

THE STEEPLE CHIMES

Columbia Congregational United Church of Christ

JANUARY

2012

Pastor Betsey Polglase

Church: 860.228.9306

Pastor Betsey's

Office Hours:

Mon. – Thurs.:9:30-12:30

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Mission Statement

The Columbia

Congregational United Church of Christ as part of the United Church of Christ and the worldwide Christian Church is called by God to be disciples of Jesus, the Christ. Therefore, the mission of the Columbia Congregational United Church of Christ is to worship God and to preach and teach the Gospel of Christ: to promote Christian fellowship among our members and friends, and to live in Christian fellowship with the Church Universal and the whole creation; that we might live faithfully, serving God and humanity, and striving for righteousness, justice, and peace.

UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST



From the Pastor's Porch

As I write this, Christmas is a few days away. The Advent season, the beginning of the church year, has been filled with joyous preparations for the coming of Christ. As you read this, Christmas day will be over and the secular New Year will have begun. I am not sure we approach the coming of the New Year so differently from the coming of Christmas, in the sense of our reflecting on the past year. A major difference is in Advent our hope is in God who came to us as a baby, grew to teach us God's will, conquered death, and remains with us through the Holy Spirit until Christ comes again. Our approach to New Year's Day is often more self-centered as we set our hopes on making personal changes for a "better" year for ourselves - and for the world. Isn't that what brings about those New Year's resolutions, a desire to make improvements on our lives: reduce the calories, increase the exercise; turn negative thinking into positive thinking; spend more time with the kids, monitor the number of hours on the TV and/or computer; keep a little less, give a bit more; play more, complain less? Some are successful with their new determinations but many find themselves back on the same path in a week or so.

It is unfortunate that our hope in Christmas slips so quickly into hope in our own doing once again. No longer are we inundated with Christmas carols and decorations, or focused on plans of gathering with friends and family for the "holidays" (how suddenly sterile our faith becomes). As we put away our decorations, find places for the gifts we received, and breathe a sigh of relief that life is getting back to normal, let's hold fast to the message of Christmas. Immanuel, God is with us even now that 2012 has begun. In the New Year let us all resolve to draw closer to God through prayer, reading scripture, and worship, leading to Christian fellowship and good stewardship of our blessings. As we draw closer to God, when we listen with ears that hear, when we place our hope and trust in God, we will find answers, strength, courage, and peace.

May you feel God's peaceful presence throughout the New Year,

Pastor Betsey

January 2012

Sunday 10:00 AM Worship**JANUARY 1**

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Communion Sunday

Worship Leader: Pastor Betsey Polglase

Deacon: Kathy Chapman

Lay Reader: Kathy Chapman

Greeters: Kathy Chapman, Terry Tangarone and
Tim Bassett**Loaves and Fishes Fellowship Hour follows Worship
Service in the Parish Hall.****JANUARY 8**

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Worship Leader: Pastor Betsey Polglase

Deacon: Kathy Chapman

Lay Reader: Kathy Chapman

Greeter: Kathy Chapman

**Loaves and Fishes Fellowship Hour follows Worship
Service in the Parish Hall.****JANUARY 15**

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Worship Leader: Pastor Betsey Polglase

Deacon: Kathy Chapman

Lay Reader: Kathy Chapman

Greeter: Kathy Chapman

**Loaves and Fishes Fellowship Hour follows Worship
Service in the Parish Hall.****JANUARY 22**

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Worship Leader: Pastor Betsey Polglase

Deacon: Kathy Chapman

Lay Reader: Kathy Chapman

Greeter: Kathy Chapman

**Loaves and Fishes Fellowship Hour follows Worship
Service in the Parish Hall.****JANUARY 29**

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Worship Leader: Pastor Betsey Polglase

Deacon: Kathy Chapman

Lay Reader: Kathy Chapman

Greeter: Kathy Chapman

**Loaves and Fishes Fellowship Hour follows Worship
Service in the Parish Hall.****COMING EVENTS**

FAMILY SUNDAY will continue to be Loaves and Fishes Fellowship Hour. Each family is asked to bring in one appetizer/finger crackers, veggies & dip, mini sandwiches...) nothing that needs to be warmed or eaten with a utensil) ONLY bring enough servings to feed 8-12 people.



**AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE –
TUESDAY, JANUARY 10TH 1:00 pm – 6:00
pm in the Parish Hall.**

**SECOND SATURDAY ACTIVITY NIGHT –
January 14th 6:30 – 9:00 pm.** Bring a friend and join the fun!

**MOVIE NIGHT – FUNDRAISER, Friday,
January 20th from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm.**
In the Parish Hall.

**CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER'S MEETING
SATURDAY, January 21st 10:00 am 12:00
pm/Lounge.**

**Please view the January Calendar of
Events on the Church website calendar.**

January 2012



LAY READER – Anyone wishing to share in the leadership of worship by being a LAY READER and reading the Scripture or bringing a children's sermon, please sign-up on the appropriate list on the bulletin board by the elevator door **and** speak with Pastor Betsey Polglase.

DEACON OF THE MONTH

January – Kathy Chapman

TRUSTEE OF THE MONTH

January – Dwayne Messerschmidt

GREETERS AND USHERS

January 1 – **Deacons** – Kathy Chapman, Terry Tangarone, and Tim Bassett

January 8 - Volunteers needed

January 15 – Volunteers needed

January 22 – Volunteers needed

January 25 – Volunteers needed

PARISH NOTICES

The return of Pledge Cards to support the budget for 2011 – 2012 is always welcome. Cards may be left in the Stewardship box, given to any member of the Stewardship Committee or handed into the Church Office. Extra pledge cards are available in the Stewardship box upon request. We invite your generosity in supporting the 2011 budget.

THE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN CONCERN – has an ongoing need for clean, empty food containers with lids for donation to the Covenant Soup Kitchen. A collection box for them is located in the coat closet near our Church Office. Thank you for helping to fill this need and recycle too. Items to be donated to WAIM should be taken directly there. Thank you for your assistance.

WAIM is frequently in need of the volunteer services of skilled craftspeople. If you are skilled as a carpenter, painter, electrician, plumber, sheet rocker, heating systems, computer technician, etc. and would be willing to become part of a craftspeople resource guide for WAIM please see Anthony White, Sr. for survey form.

FOOD PANTRY: The Church is collecting food for the Soup Kitchen and the Columbia Food Pantry. **Items especially needed: baked beans, pork & beans, canned tuna, canned pasta meals (chef-boy-ar-dee), canned soups, cereal, and feminine products.** If you would like to contribute, please leave items in the basket found at the front of the church.

January 2012

* Fun * Food * Fellowship *

Join us for

2nd Saturday Activity Nights

The fun is for all ages!

Games, crafts, cooking!

Bring a snack to share if you can and stop by 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm
in the Parish Hall

Have a game, craft, or other activity you'd like to share? Let me know!

Following are the dates for upcoming
activity nights,

Hope to see you there!

Lynn Sharpe

lynns331@hotmail.com

January 14th

February 11th

March 10th

April 14th

May 12th

January 2012

FALL ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

The 144th Fall Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ was held at the First Congregational Church of Guilford on October 22, 2011. The theme of the meeting was "*Imagine What's Possible.*"

The State of the Conference address was given by the Interim Conference Minister the Rev. Charles L. Wildman. He told us that the time we are now in at the conference is a time of hospice and a time of birthing. Our reason for existence is to serve the 244 churches that make up the conference. We are bound together by covenant to help and support each other.

A high point of this meeting for us was when Columbia Congregational Church was recognized for being a five for five church, meaning that all five special mission projects were supported. (A special thanks to the Women's Guild. They support "*Strengthen the Church,*" and our church does not.)

The conference adopted a OCWM goal for 2012. It is a basic mission support goal of \$1,596,723.00. Each church was challenged to increase their OCWM by 5% which would mean \$137.50 more for us. The conference will retain 37% of the Basic Mission Support and send the remaining 63% onto the national office. Per capita income will remain at \$8.00 per member and will be used entirely for conference work.

The budget for the Missionary Society of Connecticut was set at \$3,973,688.00. The budget for the Trustees of the Fund for Ministers was set at \$482,442.00.

One resolution was passed at this meeting. It is entitled "*Resolution Declaring The Connecticut Conference To Be A Global Mission Conference In the United Church of Christ.*" Please remember that resolutions are not binding on the churches, but are the way those gathered felt at the time. If you would like to read it, we have copies.

Many workshops were held giving conference delegates a chance to express what they would like to see in the new Conference Minister. The workshop we heard was very interesting.

Thank you for electing us delegates to State Conference. We are happy to be of service.

Yours In Christ, Arnold and Polly Hinckley

January 2012

FROM THE HISTORIAN

In the December Newsletter from the Trinitarian Congregational Church in Norton, MA. I found this article which I want to share with you.

A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

Submitted by Stephen Penesis, Church Historian

The simple Christmas treat of a candy cane has a deeper significance. It incorporates several symbols for the birth, ministry, and death of Jesus Christ.

The white symbolize the Virgin Birth and the sinless nature of Jesus, and the candy is hard to symbolize the solid rock, the foundation of the church, and firmness of the promises of God. The red stripe represent the blood shed by Christ on the cross.

It is the form of a "J" for the name of Jesus and to represent the shape of the Good Shepherd's staff.

Next time you munch on a candy cane, it will make you think of the true meaning of Christmas!

THANK YOU! I would like to thank all of the wonderful folks who have sent thoughtful notes, words of encouragement, and kept me in their prayers as I deal with breast cancer. Donna Doucette

THANK YOU! A huge THANK YOU and God Bless you from the Salvation Army, for all of the donations of food, money, gift cards and volunteer help to sort and deliver it all! We are blessed to have such a loving and giving congregation. With your help we were able to give many local families a happy Thanksgiving and Christmas. Wishing you all a very Happy New Year.

WOMEN'S GUILD, Debby Smith will have a presentation of her trip to Alaska at the January 17th Women's Guild meeting at 7:00 pm in the Lounge. All are invited.

January 2012

BACK BAY MISSION TRIP: APRIL 15-21, 2012

Our second trip to Biloxi, Mississippi is coming soon!

Web site: www.backbaymission.com

Work needed: Disaster recovery work helping families rebuild their homes and lives following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005.

Minimum Age: 14 years

Cost: \$75.00 per person registration fee, airfare, and one week of your time.

Educational Components: Back Bay Mission staff provides education regarding issues of poverty, justice issues in disaster and the church's role in enacting social change.

If you or anyone you know may be interested in going please contact me. You do not have to be a member of our congregation to go with us. (860-228-1324 or Lmess72@yahoo.com)

We will be having an information and planning meeting after worship on Sunday, January 15th.

January 2012

**MOVIE NIGHT FUNDRAISER
FOR THE BACK BAY MISSION TRIP**

Friday, January 20, 2012

Doors open at 6:30 pm

Movie starts at 7:00 pm

Come in comfy clothes, bring a comfy chair, invite family & friends and enjoy a wonderful movie that will warm your heart on a chilly winter night.

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE.

TICKETS ARE \$5.00 per person – Families of 5+ are \$20.00

TICKETS WILL BE SOLD IN ADVANCE ON SUNDAY MORNINGS,

AND WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE AT-THE-DOOR.

Feature Presentation: “Emmet Otter’s Jug Band Christmas”

The message of this movie is one that extends past the Season of Christmas, and can be enjoyed by ALL AGES. It is based on a children’s storybook by Russell Hoban which was first published in 1971. In 1977 it was adapted into a Muppet movie by Jim Henson with songs by Paul Williams. The Henson special was adapted into a live musical stage show by the Jim Henson Company, premiering at the Goodspeed Opera House in December 2008.

January 2012

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Joy to the World, the Lord has come! He rules with truth and grace! Hoping all receive the wonders of His love. His love shines for all to see and brings us the gifts of hope, peace and joy.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT: “*Live from Bethlehem*”

Preparing for the Christmas pageant is always a thing of wonder. You wonder is this really going to work! First you select a pageant then you get a good and patient director. We are so blessed to have Lynn Sharpe. She brings the children together and very patiently takes them through the pageant and helps them select parts. Lynn wears many hats (Teaches, plays the flute during service and with the bells, and sings with the Praise Team.) but she always has control of the situation and never panics, unlike me. What a true blessing.

I was most impressed with the enthusiasm the children had towards the pageant. Oh how we have grown. Children, who once never spoke louder than a whisper, were vying for speaking parts. There was singing and dancing and lots of laughter during rehearsals. And even though some thought this might be a train wreck it turned out to be one of the best performances the Church School has presented. Most definitely!

MISSION MOMENT: NICKELS FOR NETS

Nickels for Nets is a malaria prevention initiative program sponsored by Sweet Sleep Organization.

Each time I think we are done with our Nickels for Nets program, I walk into my office to find nickels someone has left for me. I am overwhelmed by the support for this mission. The Church School’s goal was to raise enough funds for 20 nets and we surpassed the goal with 25. Thank you to all who have helped make this mission a success and for helping save a child. I would like to thank the teachers for all there help with the pageant and especially to Wendy Tomlinson and Andrea Stone for their help with props and costumes. Blessings to all and best wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Joy to the World!

Jean Murphy

January 2012

The Rev. Betsey Polglase, PASTOR

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