship Circle

Inner Peace

Friendship Circle members met on January 11th and the topic was on peace—not worldwide peace, but inner peace. The meeting in February will feature a potluck brunch at 9:00 AM and a delightful discussion on genealogy by guest speaker **Maureen Famolare** who has been actively researching her husband's and her family for a number of years. Maureen is active in the local genealogy association and has made numerous trips to various places in Boston, Waltham, etc., to locate records. Bring your questions—she can answer them!

Progressive Supper

Progressive Supper tickets will go on sale soon. This popular event sponsored by Friendship Circle is scheduled for Saturday, March 10th. As in the past, there's a limited number of tickets. The menu consists of beverages and hors d'oeuvres at one home, then soup and salad at another home, followed by dessert and hot beverages at the final destination. This is always a great time of fun and fellowship.

Membership and Enlistment

-Submitted by Jean Metcalf

Recognition Sunday

Recognition Sunday is scheduled for March 25th with a reception following as we celebrate our 40+ members. Suzanne Spezzano will obtain greeters in February and Heather Leary in March. If they call, please respond with a 'yes'! M&E is always looking for greeters so if you would like to be on a 'call list' for this, please advise Jean at 9768-640-9220. The only requirement is that you come to church by 9:20 AM and stand in the Narthex to greet visitors.

"The sense that someone else cares always helps because it is the sense of love." - G. W. Woodberry

New welcome packages

M&E spent a great deal of time at their January meeting planning for our new welcome packages for visitors. Packages will include information about our church including our Pastor, the Sunday School program, youth groups, missions, web site and office telephone numbers. Your comments or suggestions on the contents of the brochure is welcome. Just give me a call if you've visited a church and received a package that you thought was particularly interesting. Our next meeting is February 13th at All Boards.

Sunday School Notes

-submitted by Rita Masters

Here are two special invitations for you!

Communion

One is Communion that is held the first Sunday of the month. After the worship service in the sanctuary, Pastor Jonathan serves communion in classroom 9 for the teaching staff, students and families to receive this special meal. It is open to all. *Come, the table is prepared...* Jesus, being the host of the Table invites everyone.

Lenten Workshop

On Sunday, February 11th from 11:00 to 12:30 noontime in Fellowship Hall an 'All Church Lenten' workshop is planned. This is a time to enjoy the fellowship of other church families while making Lenten crafts to use at home during the Lenten season. Sign up now! Use the form below and return it by Sunday, February 4th to the church office. Lent is a time for remembering just what Jesus has done for us.

Here are some important Sunday School dates:

- **Communion** will be served in classroom 9 at 11:00 AM on February 4th, April 1, May 6, June 3rd.
- Sunday, February 11th – **Lenten Workshop** in Fellowship Hall at 11:00 A.M. Potluck meal provided.
- **Contemporary Youth worship** in Fellowship Hall is scheduled at 9:30 AM on Sunday, March 18, April 22nd, and May 20th.
- There will be **no Sunday School** on the following dates, but nursery care will be available: February 18, February 25, April 8 and April 15
- On **Palm Sunday**, April 1, students in Grade 3 will distribute palms.
- **Youth Sunday** is June 10th where an all church picnic will be held in Fellowship Hall.
- Two **teacher's meetings** are planned: March 7th at TCC and on May 2nd at the Masters' home.

Junior Youth Group

Junior Youth Group is looking forward to the next couple of months. Fulfilling our Fellowship, Fun, Worship and Service objectives, our planned activities include: a Christmas party celebrating the birth of Jesus, service at Lowell Wish Project warehouse, a visit to House of Hope and a complete worship service including communion. In January, we will had a parents' meeting to plan our spring retreat at Craigville.

LENTEN WORKSHOP – February 11 – Fellowship Hall – Potluck lunch will be served.

Yes I/we will attend the Lenten Workshop:

Name: _____

_____ # Adults _____ # Children

I will bring a _____ salad or _____ dessert.

Return by Sunday, February 4th. This information helps in planning the amount of craft kits needed. Either mail to TCC, 10 East Street, Tewksbury, MA 01876 or drop in the collection plate.

Mission News

Submitted by JOJO Scharmer

For a long time now—to this very day—you have not deserted your brothers but have carried out the mission the LORD your God gave you. *Joshua 22:3*

Because you have given so freely and so lovingly, more of God's children will now have the opportunity to attend school in three different countries! **Petersen Tanis** from **Haiti** continues to be supported, and the really great news is that there are other children who will now be blessed by your generosity given during coffee hour. Praise God!

Paraphrased from the Mayanfamilies.org

There are many children in Guatemala who would like to attend school but for financial reasons cannot. School is free here but there are many costs attached to it: the inscription fee, the school uniform, the books, the backpack, the school shoes, the tennis shoes and the added extra costs. This puts sending a child to school way out of the range of many families.

Quite often if there is a choice between which child shall go to school the family will choose the boy to attend school and the girls will stay at home.

We especially try to sponsor children from single parents, as these are the most disadvantaged. We also sponsor two parent families who are suffering hardships. It costs us \$110 a year to send a child to school. This includes school subscription, school uniform and sweater, all school supplies, backpack, two pairs of socks, underwear, school shoes, tennis shoes, shorts and t-shirt for gym. Depending on the school and the grade it may also include a musical instrument, it also usually includes an annual school excursion and help with projects - such as mothers and fathers day crafts etc.

Meet our little Mayan girl: Florinda Ben. Ben is 8yrs old and is in first grade. She lives in the remote village of Tierra Linda, Guatemala. One of eight children, she lives with her mother and father in an isolated part of the village. The girls in this family have only been educated up to second grade because the father cannot afford to send them further than that. The only child that they have sent to school through 6th grade is the son. There are four school-aged girls in this family. This family is very poor; the father makes about \$2.25 a day. He works in the fields picking whichever crop is ready for picking- beans, onions etc. We are excited to help Florinda and hope to do even more for this family as time goes on.

We are also going to be sponsoring an older child from Guatemala – older children do not get sponsored as easily as the focus seems to be on the younger children. But if we “step up to the plate,” their life can only be improved by the education and the love that travels with the gift of sponsorship. We are asking the organization to pick one of the neediest children for us and we will update you when we receive the details.

-more Mission News next page

Mission News

-continued from previous page-

Mexico Mission Trip

Mexico is another mission field that TCC supports and we are happy to announce that we will be sponsoring at least one child from the area visited by our Mission Team. Updates will be posted during coffee hour as we fulfill this wonderful and exciting call to reach out globally to our brothers and sisters in Christ who are ready to welcome our love with arms open wide. Amen!

February is a snuggly month. We are gathering **baby blankets and baby items** to create kits for struggling low-income mothers in the Merrimack Valley. Look for the collection basket during the first three Sundays of February. Needed items include: onesies, newborn diapers, bibs, one piece play sets, a toy, and more. Check out the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall for more information and updates.

Tools & Blankets Program - February 11

From blankets, tents, and emergency supplies in the wake of disaster to material assistance, education and training, and small-enterprise loans as part of sustainable development programs — Tools & Blankets provide the right "tools" at the right time. Through the **Tools & Blankets Program**, congregations and groups around the country reach out in compassion to people in need in more than 80 countries. You can be part of that rainbow of caring:

\$25 can provide five warm blankets for a family left homeless by a hurricane in Florida

\$100 can buy fishing nets and equipment for a village cooperative in Bolivia

\$175 can shelter an extended family of disaster survivors in an extra-large tent.

\$250 can provide a sewing machine to a widow learning to support her family in Afghanistan

\$5,090 can drill a well and bring clean, safe water to a village in Malawi

Please give generously to the Tools & Blankets Program.

Upcoming TCC Social Events

Bruce and Sue Panilaitis will host a pizza party and brainstorming session at their home on Friday evening February 9th at 6:30 PM. All ages are wanted and needed to help plan social events . Please RSVP at 978-858-0528.

TCC Fellowship - "Night at the Theater", Thursday, April 12th at 8:00 PM at the Lowell Memorial Auditorium to see 'Jesus Christ Superstar'. Tickets are \$36 per person.

Jesus Christ Superstar, the first masterpiece from the legendary writing team of Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber, exploded onto the scene in 1971 changing the world of musical theater forever. This groundbreaking rock opera is based on the last seven days in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. With a score of amazing songs – "I Don't Know How to Love Him," "Hosanna", "Everything's Alright", "What's the Buzz", "Superstar", and "Heaven on Their Mind", this original groundbreaking production starring Ted Neeley is as relevant and timeless as ever.

Please email tcdfellowship-owner@yahoo.com or call Bruce and Sue at the above number if you would like to go.

TCC Pie Social and Holiday Fair Update

Submitted by Linda Dunn

Another great year for both events! Thanks to everyone who helped to make the events successful from those who work tirelessly all year making beautiful hand made and crafted items to all of the work and sweat that happens in the weeks leading up to and including the day of the events.

Pie Social

Friday evening's Pie Social had a bit of a disappointment in that we found out on Friday that the town tree lighting was postponed due to the inclement weather. This did have an impact on turnout for the event. Linda Mayer could not chair the event this year due to a scheduling conflict but **Sue Howard** and **Rita Masters** stepped in to help along with **Sue Trudeau, Mary Lou Adams, Gail Bliss** and many others. They did a great job and even overcame an unforeseen obstacle of a power outage during the event. This did not dim anyone's spirits. A great and delicious time was had by all!

The total for the Pie Social was \$274, which is approximately 92 happy customers served!

Holiday Fair

The Holiday Fair's total at the time of this writing is \$7,402.71 (There are always some straggling funds that come in the weeks following the event.) The combined total (Fair + Pie Social) is \$7, 676.71. That is a great, hard-earned total and one we can all be proud of.

- Holiday Friends outdid themselves with gorgeous and creative items (as we have come to expect from them and are never disappointed).
- The Candy and Bake Tables were overflowing with delicious goodies.
- Ladies Aid and Jewelry tables, although they are 'regulars' at the fair, they always surprise me with the range/quantity of items as well as there always being something new on display.
- Silent Auction had more items than ever generously donated this year with items widely ranging from widely popular Red Sox tickets, local artists' paintings and gift certificates to hand turned wooden bowls and a dish garden in a gigantic snowman cup and saucer.
- Christmas Ornaments had a new chair, **Lisa Parker** – welcome aboard! She did a great job and promises to return next year!
- The Used Books and White Elephant tables had bounteous donations and prove year after year that one person's donation is another person's coveted treasure!
- Men's Group had their usual delicious fare of breakfast and lunch items which the fair workers and shoppers count on each year in keeping us well-fed and energized!
- **Cathy Seaman** returned to Co-Chair the Kid's Fair along with **Marlene Gasdia-Cochrane**. They coordinate 5 different rooms/events in the Kid's Fair – Games, Cookie Walk, Crafts, Used Toys and Nail Art. As I found out last year - it takes a small village to run our kid's fair – or - as luck would have it this year - 2 really great women and a whole bunch of volunteers.

Once again, a huge round of thanks to everyone for all of the help, support and caring. As always, I heard many people from the outside community saying that they look forward to our events each year, that they would not miss attending and that we do a great job. Looking forward to another successful event in 2007!

TCC - Holiday Fair 2006

Table	Chair	Total
Baked Goods	Eleanor Corey	\$1333.25
Books/Videos	Beth McFadyen	581.38
Candy	Pat Takach	316.10
Children's Fair	Cathie Seaman and Marlene Gasdia Cochrane	324.55
Donation		125.00
Holiday Friends	Jean Metcalf and Marilyn SanClemente/Holiday Friends	1,962.18
Jewelry	Julie Marotte	276.30
Ladies Aid	Millie Patterson/Ladies Aid	426.15
Ornaments	Lisa Parker	164.80
Pie Social	Sue Howard and Rita Masters	274.00
Silent Auction	Heather Burns	898.00
Snack Bar	Steve Trudeau/Men's Group	515.65
White Elephants	Joan Mendieta	479.35
Total		7,676.71

All Boards & Committee Meetings (ABCs)

Here is a summary of the *All Boards & Committee Meetings* (ABCs) held
Tuesday evening, January 9th, 2007

Music

- Continuing their search for a Bell Director
- Reviewed budget

Religious Education

- Commented the Christmas Pageant was very well done
- Jr. Youth Fellowship is doing well
- Pre-Lent workshop scheduled for February 11th from 11:00 to 12:30 noontime
- Dates determined: Youth Sunday, 6/10; Mini-Church School to begin 6/24; Sunday School begins 9/9/07
- There will be no Sunday School on 2/18, 2/25, 4/8 and 4/15.

Board of Trustees

- Will reduce 2007 budget by 6%
- Will review information on sewer easement provided by the Town
- Will meet with contractor re parsonage windows
- Clean-up day set for 1/27

Finance

- Budget reductions made to '07 requests
- Open meeting after worship 1/14 with members re 2007 budget

Missions

- Assembled and delivered 80 toiletry and candy kits to Lowell Transitional Living
- Jan/Feb projects are baby blanket kits for the Lowell Wish Project
- Investigating options for service projects in March/April
- Discussed allocations for 2007 budget
- Will sponsor one child from Mexico and two children from Guatemala using Coffee Hour funds

M&E (Did not meet on 1/9; meeting later in the week.)

Deacons

- Discussed Pastor's sabbatical
- Reviewed Lenten program and materials
- Discussed chicken pie supper details

