

THE CHIMES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAR HARBOR CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

29 Mount Desert Street, Bar Harbor, Maine 04609

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From the Senior Pastor

December 2007

As we enter this holy season of Christmastide, I am mindful of the symbols of these days. I am particularly taken by the angels who announced the birth of our Savior. What an honor was theirs to bring the glad tidings that the Messiah had been born for the world. As they announced the good news, I can almost imagine the sound of their angelic voices floating over the countryside and their bright raiment flowing in the air. What a sight they must have been!

Sometimes I am convinced that I catch the angels' song here at our church. Am I hearing things, you ask? Has our minister finally taken a step over the edge? Absolutely not! I am referring to our choirs. We hear them every Sunday and, I suspect, enjoy the joyful noise they make to the Lord, but then we tend to take them for granted. After all, with the exception of the summer hiatus, at least one choir is in church and at many special services. We are truly blessed.

Let's start with the Cherub Choir. These are the youngest members of our church family who sometimes sing during Children's Time. Isn't it wonderful to hear these young voices enthusiastically lifted in song? Their willingness to sing and their acceptance of the fact that God loves them is a gift to our church. I think Kimberly and Doug really enjoy working with them. The kids sing downstairs with Doug every Sunday before Sunday School begins.

Then there is the Alleluia Choir, made up of young people who love to sing to God. We have seen them grow and develop both in talent and in maturity to the point that now when they sing they are both poised and polished. However, one of the best things about them is their still present ability to be a little silly when it is called for. They are a joy to behold and I, along with you, am deeply grateful for them. Kimberly and Doug have done some very fine work with them and it shows forth in wonderful praise to God.

Finally, we have our Adult Choir. What can I possibly say that will do justice to their manifold gifts? Every Sunday they amaze me with their masterful interpretations of the beautiful music they sing. Whether they are singing in a foreign language or A Capella, their voices lift us to the heavens and allow us a small glimpse of heaven. Is it any wonder that I hear angels?

Of course I cannot comment on the choirs without recognizing the leadership. Doug McMinimy is a talented and gifted singer, dancer, and lover of music. He does a wonderful job with the young people's choirs. And then, of course, there is Kimberly Haller. Kimberly came to us like a gift from God and proceeded to bring us her own special brand of music. She is a gifted pianist, organist and choir director. She is also a dedicated teacher and has opened many of us to the wonders of singing in church. We are all better for her sharing of her love of music with us.

I hope that during this holy season you will find reason to listen for and hear the voice of the angels. Please plan on being in church and attending the Christmas Festival on December 9th and the Sunday School Christmas Pageant on December 16th. I promise you that you will be very glad you have made music an important part of your Christmastide.

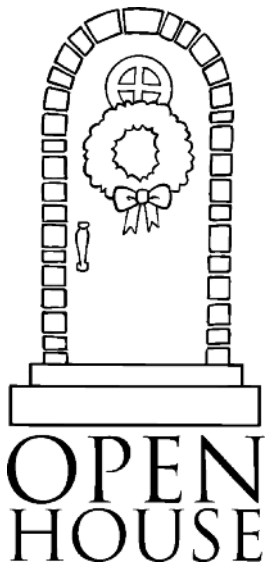
May God bless you with a joyful Christmas.

Sandra M. Reed

Stop Making Scents - Please!

You may not be aware that many of our congregation on any given Sunday are allergic to the scents of perfume, after shave lotion, or candles. Our church has made the decision to use only non-scented candles, but it would be so helpful if you would help us by leaving your perfume and after shave lotions at home on Sunday mornings and for other church events.

Your help in this matter will be deeply appreciated.



Parsonage Open House

You are warmly invited to attend the annual Christmas open house at the parsonage on **Sunday, December 16, from 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM**. Please join Wally, Sandra, Herbie and Winston for some good food, good fellowship and good Christmas cheer.

The parsonage is at 37 Hancock Street in Bar Harbor.



CHOIR NOTES

I'm so very proud of our youth! They are a joy to work with and are so willing to share their talents with others. On October 28, about half of the Alleluia Choir sang several pieces at the Choir Festival hosted by the First Congregational Church in Deer Isle. Everyone enjoyed their contribution to the Festival. Afterwards, we had a delicious pizza party at Pat's Pizza in Ellsworth.

Another one of our young adults who is literally blowing the socks off people is Eric Beals. Eric recently made All State in the jazz division with his fancy trombone playing. Eric is also one of the MDI High School band members who will travel to London to play in their New Year's Day parade. Congratulations, Eric, for all your recent accomplishments!

Please support the Alleluia Choir, Eric, and many other talented folk in our church by attending the **Third Annual Christmas Festival on Sunday, December 9, at 3:00PM**. This concert will feature both instrumental and vocal performances from amateurs and professionals, solo and ensemble. The concert is free and a reception will follow it. What better way to begin your Christmas celebrations?

Faithfully yours,
Kimberly Haller

William Hamilton Skiff, III

November 16, 2007

to Jim and Linda Skiff,

Grandchild of

Bill and Charlotte Skiff





The Annual Living Nativity will return to the front steps of the church again this year on Wednesday, December 19th and Thursday, the 20th from 6:00 - 7:20pm. Sign up sheets will be on the bulletin board the Sunday following Thanksgiving. Over 60 volunteers are needed each year to put this event on. Newcomers to the church are encouraged and welcome to participate. This is our gift to the community, which is enjoyed by many each year.

Participants- Please plan to be in the Sanctuary to get costumes on between 5:15 and 5:30pm at the latest! Dress warmly! The costumes will cover most heavy outer wear. Don't worry about supper as we will have a light meal available for you in the parlor.

Call Norma Spurling with questions at 288-9023

**Give
Unto
the
Lord**



Financial Stewardship

Well, as those who attended worship on November 18th know, we believe that The Big Secret around church stewardship is that it should not be a secret! We should all be proud to proclaim why we pledge and support financially our wonderful church community. All forms of stewardship are crucial to our life together - worship leadership, committee participation, Sunday school teaching, etc. - but only financial support can help us to maintain our vital physical resources and paid employees.

Be on the lookout for pledge cards (if you don't already have them), and I am hopeful that you and your family will prayerfully consider the possibility of making and, if possible, increasing your financial pledge. Thank you for your help.

P.S. Please note that the Stewardship letter that was sent suffered from some edition control problems; this will be your 2008 pledge (not the 2007), and Stewardship Sunday is, in fact, December 2nd (not the 3rd). I apologize for this error and any confusion it may have caused.

Michael Bonsey

Annual Christmas Fair

The Christmas Fair is coming, **Friday, December 7th from 10 am - 2 pm**. We will have a sneak preview of the fair on Thursday, December 6th, between 7 and 8 pm for working people who are unable to attend the fair on Friday.

Come and help us put together a spectacular fair! We'll need donations for attic treasures, crafts, baked goods, cookies and candy. Lots of helpers are needed before and during the fair. We can find a place for everyone to participate!

Christmas for Kids

*“Johnny wants a pair of skates;
Suzie wants a sled;
Nellie wants a picture book
Yellow, blue and red;
Now I think I'll leave to you
What to give the rest;
Choose for me, dear Santa Clause,
You will know the best.”*

Christmas is for all ages, but it is most magical for children. No child on our island needs to be disappointed on Christmas morning if we all

participate in the Christmas for Kids Program. In return, our lives will be enriched with the joy of giving in the spirit of Christmas.

Please help to make this program a success again this year with your generosity, your efforts to carefully wrap gifts, and by meeting imperative deadlines. Christmas gift tags will be on the tree in the foyer of the church.

Families and individuals are invited to take as many tags as they would like. Each tag has an identification number and a gift item for a particular child. Therefore, it is very important to securely fasten the gift tag on your wrapped gifts! Please leave gifts under the tree no later than Sunday December 16th.

Donations are gratefully accepted in lieu of shopping. Envelopes will be available as well as a box to deposit them in.

There will be a sign up list on the bulletin board for volunteers needed to sort, distribute, and shop for gifts. The Sunday school children will be a big help by making the tags for us to put on the tree.

If you have any questions, please contact Karen McFarland at 288-5760 or Alice Hobbs at 244-7830.

Thank you,
Karen McFarland, Outreach Board



Poinsettia Sale

Our poinsettia sale is on! These beautiful hardy plants come in a 7" pot and cost \$20.00. There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board, or contact Sandy Boyce 288-1047, Billie Mitchell 288-3691, or the church office 288-3280. Please make checks payable to the church and put poinsettia in the memo portion of your check, at the time of your order.



The Case for Christ for Kids (and Adults!)

What: (taken from book) Retracing his own spiritual journey from atheism to faith, Lee Strobel, former legal editor of the Chicago Tribune, searches for credible evidence that Jesus of Nazareth really is the Son of God. *The Case for Christ for Kids*, based on the adult book, brings Jesus to life, addressing the miracles, ministry, family, and way of life of Jesus through kid-friendly terms, humor, and illustrations.

Who: *Pilot Program:* Grades 5th and 6th and those in 4th grade whose parents feel they are ready for an in-depth study. Adult study at same time.

When: Monday evenings; 5:30 PM – 7:00PM. Will include light supper.
November 5th – February 11 (No class during Christmas Break)

Registration: Advance registration is required. A small fee to cover materials will be charged. A sign-up sheet, a book copy for review, and the curriculum outline are available in the parlor.

Thank You, Debbie Dyer, for All the Good Work that You Do

The Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce honored Debbie on October 17, 2007 "for her 18 years of work organizing the town's Fourth of July parade." Organizing the parade, of course, is only one of the many services that Debbie performs for the town and our church.

She is widely known for her work and leadership of the Bar Harbor Historical Society, and you may have seen her recently at the Rotary Club, Jesup Library, or on television describing the 1947 fire in Bar Harbor, and not too long ago on the nationally televised program "Dream Drives" about West Street.

Several less visible but important activities are her leadership and/or participation in maintaining the Ledge lawn Cemetery, Hospital Auxiliary, Joy Morse Scholarship Fund, and weekly "Times Past" column in the *Bar Harbor Times*.

As a member of our church, she has served in virtually all member capacities, and is the church historian. Currently, we enjoy her clear, confident, and spiritual voice when often speaking to us as our liturgist.

Debbie is a Bar Harbor native, and notes that she was born at the hospital and "walked" across the street to her home where she has lived ever since except for a few years. Always wearing a smile, she is a storehouse of knowledge about Bar Harbor and has an amazing recall of people and events.

When asked why she is so active in town and church activities she notes: "What I do—I do because I really enjoy it, and it keeps one busy and involved in the community." As a sign I have says and I try to practice: "Volunteers give from the heart."

It goes without saying that we enjoy and are grateful for having Debbie as a member of our church, and are thankful for the many volunteer activities that she performs for us and our community.

First quotation, *Mount Desert Islander*

Congratulations, Iron Man, David Painter

"Bar Harbor physician David Painter, 46, completed the Ford Ironman Championship – the granddaddy of triathlons [Kailua-Kona, Hawaii]– ...in 11 hours, 39 minutes and 30 seconds.

When he qualified for the race earlier this year, Painter said his goal was to have fun and just complete the race.

He posted a time of 1:22:35 in the 2.4 mile swim, 6:17:57 in the 112 mile bike race, and 3:46:16 in the marathon, a 26.2 mile run.

Capital Campaign Report

It seems such a short time ago that we decided that we needed additional space in our church building, participated in a capital campaign to raise funds for the addition, began the building with lots of dislocation and inconvenience, and then moved into our beautiful new quarters. And now, here we are already at the end of the campaign pledge period.

The faithfulness of those who made pledges has been remarkable, far better than most campaigns. As of early November, all but approximately \$13,000 of the \$440,000 pledged has been received. We can all be very pleased with that. However, we do ask that each of us check our pledge and payments.

Money committed but not received is an unexpected expenditure for the church, requiring more borrowing from the endowment and therefore less revenue from the endowment as well as greater annual charges in repayment of the debt. All of that has a serious impact on our operational budget and the fulfillment of our mission as a church. And so we urge all pledging members to complete their payments before the end of the year.

Also, let us remember that the amount pledged for the building addition plus special gifts and memorials was still about \$240,000 short of the actual cost of the construction. This is the money we have borrowed from the endowment and which must be paid back. Also, it is the amount of money which cannot generate revenue to meet our budgeted needs.

Clearly it would be of great benefit to the church if that debt could be paid as early as possible. Therefore let us make the following suggestion and challenge. Could we each

continue our annual pledge payments for one more year? Or even for two more years?

This could provide a very significant reduction in the debt and help in the development of a balanced budget in future years. If this is something you can do, please contact the church office with your intentions.

A finance campaign for building improvements has wonderful consequences for all, above and beyond the final physical structure. There were so many people who worked long and hard through many meetings and tasks.

The congregation was enthusiastically engaged in a mutual effort which brought about unity of purpose and spirit. There were some who said we could never raise enough money for such a project. But those with vision set a goal and the final response went above and beyond the goal. The generosity of our membership, with their time, talents, and resources, is remarkable and heartwarming.

Capital Campaign Follow-Up Committee

Christian Education

Christmas time is one of the most meaningful times of the year and one of the busiest. Christmas comes with a mix of emotions; the joy and love that fills our hearts as we ready ourselves for the birth of God's great gift to us and the busy, hectic frustrating pace needed to get everything done in time for Christmas. There is always the conundrum of how to fit everything in at Christmas and remain civil. We end up feeling exhausted, frustrated and somehow empty. This year take time to sit back and relax, enjoy the family, the snow, the stars...take time to wonder.

Youth Groups

The 3rd & 4th grade youth group is planning ahead for everyone's enjoyment of God's

beauty. Last week they planted crocuses, tulips, and daffodils around church. The weather was windy and wet. These young workers hung in there and spent their afternoon digging in dirt. There was also a game or two of tag. They were thrilled to add future beauty to our church.

The week before, this group had a "Make Your Own Pizza Party". We made pizza, had a short meeting and then made cards to go in the Thanksgiving Baskets. The 3rd & 4th Grade Youth Group meets the 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month.

The 5th & 6th Grade Youth Group will be having a pizza party on Dec. 7th from 5:30 to 7:30. We will have a short meeting, and fun & games. We hope all 5th & 6th graders will join us. They are being asked to bring their favorite music and a friend. The 5th & 6th Grade Youth Group meets the 2nd & 4th Thursday of each month.

Gingerbread Houses

On December 1st, the Sunday School is having a "Gingerbread House Decorating Party". This has always been a fun way to start celebrating and preparing for Christmas. The children love decorating their very own gingerbread house. Please contact Bethany Hanson or Leslyn Shea for additional information

Christmas Pageant

This year our Christmas Pageant will be on December 16th, at 11:30 in the Sanctuary. The Sunday School and children's choir will present a short musical. This is a combined effort of the Sunday School and choir. Please join us for a beautiful and heartfelt performance.

Have A Merry Christmas!
Mary Swift



Susan Basta Stanley
Olivia Stanley
Emma Suzanne Stanley
November 11, 2007

Bar Harbor Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
29 Mount Desert Street
Bar Harbor, Maine 04609

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Special dates

- First Sunday of Advent, December 2, 2007
- Second Sunday of Advent, December 9, 2007
- Third Sunday of Advent, December 16, 2007
- First day of winter, December 22, 2007
- Fourth Sunday of Advent, Dec. 23, 2007
- Christmas Eve, December 24, 2007
- Christmas Day, December 25, 2007
- New Year's Eve/Watch Night, Dec. 31, 2007

Advent

In an Advent speech in 2002, Pope John Paul II said, "The liturgy of Advent helps us to understand fully the value and meaning of the mystery of Christmas. It is not just about commemorating the historical event, which occurred some 2,000 years ago in a little village of Judea. Instead, it is necessary to understand that the whole of our life must be an 'advent,' a vigilant awaiting of the final coming of Christ. To predispose our mind to welcome the Lord who, as we say in the Creed, one day will come to judge the living and the dead, we must learn to recognize him as present in the events of daily life. Therefore, Advent is, so to speak, an intense training that directs us decisively toward him who already came, who will come and who comes continuously."

The Newsletter



Christmas Prayer

Loving Father, help us to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift, and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen!

—Robert Louis Stevenson

December



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Michael Breen
- 2 Patrick Breen
- 4 Eric Kelley
- 4 Terrance Kelley
- 6 Bill Fuller
- 6 Jefferson Hobbs
- 8 Emily C. Allen
- 11 Beth Paradis
- 11 Mary Elizabeth Kelley
- 14 Linda Kelley
- 15 Fran Fry
- 16 Jean Kief
- 18 Ian Hepburn
- 18 Deb Wade
- 18 Mark Reece
- 19 Marilyne Marino
- 19 Isabella Webster
- 26 Kathryn Mittelberger
- 27 Mary Drury
- 27 Dean Bryer
- 29 Dusty Warner



The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

J o h n 1 : 9

Sunday Worship Contributors

Head Deacon – Marianne Starbird
Assistant Deacon – Norm Moulton

Liturgists-

- 2: Mike Ross
- 9: Estelle Megquire
- 16: Betty Bryer
- 23: Debbie Dyer
- 30:

Flowers –

- 2: The Lamberts
- 9: Sheridan and Barb Steele
- 16: Doadie White
- 23: Poinsettias
- 30: Poinsettias

Coffee Hosts -

- 2: Tim Smith, Laurie Riddell, Caitie and Haleigh
- 9: Beth and Hannah Paradis
- 16:
- 23:
- 30:

Bible Readings -

- 2 Isaiah 2:1-5
Psalm 122
Romans 13:11-14
Matthew 24:36-44
- 9 Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Romans 15:4-13
Matthew 3:1-12
- 16 Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 146:5-10
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11
- 23 Isaiah 7:10-16
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
Romans 1:1-7
Matthew 1:18-25
- 30 Isaiah 63:7-9
Psalm 148
Hebrews 2:10-18
Matthew 2:13-23