



The North Church

BEACON

The deadline for the next BEACON is at **9 a.m. Monday December 5, 2011**. Send entries to beacon@fccucc.org.

First Congregational Church
 United Church of Christ
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November 14, 2011

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Looking Ahead in Worship

November 20 - Thanksgiving Sunday

Food Ingathering - bring items suitable to the season for Thanksgiving baskets

8:30 a.m. - chapel worship

10:00 a.m. - sanctuary worship with the Children's Choir and Meetinghouse Choir; Sunday school classes through 6th grade, and Worship Discovery for 7th-8th. John McCall will give the message and fellowship time follows in Wright Pavilion.

November 27 - First Sunday in Advent

We'll light the Candle of Hope

8:30 a.m. - chapel worship

10:00 a.m. - sanctuary worship with the Meetinghouse Choir; Sunday school classes through 6th grade, and Worship Discovery for 7th-8th. John McCall will give the message and fellowship time follows in Wright Pavilion.

December 4 - Second Sunday in Advent

We'll light the Candle of Peace

8:30 a.m. - chapel worship with communion

10:00 a.m. - sanctuary worship with communion and the Meetinghouse Choir; Sunday school classes through 6th grade, and Worship Discovery for 7th-8th. John McCall will give the message and fellowship time follows in Wright Pavilion.

December 11 - Third Sunday in Advent

We'll light the Candle of Love

8:30 a.m. - chapel worship

10:00 a.m. - sanctuary worship with the Children's Choir, Hilltop Ringers, and Meetinghouse Choir; Sunday school classes through 6th grade, and Worship Discovery for 7th-8th. Elsa Peters will give the message and fellowship time follows in Wright Pavilion.

5:30 p.m. - Christmas Vespers in the sanctuary: Jesus, Our Guide and Teacher.

PLEASE: at any time remember to bring non-perishable items for our food pantry. The need is greater than ever.



Those serving in the military and their loved ones; peace and peacemakers; those suffering from the weather, especially droughts and flooding.

Concerns:

Bob Foster, making a slow recovery from open-heart surgery; **Henry Leeman** recently hospitalized; **Skip Graham**, Faye's husband, Recovering from a heart attack and surgery in Florida.

In grateful memory:

Susalee Follansbee, a member since 1950, died Sunday, November 13, at Maine Medical Center following a stroke. She was 93. We hold her family in our prayers – son Robert and his wife Linda Follansbee and their children Julia and Fred. A **memorial service** will be held **Monday November 21st at 11:00 a.m.** in the sanctuary. Reception to follow.

Looking Further Ahead

December 18 – 9 a.m. Christmas Pageant and 11 a.m. Sanctuary worship with the Meetinghouse Choir. Eskimo Men's Club Cookie and Candy Sale.

December 24 – Christmas Eve worship at 5 p.m., 7 p.m., and 10 p.m.

December 25 – Christmas Day - one service at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary, led by Elsa Peters. Come in your pajamas.

January 1 – New Year's Day - one service at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary, with communion, led by John McCall.

Who Shall We Become?

As Advent approaches, I'm wondering what it means to look forward to Christ's birth. What is it that we understand about God taking on our flesh this year? What is it that we understand about how God dwells in this world right now? When people ask me how I am this year, I've been saying that I feel like Advent has come early.

It's true. The prophets are already in the wilderness. They are standing outside of the accepted norms and asking for another way.

They don't know what it looks like. They can't quite name it. But, the longing in the occupations on Wall Street and in Lincoln Park aren't any different than the longing we hear in the texts of Advent. We want things to change. We want to change. But, then, who shall we become?

Who shall we become after sending 128 letters to the powers that be in Augusta and Washington DC? Who shall we become after raising money for **Mission: 1**? Who shall we become after sending our gifts generated at the **Holly Daze Bazaar**? Who shall we become after we send out 30 **Thanksgiving Baskets** into our community? Who shall we become after we have heard the stories of this summer's **Mission Trip**? Will these things change us? Will these events transform our understanding of mission? Will they call us into greater justice and peace? Will they help us to imagine what it means for more hope, more joy and more peace to come into the world? After we've done all of those things that busy us through this season, how will we allow ourselves to be changed? How will we allow God to come into our world... again?

This picture from Mission: I was featured in the United Church News. Read the whole story here: <http://www.ucc.org/news/south-portland-ucc-encourages.html>.

Elsa



STEEPLE LIGHTING

The steeple is lighted the week of **November 20** in loving memory of **Wayne M. Lockwood** by Bruce, Ann, Rachel and Andrew Lockwood.

The steeple is lighted the week of **December 4** in loving memory of **Linwood and Edithe Durrell** from their family, and in loving memory of J. Stephen Woodbury by father John, mother Evelyn, sister Beth and niece Keri.

INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE

You are invited to the **Interfaith Thanksgiving Service** hosted by the **Thorton Heights Methodist Church** on **Sunday, Nov. 20, at 7:00 p.m.** Sue Stevens from our Spiritual Life & Worship Team will serve on the Planning Committee for this service.

An Interfaith Thanksgiving Service is a wonderful opportunity to meet and worship with members of various faith communities and jointly thank God for the blessings of the past year.

*Claude Vachon
SL&W Team*

Help Plan Advent Worship!

This Advent, we will learn to sing a new song. Shirley and I will pick the music and plan the service – but we would like your help finding those passages that speak to your understandings of Advent.

As you read the newspaper, novels or poetry, I invite you to make copies of

the passages that might evoke the sense of longing and waiting that Advent articulates as we wait for the Christ Child. Send all of your readings to me in the Church Office or by email.

*Elsa A. Peters
elsa@fccucc.org*

Confirmation 2012

If you are over the age of 13, you're welcome and encouraged to come along on the journey toward Confirmation. This year, once again, our Confirmation experience will be a **six-month program from January to June**. There are a few central ideas that are at the heart of our Confirmation experience. These include:

- We are all on a journey. This is an opportunity for youth to choose his/her own spiritual path.
- To engage in conversations about faith, we need to be mature enough to talk about hard things without being mean or disrespectful.
- We all need mentors. This should be an opportunity where youth

seek to grow in an adult friendship with someone in the church.

- Our faith is reflected in our commitment to mission, service and action. This should be an opportunity to explore this experience.

A letter went out during the month of November to all youth over the age of 13 that our church database supplies. Our database sometimes fails, so please contact me if you're interested. Please remember that **there is a firm deadline of December 15, 2011** so that there is enough time to find all youth a mentor before the beginning of the Confirmation experience.

Elsa A. Peters

Count Yourself Blessed ~ Consecration Sunday + 4

The spirit has moved many of us to count ourselves blessed and to give as it has been given to us. We're grateful for every commitment and encouraged by the responses so far. As always, our enlistment won't be complete until every household has made a decision about your intentions to support our shared ministries in 2012. Pledge cards are in the pews or available through

the office at 799-3361. If it's more convenient for you try the online pledge form at: <http://fccucc.org/about/2012-pledge-form/>

In Gratitude, your Stewardship Committee – Bill Campbell, Betsy Keiter, Ted O' Meara, Jerry Reynolds, and John McCall

Bible Study for Men Only

With the encouragement of the Adult Faith Formation Committee, Scott Berry has eagerly agreed to host an opportunity for Bible Study in addition to Leisurely Lectionary.

The group will meet in Scott's home – and it's an opportunity only for men. If

you are a man interested in this opportunity, please contact Scott at 767-0236 for more information. The Adult Faith Formation Committee hopes to help support opportunities for Bible Study like this one. If you're interested in leading a Bible Study like this, contact Elsa at 799-3361.

Interested in a Small Group?

Each member of our church is looking for an opportunity to connect with other members of the church. If you're looking for that unique connection, we want to be able to help you create that opportunity.

Outside of Wright Pavilion, you'll find an updated bulletin board that highlights the groups that are currently active in the church. There are groups

for men, women, families, knitters, readers, diners and justice-seekers. There's also a wonderful group of seniors not featured on that bulletin board but on another on the other side of the room. If you're web savvy and looking to find out more about our small groups, check out the Participate tab at www.fccucc.org. Please also know that you're welcome to imagine a group that might reflect your gifts.

The Living Well

Please join us for the **Women's Retreat** this year as we explore what it means to "live well". This retreat will be participant-lead and will focus on Wellness-physical, emotional, and spiritual. There will be large and small group discussions, experiential activities, and free time for reflection and rejuvenation. The retreat will be held **February 11-12, 2012** at the

Beachmere Inn in Ogunquit. The cost is \$120 and includes lodging, all meals, and retreat activities. A deposit of \$60 is due by December 15th. Registration forms may be found outside of Elsa's office.

Please contact Kristen Silvia 799-8580 or Jill Gorneau 799-4109 if you have any questions.



Tuesday, November 29- breakfast at I-Hop is at **9:00**. We hope you'll join us.

Thursday, December 1- we would love to have you come to our **SAGE** meeting at **1:00**.

Wednesday, December 7- the movie, **Funny Farm** will be shown in Davidson Lounge at **1:30**.

Wednesday, December 14 and Thursday, December 15 will be the **pick-up times for Christmas gifts by CCM recipients**, who will be assisted by Senior volunteers.

FAMILY POTLUCK

Families of all shapes and sizes are welcome to a series of potluck known as the Family Potluck. These potluck dinners usually take place on the third Sunday of the month at 5:00 p.m. in Wright Pavilion.

December 18 is the annual caroling party. More info to come. Contact Kim Early at parenting@fccucc.org.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Mark your calendars for these events for our 6th-12th graders.

Sunday November 27
@ 4:30 p.m. Guptill Games.

Saturday December 3
4:30 p.m. Wayside Soup Kitchen.

Questions? Reach out to Jerry Reynolds at youth@fccucc.org.

FAIR TRADE COFFEE

A limited quantity of coffee, tea and cocoa will be available on a cash only basis in the Mission Mall at the Holly Daze Bazaar on November 19.

SOMETHING'S NOT ON THE LEVEL ... OUR SIGN

Our once-beautiful church sign on Cottage Road has become an eye-sore. Weather rotted the edges and the mighty wind of Hurricane Irene was the last straw. Several kind members have inquired – even offered to help fix it. Since it's beyond repair the Administration Team has accepted a bid and the replacement should be here within a few weeks.

Thanksgiving Basket Reminder

"Over the river and through the woods..." I'm sure we all know the words to this song which celebrates the feast of Thanksgiving. For many people, such feasts are more of a dream than a reality and, unfortunately, the numbers are increasing.

This year we will be providing Thanksgiving baskets to 30 families in our area. **Please remember to share your blessings by bringing your donation of non-perishable food to the church service on Sunday, November 20th.** Recommended items include

canned vegetables, stuffing, potatoes, bread/rolls, cranberry sauce, gravy, pumpkin pie filling/crust, beverages and any other items you may traditionally have at your Thanksgiving table.

We will be sorting and packing the baskets after worship at 11:30 on November 20th and would love some extra hands, so please come join us for some joy-filled service! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Suzanne Lindner at thanksgiving@fccucc.org.

Holly Daze Bazaar - Saturday November 19th, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

The Bazaar workers need your help. The folks listed below would love to hear from you. Together, we can make the Bazaar an outstanding success. Thank you.

Trash & Treasure

Scott Berry 767-0236

Grandma's Attic

Prudy Wiggins 799-5705
June Wiggins

Food Court

Karen Westerberg 799-1055
Darla Harris 799-6773

Luncheon

Judy Magnuson 799-3034
Carol Thorne 772-6713

Books

Brian Wallace 774-4096

Mission Mall

Carol Scheffler 799-5269

Jewelry

Deb Riley 767-3149
Sue Mitchell 767-2063

Kid's Room

Deb Theriault 799-8990

Knit 'n Purl

Evie Strom 799-7705
Elinor Redmond 767-4198

Candy

Kathy Cotter 799-4808

Christmas Room

Janice Files 799-3457

Fair Fancy

Marilyn Andress 741-5199

Gifts

Glenice Hodgson 799-6664

Greens

Bea Potenzo 883-8287

The luncheon hours: 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

The marvelous menu includes yummy haddock chowder, fresh crab & lobster rolls, chicken salad rolls and apple crisp.

Mission Mall November 19, 2011: As you may know, the Mission Mall is an alternative gift fair in which various charities with a local connection are highlighted. Our purpose is to encourage people to use the Mall as a way of giving a gift, not only to their recipient but at the same time to those in need.

Won't you consider adding the Mission Mall to your gift list? We will be located in the Wright Pavilion at the Bazaar and hope to see you there!

The Holly Daze Bazaar is chaired by Janice Files 799-3457; Karen Souza 772-5238 and Lynne Lanctot 799-1785. We're grateful for their hard work and dedication.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA MEMORIALS & CELEBRATIONS

First Congregational Church offers the opportunity for remembrance of loved ones at Christmas. You may purchase a poinsettia as a memorial or to celebrate someone or something special in your life.

Our red or white poinsettias come in six inch pots and have five to eight blossoms. They will decorate the sanctuary for Dec. 18th and Christmas Eve worship services. A list of the names for memorial and celebration plants will be included in the order of worship on Sunday, December 18th. Print all information on the following form and then mail it in or drop it off at the church office with your check, no later than Sunday December 4th.



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA:

I would like to order _____ white or _____ red poinsettias at \$11.00 each

In memory / celebration of _____

From _____

_____ I will pick up my poinsettia(s) on Christmas Eve following the 5 p.m., 7 p.m. or the 10:00 p.m. service. (Please circle one).

_____ I will leave my poinsettia(s) to be delivered to our shut-ins.

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____ Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Please return form and payment by Sunday, December 4th to the church office. Thank you.



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