

PASS I† ON!



THE UNITED CHURCH
of CLINTON
January Newsletter 2017



January 2017

What's Next?

With another Christmas rapidly fading into memory, I opened the gospel of Luke, which tells the most familiar parts of the Christmas story, to see what came next. It's an odd inclusion. Jesus' parents take their infant son to the Temple for the usual rites of purification - of Mary, not of the child. In Jewish tradition, the blood of birthing rendered a woman unclean. After seven days (fourteen for a female baby) and a suitable sacrifice, a priest could declare the mother ritually clean again. While in the Temple, they met two elderly people: Anna, who must have lived over 100 years, and Simeon, who believed he would not die until he had seen the long-promised Messiah. In what must have been one of the last acts of his life, Simeon took the baby Jesus in his arms and uttered a prayer that has since become widely known in its Latin form as *Nunc Dimitis*: "Lord, now let your servant depart in peace..." It is, perhaps, the prayer of every old person.

When I was much younger, I set out to conquer the world. Or perhaps to change it. Well, at least to make a difference. And yet there is a yearning, sometimes a desperate yearning, to believe that however much or little each of us has actually accomplished, there was some reason for our existence. That we were not just dandelion fluff, blown about by the winds of chance. That even if we have trouble recognizing it, our lives do have meaning.

So I see the story of Simeon and Anna as a kind of parable - a story that conveys a message. And the message is that we will receive that reassurance, in some unexplained way, before our time runs out. Why would the writer of this gospel, include this particular story? Primarily, to support the claim that Jesus was the long-awaited Savior. But perhaps also because it carried a universal truth - like Simeon and Anna, we too will receive reassurance that there was some purpose and meaning for our lives.

At the start of the new year, I want to encourage you to use what God has given you in the place that He has given you. Start where you are, use what you have, and do what you can. Everyplace you go, ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to those that He wants you to minister to. Maybe someone needs a hug, or a smile. Sometimes they need a prayer. But always they need our love, not our condemnation. You are God's hope in glory so I pray that you will be a beacon of His light everywhere you go this year, and from now on! Let God use you to bring hope and encouragement to those around you.

Dr. Scott Stewart

Best Fishes

<'}'}>< John 21:1-14



Lay Readers

LAY LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Please be there by 9:45 to pass out bulletins & greet
- Read as specified
- Arrange for yourself or someone else to take the offering
- Stand at the door with the Pastor as everyone is leaving

If you have volunteered to be a "Deacon at the Door:/ Lay Reader and can't make it please call or e-mail the Church Office or try to get a replacement. Thank you, hopefully this will work and give everyone a chance to participate in the life of our church.



Missions & Social Justice Committee

FEED MY SHEEP

The start of another year for our mission and social justice endeavors. First, though, thanks to those who participated in our Winter Togs collection which we sent to the Sioux YMCA in Dupree South Dakota. On December 18, Pastor Scott blessed a box that was brimful! But the chill of winter is here with us in Clinton. Please remember our:

Winter Coat Collection that will run until January 17: Our donations will go to a local community project, The Thomas J. Serewicz Sr. Foundation. Look for a collection box in the Sanctuary for your donated new or clean gently used winter coats.

The Community Café meal of pizza, salad, and ice cream continues to be delivered on the third Monday of each month. Thank you, everyone, for your Advent Spare Change Baggies, which went toward our monthly menu costs. See also the place setting in the Sanctuary on Communion Sunday, the first Sunday of each month, for donations toward our Café meal. FYI: The cost of the meal each month is around \$130.00.

Bags for moms: In conjunction with other churches and community groups, this mission is continuing beyond the Christmas season. See Janet Lamy for a suggested list of contents.

Plastic bags for WHEAT: We're still collecting. The bags go to the WHEAT food pantry. Our summer/fall produce from *Growing for Others* often ended up in our donated bags! How about that for a circle of love?

I guess we're off 'n running!
With best wishes for a happy and healthy 2017!

Gloria Parkinson on behalf of Mission and Social Justice Committee members: Dianne Mather, Madeline McTague, Gloria Popp, and Pastor Scott (ex officio)

Servants in Faith



German Christmas Market: Thank you! Thank you! To all who participated in the 2016 German Christmas Market – many hands made the work of the event go very smoothly. A donation of \$7,000 was given to the church.

Prayer Shawls and Chemo Caps: Prayer shawls are available for anyone who needs a “hug” from our congregation. They are kept in a bin in the sacristy. After they are blessed during worship, a tag with the prayer of blessing is attached to each shawl. Please sign the list that is in the bin so we will be aware of who has received a prayer shawl. Also chemo caps are available in the sacristy.

Handmade for Cancer: As a formal program, Handmade for Cancer is being suspended. At present our inventory is being sent to Mass General Hospital in Boston and to St Jude's Medical Center in Memphis, Tennessee. There are chemo caps available in the sacristy and should this supply become low, new ones will be made to maintain a supply in the church. Please feel free to take one to anyone who is in need of a warm cap.

Hugs by Mail: There are twelve Angels who are in contact with sixteen people who can no longer attend church. A thank you to our Angels: Diane Cummins, Pam Dobeck, Debbie Facendola, Jan Ganusko, Mary Ellen Matthew, Gloria Parkinson, Gloria Popp, June Schultz, Edie Shaw, Dawn Sivert, Teresa Sontag and Laraine Amelotte. A special thank you to Gertrud Finkbeiner who has been an Angel since our program began – you are special and will be missed! Also a thank you to former angels – Alan Baer, Roberta Lucht, Sue Oja, Lucille Slauenwhite, Marianne Tencati. Anyone wishing to be an angel, may contact Mary Ellen Matthew.

Youth News

JANUARY

Trip to SkyZone indoor
trampoline park in Westboro
Sign up sheet is on the bulletin board
outside of the sanctuary.
Date: Monday--January 2, 2017

If you are interested in volunteering in the
Sunday School please contact
Heather McNamara -
heather.mcnamara@uelcontractors.com

or
Chrissy Dobeck - cddbeck@comcast.net
at your earliest convenience

"Sunny School" Kindergarten-Second Grade room
was dedicated in memory of Kate Arpano on December 18th.

Thank you to all who participated in this year's Christmas Pageant!

Sunday School Schedule for the Month of January:

January 1—New Year's Day—No Sunday School

January 8—Bible Journaling

January 15—Begin collection for Souper Bowl of Caring

January 22—Movie Sunday

January 29—Youth Council Bake Sale

Youth Council Meeting:
Sunday January 8, 2017 at 9:15a.m.
All are welcome to attend
Please bring suggestions for youth events.



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 04 - Julie Dietel
- 13 - Michelle O'Toole
- 15 - Jennifer Arsenault
- 17 - Teresa Sontag
- 17 - Christopher Perez
- 18 - Sarah Erickson
- 20 - Shane Wheeler
- 23 - Sarah Irvine
- 24 - Justin Newton
- 24 - Kathleen Kopitsky
- 24 - Donald Dobeck III
- 25 - Amanda Smethurst
- 27 - Lauren Crossman
- 28 - Samantha Kirby

JANUARY ACTIVITIES

- 01 - HAPPY NEW YEAR!
No Sunday School
- 02 - Youth Group/ Skyzone
- 03 - Missions & Social Justice
/ 7:00 pm
- 08 - Youth Council Meeting
/ 9:15 am
- 11 - FAMILY NIGHT POTLUCK
/ 6:00 pm
- 11 - Council/ 7:30 pm
- 15 - Start Collection for SOUPERBOWL
Of CARING
- 16 - Community Café
- 29 - Youth Council BAKE SALE
/ after worship

CHURCH FAMILY PRAYER LIST

- Sara Houghton
- The Arpano Family
- Lynn Ago
- Chad Kay
- Jim Garceau
- Yvonne Quinn
- Fred Duncanson
- Amanda Howe
- John Howard
- Billie Jean Dotson



In an effort to update our Prayer List in the new year, we have removed all names that have been on the list for longer than two months. If you would like someone's name returned to the list please notify the Church Office by e-mail or telephone. In the future, we will be removing names after two months unless we receive notification.

**ALSO, REMEMBER
OUR HOME WORSHIPERS**

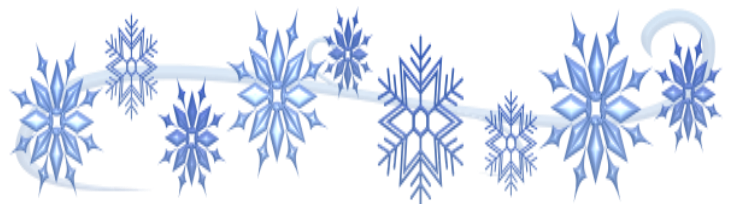
- Mary Bisson, Herman Schultz, Marge Sheridan, Corinne Dobeck, Marilyn Center, Tina Norwood
- Fred Duncanson, Eunice Salmon, Gloria Nillson
- Ruth Baer & Corinne Gebhardt

AND, THOSE IN THE MILITARY

- Mike Clark (Mary & Joe's son)
- S/SGT Frank R. Heron (Marge Sheridan's grandson)
- Captain Aubrey Sontag
- 1st Lt Tiffany Sontag
- S/A Jill Milewski
- Pvt. Alex Apell
- All who are deployed



PLEASE NOTE
Kelly Turcotte will now be handling the Altar Flower Orders.



**COFFEE HOUR
DONATIONS**



The kitchen ladies are still looking for donations of baked goods for Sunday Coffee Hour. (Please, if you are purchasing ready made baked goods, be sure to check the expiration dates.)

ALTAR FLOWERS



May be purchased for the altar in celebration, honor or memory of Loved Ones or an occasion by using the sign up sheet on the bulletin board in Marquardt Hall. The full selection---two side pieces, center and bulletins is \$50, center is \$15, two sides are \$30 and bulletins are \$5. The arrangements are being made by Country Garden Florists. For additional information and payment contact Kelly Turcotte or the Church Office.

CHURCH E-MAIL & PHONE LIST

If you have recently changed e-mail addresses, telephone or cell phone numbers or are new to our Church Family and haven't completed a member information form, please do so as soon as possible and return it to the office. The Church Family e-mail and phone list is an important part of our contact network for announcements and updates.

WEBSITE

The Newsletter section is updated every monththe next updates are scheduled for the beginning of January...you can find us at www.clintonunitedchurch.org. We now also post the weekly bulletins, weekly sermons and information on upcoming and ongoing events.

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Any articles, photos, announcements, calendar events, etc. that need to be in the February 2017 Newsletter must be in the Church Office by no later than Wednesday, January 18 at 9:00 am.

UPCOMING

LENT
begins on
ASH WEDNESDAY
March 1

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CLINTON
109 Haskell Avenue
Clinton Massachusetts 01510

Contact Information:

The Rev. Dr. Scott Stewart.....978-598-7142
Church Office Hours.....Mon -Thu 9:00-12:30
(Closed on Fridays)
Office Telephone978-365-9232
E-Mail.....cu@clintonunitedchurch.org
Website.....www.clintonunitedchurch.org

Committee Chairs:

Council Moderator.....Bob Lidstone (978-368-7747)
Deacons.....Pam Dobeck (978-368-1632)

Youth Council

Sunday School.....Christine Dobeck (978-365-3105)
Heather McNamara (978-838-9963)
Year I Confirmation.....Bob Lidstone (978-368-7747)
Youth Council.....Cynthia Stewart (978-598-7142)
Amy Arpano (978-582-0729)

Property.....Fred Sontag (978-365-5669)

Servants in Faith

.....Mary Ellen Matthew (978-870-9145)



At The United Church of Clinton,
there are now several ways to get Connected.

1. Prayer request can now be submitted via text (eg Text "Connected prayer request" to 97000)
2. Messages can be sent via text (eg Text "Connected When can I come by?" to 97000)
3. Visitors can now text "Connected" to 97000 and link to our online visitor information survey.
4. Email us at cu@clintonunitedchurch.org
5. Pen and paper still work as well – forms are located in the pews and can be placed in the offering plate at the time of offering or handed directly to the Pastor.

**Message & data rates may apply.*