



THE BEACON

Volume 1, Issue 6

December 9, 2012

Deadline for the next BEACON is Friday, January 4, 2013.

Send entries to beacon@fccucc.org.

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Looking Ahead in Worship

Note: some service times are changed

December 16 - Third Sunday in Advent

9:00 a.m. - Christmas Pageant. Fellowship time follows in Guptill Hall with the Eskimo Men's Club Cookie and Fudge Sale.

11:00 a.m. - Sanctuary worship with the Hilltop Ringers and Meetinghouse Choir. Diane Harvey will give the message. The nursery will be open but not staffed. Eskimo Men's Club Cookie and Fudge Sale continues.

December 19 - Blue Christmas Worship *(see page 3 for further details)*

7:30 p.m. - This Sanctuary healing service of music, prayers, candlelight and reading will offer a time of peace and reflection to acknowledge the loss, grief and loneliness that are also part of the holiday season.

December 23 - Fourth Sunday in Advent

10:00 a.m. - Sanctuary worship with the Meeting House Choir. John McCall will give the message.

Monday, December 24 - Christmas Eve

5:00 p.m. - Family worship with a simple telling of the Christmas story, followed by a birthday party for Jesus.

7:00 p.m. - Worship with carols, scripture, and other readings; ASL interpreted for the hearing impaired.

10:00 p.m. - Service of Lessons, Carols, and Candlelight with the Meeting House Choir.

December 30 - First Sunday after Christmas

10:00 a.m. - Sanctuary worship. Diane Harvey will give the message. Fellowship time follows in Wright Pavilion.

January 6 - Epiphany

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

10:00 a.m. - Sanctuary worship with communion, the Meeting House Choir and Sunday school. John McCall will give the message. Fellowship time follows in Wright Pavilion.



PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

For those suffering from the effects of the tough economy; for those who live without sufficient food, water,

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PLEASE REMEMBER to wear your name tag to help others learn your name!

Prayers of the People
continued...

shelter, or safety; for veterans and those in active service; for peace and peacemakers.

In memory:

Jeannie Lothrop, a member since 1949, died November 27, just four days short of her 98th birthday.

Ongoing Prayers:

Roger Walker, now at Springbrook Center in Westbrook. Guy Gledhill and family on the recent death of his mother after a long illness; all who have suffered loss and dislocation from Hurricane Sandy.

For our nation's leaders as we all face the "fiscal cliff," for peace in Israel and Gaza; for all affected by HIV / AIDS as we mark *World Aids Day*, December 1.

PLEASE CONTACT

THE OFFICE ...

... if you or a family member is hospitalized. We check the lists at Maine Medical Center and Mercy regularly but may miss your name among the many. Email office@fccucc.org or phone 799-3361 to let us know.

BELONGING! GIVING! SHARING! CONTRIBUTING!

At any time, when I think about church membership, those words enter my mind. At this time, in this year, I have some responsibility to fulfill as a church member, other than sitting in the pew. I am working with the Church Council, Council committees, and Teams on finances. I wish we didn't have to "get real" at such a blessed time of year!

Do you remember that the FCC Budget for 2012 projected a deficit of nearly \$27,000, which would deplete any built-up reserves? Please consider year-end additional donations to the FCC for 2012.

Have you already made your pledge for 2013? The current level of pledges is encouraging and may enable us to maintain our situation. However, please join me with an increase, if only a little bit. There are great challenges and opportunities for us in 2013.

I believe that each one of you feels that you BELONG. So you know that each one of you can help. Already folks are CONTRIBUTING, SHARING their talents and time. Please also GIVE as much as you can of your resources.

Thank you for reading this and thinking about it. May the season bring you joy.

Nancy MacLean
Moderator

**Congregational Profile
and Senior Pastor Questionnaire**

The last several weeks have been busy ones for the Search Committee. We have been working diligently on our Local Church Profile and Prospectus; Both documents give prospective candidates a sense of our community and congregation and what we are looking for in a new pastor. We have created a *Congregational Profile and Senior Pastor Questionnaire* as a way for the congregation to participate in

the search process and help the Search Committee better represent the congregation in the documentation and throughout the process. This questionnaire will be available in electronic form on the church website and in paper form in the sanctuary and chapel **beginning Sunday, December 16th and ending Sunday, January 6th**. We know that this is a very

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Congregational Profile and Senior Pastor *(cont.)*

busy time of year for people, but it is important, and we are hopeful, that as many people as possible will take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire. We do not ask for your name on the questionnaire and all responses will be held in confidence. Watch and listen for more information

and reminders regarding this questionnaire during worship and on the church website. Please continue to keep the work of the Search Committee in your prayers.

~ Senior Pastor Search Committee

Blue Christmas Service - Wednesday, December 19

The holidays can be a time of stress and anxiety in the midst of outward pressure to celebrate and be merry. This healing service of music, prayers, candlelight and readings will offer a time of peace and reflection to acknowledge the loss, grief and loneliness that are also part of the holiday season. The service will be

held in the Sanctuary and a time of fellowship will follow. It is designed to be nondenominational and interfaith so please invite your friends from the wider community who may find this service helpful. For more information, please speak with Diane Harvey, 799-3361.

New Artwork by Alicia Hynes in the Gallery

A graduate of South Portland High School in 2007, Alicia went on to study fine arts and theatre at the College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, ME, where she earned her bachelor's degree in 2011. She has also studied art at the Maine College of Art and Salzborg College, and has worked with the Newburyport Art Association's life drawing group. The works on display were created during Alicia's time at the College of the Atlantic (where she studied under Ernie McMullen) and during her Advanced Placement Art Class from high school. Alicia also works in theatre as a director, technical designer and actress. In early 2012,

she and her colleague Daniel Mahler founded the Harborside Shakespeare Company in Bar Harbor, ME. Last summer was their first season, which included a production of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet", which Alicia directed, designed and acted in. Alicia was a member of the confirmation class of 2004 and is the daughter of Leslie Gatcomb-Hynes. She can be contacted at aliciahynes@gmail.com.

DECEMBER ALTAR MEMORIALS

The flowers on the altar **December 2** are given in loving memory of **Robert H. "Bob" Foster** from his wife Carolyn Foster, Scott & Joan, Grace & Charlie Stacey, Brett & Julie, Jack and Carolyn Stacey and Beth Marie Stacey on the anniversary of his death, December 8, 2011.

The Mission Globe is lighted **December 16** in celebration of our children, **Garrett and Shana** by Shaun and Sheryl Kieran.

Individual families from our Congregation offer Poinsettias on **Christmas Sunday and Christmas Eve** services in memory and celebration of loved one(s).

A Christian family:
Loving,
Welcoming,
Serving



STEEPLE LIGHTING

The steeple is lighted the week of **December 9** in loving memory of **Linwood and Edithe Durrell** from their Family, in loving memory of **J. Stephen Woodbury** by father John, mother Evelyn, sister Beth and niece Keri, and in loving memory of **John Marino** by his wife Henrietta Marino.

The steeple is lighted the week of **December 16** in loving memory of our parents **George and Mena Geer and Steve Geer**, our brother by their family, Daryl and Charles Geer and Deborah Atwill.

The steeple is lighted the week of **December 23** in loving memory of **Noble Mallar** by his wife Doris Mallar.

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Youth Ministry – Looking Ahead

Please visit the church website for updated information on the **Youth Ministry 2012-13 Youth Calendar**.

Looking ahead for December:

Dec. 15 – Christmas Caroling/Family Potluck from **4:30 – 7 p.m.**; The LOCKIN has

been rescheduled to February 2.

Looking ahead in January:

Jan. 20 – Super Bowl Sub Sale **9-11 a.m.**; **January 27** – Super Bowl Sub Sale **9-11 a.m.**

Jerry Reynolds
youth@fccucc.org

ESKIMOS Cookie & Fudge Sale

On **Sunday, December 16**, the Eskimos will be selling fresh baked cookies of great variety, and mouth watering fudge, in Guptill Hall **after the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services.**

Best quality in town just in time for Christmas at a price you cannot beat, and it gives your family cookie cooker a break.

Mark Your Calendar – Hilltop Guild – January 10, 2013

We will be having our January meeting in the afternoon on **January 10th at 2 p.m.** Please join us for a musical trip **“Down Memory Lane” with Monica Grabin**, a singer with a huge repertoire of music from folk songs to popular standards, and accompanying herself on guitar, banjo, autoharp and percussion. All ladies of the church are

welcome to come along for an afternoon of music, fun fellowship and dessert. If you're not on our calling list, please call Joan Dennison (799-3193) by January 7th to let her know that you'll be coming. Have a wonderful holiday season and then start the new year by joining us at our January meeting.

Knitters!

Each year many of your knit beautiful items for the Holly Daze Bazaar. We workers arrive to set up Knit N Purl on Friday and find bags and boxes of hats, mittens, sweaters, afghans, scarves...just beautiful things. And we do not know who does the knitting.

So thank you, anonymous knitters. Please know we appreciate your efforts, as do our shoppers and those who receive all those tiny stitches.

Elinor Redmond
Knit N Purl

DID You Know...

...that in Latin America, Africa & Asia, small farmers often struggle to make a living as they are forced to accept low prices for their products. The UCC Coffee Project is a partnership between Equal Exchange and the Justice & Witness Ministries of the United Church of Christ. The partnership helps farmers build better lives by working with democratic cooperatives, offering affordable credit, paying a fair price for their product and supporting sustainable agriculture.

You have probably noticed that you pay a small surcharge when purchasing coffee and tea at our church. This surcharge is accumulated throughout the year to

Mission Mall 2012

The Mission Mall Committee would like to report the results of Mission Mall, 2012, held at the Holly Daze Bazaar.

South Portland/Cape Elizabeth Emergency Food Pantry:	\$613.00
Community Crisis Ministries Fund:	\$360.00
GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian & Straight Educational Network):	\$365.00
My Sister's Keeper:	\$260.00
Opportunity Alliance (fuel assistance):	\$340.00
Preble Street:	\$515.00

Grand Total: \$2,453.00

This year's donations soundly beat the previous high total of \$1,891.00 in 2009. Carol Scheffler brought forward the idea of Mission Mall in the fall of 2006, and the first event was held that

cover unexpected expenses but at the end of the year, if the surplus remains, it is used to defray the cost of the coffee & tea served at coffee hour for the next month! It's a win/win situation for everyone!

Next month, orders for Fair Trade Coffee & Tea will be taken on January 6th and 13th. Look for Fair Trade members (Laurie Cary, Dolores Broberg, Lisa Merchant, Judy Kimball and/or Carol Scheffler) in Wright Pavilion to place your order. And, if you would like to volunteer to help out, we would love to have you!

same year with only a few months to prepare. We have now completed our seventh year, and raised over \$12,000.00 for local charities. This year we noticed that more individuals outside our church family stepped up to donate, a breakthrough we had been striving to achieve. The Committee would like to thank all those who made donations, the volunteers from the nonprofits, and anyone who helped see this event through from the planning stages in the spring through the wrap-up after the holidays. We particularly thank the Holly Daze Bazaar Committee for accommodating us at the Christmas Fair year after year.

Mission Mall Committee members:
*Carol Scheffler, Linda Skinner,
AnnElissa Leveque. Joan Carrier
Sarah Randall. & Laurie Cary*

STEEPLE LIGHTING (CONT.)

The steeple is lighted the week of **December 30** in loving memory of **Bursley, Mark Alan, Nathan Mark Taylor and Roger Belanger** by Joyce Belanger and family, and in loving memory of **Mabel Martin Ahlsen and Hettie Steeves Martin** by daughter Nancy Ahlsen and Rod Link.

THE GIVING TREE

If you are participating in the **Giving Tree** to help residents of **Long Creek Development Center**, please remember your gift bags are to be returned to the tree in the Sanctuary by **Sunday, December 16**.

CCM GIFT PROGRAM

If you are participating in the CCM "Ornament" Program, please remember that gifts are due back to the church before **Thursday, December 13**.

From the Holly Daze Bazaar

We, Lynn, Karen & myself, want to thank all of you once again for helping us to have a great Bazaar. We want to thank the lifters, the carriers, bakers, candy makers & makers of beautiful knits & crafts; and all our wonderful room chair people who donated & gave of their time on Thursday, Friday & Saturday. Thanks to Sally Hinckley for taking care of all our advertising around town. Thanks to the wonderful people that worked & cooked for our delicious luncheon & for our beautiful music. A special thanks to my friend Lynn for all the beautiful decorations around the church. I call her the energizer bunny. She just goes & goes. Also a special thanks to Jim Mileson for making our dump runs. The trash was literally piled to the ceiling. Also a special thanks to all

of you that came & spent all your wonderful money. We made about \$10,000. We also had some new chairs this year for books, gifts, knits & Christmas rooms. We hope you all had as much fun as we did & will be back next year. We want to give a really big thank you to Peggy Murray, our treasurer. All the chair people will get together in January to decide how to distribute our moneys. May God help us to choose wisely. We also want to thank Tom for all the extra work we caused him. If we have left anyone out, it is not intentional and we certainly hope we did not.

Your Chairs for Holly Daze Bazaar,
Jan, Lynn & Karen



The Christmas Fund Offering

“Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means “God is with us.” (Matthew 1:22-23)

The Christmas Fund Offering for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund, traditionally collected on Christmas Eve, has been a means by which we, as members of the United Church of Christ, live out the mandate to be Christ’s Body in the world. The Christmas Fund is a ministry of compassion and care to those who serve our church. Your generous giving enables the Pension

Boards’ Ministerial Assistance program to individuals and families in need. Like the Magi of old, we can honor the Christ Child by bringing gifts that will be used to support and honor those who have served and are serving our beloved church. May we continue to experience the blessings of Emmanuel - the One Who is with us now and always. To make your offering for 2012, use the Christmas Fund pew envelopes or label your donation on the memo line of your check. Undesignated offerings at the Christmas Eve Services are also added.



SENIOR ACTIVITIES

Wednesday, December 19 from 12-2 and Thursday, December 20 from 11-1 we will help give out **Christmas gifts for children of Community Crisis Ministries families.**

Monday, December 31 - meet at **I-Hop** for **breakfast at 9:00** and celebrate New Year’s Eve.

Thursday, January 3 – The first **SAGE meeting** of 2013 will start at **1:00**. Come with your ideas for new activities in the new year.

Wednesday, January 9 - Leave the church at **11:00** for the **Egg and I** in Scarborough.

Thursday, January 17 - **Lunch and Fun with the ABC’s**. Please bring your lunch and beverages will be provided. We hope you will stay for a Domino game after lunch or bring your Scrabble or other board game to play. Come to find out what the ABC’s are all about.

FUN FOR SENIORS (CONT.)

Thursday, January 24 - We will view the movie **"Hope Springs"** at 1 p.m. in Davidson Lounge. It stars Meryl Streep, Tommy Lee Jones and Steve Carell. Kay (Meryl) and Arnold (Tommy Lee) have a good marriage but Kay wants to reconnect (spice it up) and they go for a week of therapy to a little town called Hope Springs. Please come.

Thursday, January 31 - It's I-Hop time again at 9 a.m.

THANK YOU

The **Emergency Food Pantry** would like to thank the **Thursday Duplicate Bridge Group** for their donations of \$116 during the month of November. Your contribution goes a long way towards keeping our shelves stocked with food.

Cyndi Alden
cda@fccucc.org



The Christmas Offering



In keeping with the desire to help those in need both "near and far" the Mission and Outreach Team has chosen the **Portland Community Free Clinic (PCFC)** to be the local recipient and the **Heifer Project** to be our international recipient of this year's Christmas Offering to be collected on Christmas Sunday December 23rd.

The **PCFC**, located at the City of Portland's public health clinic at 103 India Street, provides primary and specialty care to uninsured, low-income adults living in Cumberland County. Care at the PCFC is provided by volunteers and the clinic works with a network of providers in the community to obtain free or low-cost services for patients that require care beyond what PCFC can provide. Many of the patients are 'the working poor.' Some are self-employed and cannot afford health insurance. Others work in service industries where insurance is not offered or work insufficient hours to qualify for insurance. In 2011, 124 volunteers gave 1,962 hours to provide care for 515 patients in 1,573 patient encounters. Every dollar donated to the PCFC translates into \$13.50 of healthcare services provided to the community.

The **Heifer Project** has been helping to end hunger and poverty while caring for the Earth since 1944. Millions of families have benefited from the Project's unique formula that enables

families to lift themselves out of poverty. Your donations provide gifts of livestock and training in their care. It doesn't take long for a family to have milk to drink, food to eat and enough left over to sell at market. The Heifer Project's cornerstone principle of Passing on the Gift asks each family to pass on the gift of their animal's offspring to another family in need. So what will it be...

- a Llama, Alpaca or sheep for wool to make warm clothing
- a hen or duck or goose that can lay hundreds of eggs every year
- honeybees and the honey they make and the pollinating they provide
- heifers, water buffalos, goats, rabbits or pigs ??

For the Christmas Offering you can use the envelope provided in the December envelope mailing or note your check with "Christmas Offering".

**The Mission and Outreach Team
thanks you for all your gifts this
Christmas season.**

IRS Regulations Concerning Contributions

With the end of the calendar year approaching, please plan ahead for gifts that you would like to be tax deductible for 2012.

In general, gifts/pledges must be received by the church office by December 31st in order to claim a charitable contribution deduction for 2012.

However, checks that are written and postmarked in 2012 will be deductible in 2012 even though they may not be received by the church in 2012. Stock transfers must be received in our brokerage account at Morgan Stanley Smith Barney by December 31st. Checks that are placed in the church offering on the first Sunday of 2013, (January 6th)

will not qualify for a charitable contribution deduction in 2012, even if the check is predated to 2012 or was actually written in 2012.

Additionally, please do not file your 2012 tax return until you have a written acknowledgement of your contributions from the church. Per the IRS, your contributions may not be tax deductible if you file your tax return before receiving a written acknowledgement of your contributions. We expect to mail out your 2012 Giving Statements mid-January.

Cyndi Alden
cda@fccucc.org

ELECTRONIC PLEDGING FOR 2013

If you made a 2013 pledge on line @ our website, and **did not** get an e-mail thanking you/acknowledging your pledge, please contact Cyndi: cda@fccucc.org or 799-3361. We did have an instance of this happening; so we want to make sure that all 2013 pledges have been received.

Thank you,
Cyndi

When the Weather Outside is Frightful...

Weekdays:

Check the SMCC storm line (741-5900). If evening classes at the college are cancelled, so are church Teams, committees, or Council. You can also find SMCC cancellations on local TV and radio stations. Each Team or committee is responsible for rescheduling their meeting. Note: this doesn't include choir rehearsals or fellowship groups; these groups have their own contingency plans.

Sundays: Worship service cancellations will be listed on the three local news stations (Channels 6,

8 & 13) as well as on radio 560 – WGAN. We've only canceled worship once in the past 20 years, and would do so only if there's a public safety issue or power outage affecting our building. However, be alert to parking bans during heavy snows and try to avoid parking on Cottage Road.



A CHRISTMAS CAROLING PARTY

Saturday,
December 15
4:30 p.m.

A potluck dinner will be
hosted afterward in
Wright Pavilion.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
301 Cottage Road, South Portland, ME 04106

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Find us at: www.facebook.com/fccucc



First Congregational Church and the Family Potluck Group invite you to:
- Hosted by Youth Ministry -

A CHRISTMAS CAROLING PARTY Saturday, December 15 - 4:30 p.m.

The potluck dinner will be hosted in Wright Pavilion.

We'll meet to "warm up our voices" then carol at the homes of some of the shut-ins from our congregation and return to Wright Pavilion for a potluck.

Please bring a main dish, an appetizer, a salad, OR a dessert to share. Please RSVP to Carol Zechman at zechmc@mainehealth.org or 799-1241.

We have a GREAT time every year and eat well! We hope you can join us!