



The Beacon

First Congregational Church of Millbury, United Church of Christ

Our Mission: To welcome and inspire ALL through faith, love,
and fellowship according to Christ's example.

Volume 31 Issue 12 • December 2019

From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

At this time of year in New England, the sun sets early and rises late. In terms of daylight, it's the darkest time of the year. But during Advent we anticipate the coming of the Light of the world, Jesus our Savior. We are thankful for these words from John's gospel, "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1 : 5, New Revised Standard Version).

We may sense darkness in our world, but we wait in hope for the One who will be the Light that no darkness can overcome. For your Advent reflection, I offer this poem by Madeleine L'Engle:

First Coming

He did not wait till the world was ready,
till men and nations were at peace.
He came when the Heavens were unsteady,
and prisoners cried out for release.

He did not wait for the perfect time.
He came when the need was deep and great.
He dined with sinners in all their grime,
turned water into wine.

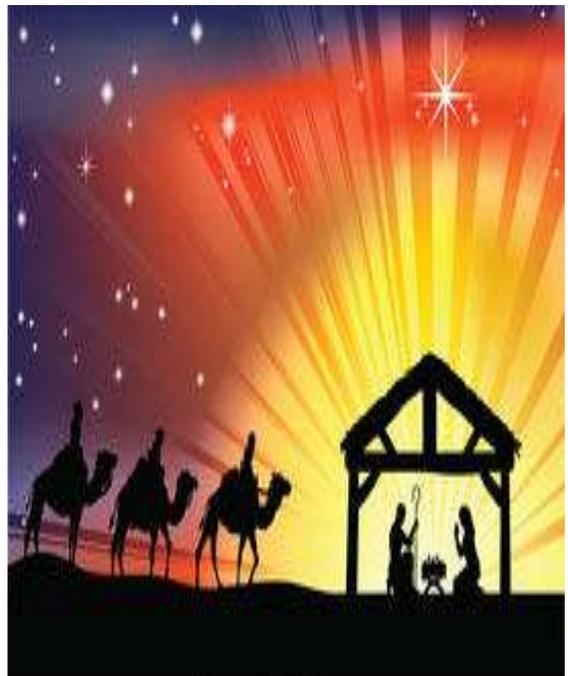
He did not wait till hearts were pure.
In joy he came to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.
To a world like ours, of anguished shame
he came, and his Light would not go out.

He came to a world which did not mesh,
to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.
In the mystery of the Word made Flesh
The Maker of the stars was born.

We cannot wait till the world is sane
to raise our songs with joyful voice,
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,
He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!

Advent Blessings,

Pastor Elva



Following is the summary of the church council meeting that took place on Sunday November 10, 2019 following worship. The full minutes of the meeting are posted in Fellowship Hall.

SUMMARY OF CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING November 10, 2019

- A quorum of 8 council members were present
- REPORTS
- Treasurer: Report for October 2019 Reviewed and filed
- Building & Grounds and Christian Formation: No Report
- Clerk: Minutes of 10/13/19 council meeting submitted
- Deacons: Making plans for holiday services, and reports from Pastor Elva regarding her activities during the month
- Music: Joyce Carpenter-Henderson, Music Director will do another presentation on the workings of the organ. The previous presentation was very interesting. Organ maintenance was done on 11/9/19. She is still working with other churches regarding youth helping with jazz concert in the Spring
- Pastor: Pastor Elva is still working on Safe Church policy which usually would include a key policy. The key policy has been put aside until a future date and she will proceed with Child and Youth Protection Policy. There is an Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service scheduled for 7:00pm on Tues. 11/26/19 at Holy Spirit Episcopal Church, Sutton. Bring nonperishable food item for Millbury and Sutton food pantries. Three UCC conferences have joined to form Southern New England Conference, of which we are a part. The 2020 budget to be presented at next Annual Meeting will include \$100 for the UCC conference.
- Missions: White Gift service is Sunday 12/15/19, we will purchase gifts for 5 children from Elmwood St. School, and \$10 gift cards from Goretto's for Senior Center. Bring fresh veggies for 11/24/19 altar display to be donated to food pantries for Thanksgiving meals after service.
- Turkey Raffle: Friday 11/22/19 at Senior Center 6:30pm. Start bringing prize donations to the church.
- NEXT MEETING: - No meeting in December 2019 due to event conflicts on Sundays after church. Next Council meeting will be Sunday January 12, 2020 after worship.

Submitted by Karen Bickford, Clerk
First Congregational Church Millbury

**The moments when you have really lived are the moments when
you have done things in the spirit of love.**

~Henry Drummond

A Christmas Message About Stewardship

'Tis the season of giving and remembering all the church means to us and to the community. In late November, a letter was sent to First Church members and friends, as part of our stewardship ministry, requesting help in supporting the work of the church by making a pledge. In the spirit of Christmas cheer, we offer this follow-up stewardship message with a playful spin:

'Tis Advent season in the First Church house.

The office computer is whirring, even the mouse.

The church is concerned over budget matters indeed.

And wonder why a balanced budget seems an impossibility.

We have no power to stop the rising fixed costs.

And cannot put the bills in the trash to be tossed.

So help is needed from those near and far.

For Church is not just a building, but who we are.

When we stoop to help others, we are never so tall.

Please listen to your inner voice and answer our call.

Our appreciation of members and friends will never cease.

And we wish you great joy, fulfillment and peace.

winter is coming and snow may fall.

May you have the most blessed Christmas season of all!

If you received a pledge card, please fill it out and return it to the church in the mail, or by putting it in the offering plate during worship. If you did not receive a pledge card, please speak to one of the Deacons or take a card from the rack in the back of the sanctuary. Thank you!

SAVE THE DATE FUNDRAISER SATURDAY JANUARY 25, at 1:00 PM

Sue Dion will return to Millbury First Church for an Acrylic Painting Class in Fellowship Hall. As usual all materials will be provided along with free refreshments.



Watch the local papers, Facebook and our website for additional details.

SNOW CANCELLATION From Pastor Elva

If a Sunday worship service has to be cancelled because of inclement weather, notice will be put on the answering machine message you hear when you call the church.

Cancellation notice will be posted on WCVB TV Channel 5.





9th Dirk Enthoven
20th Amy Peterson
24th Karen O'Donnell

Remember our shut-ins with a note or a card.....

Mrs. Charlotte Stockwell
Auburn Life Care
Auburn, Ma 01501

Mr. Jay Stockwell
110 Hartness Road
Sutton, MA 01590

Chris Rudge
8 Carlstrom Lane
Millbury, Ma 01527

Bill Crandell
Care One at Millbury
312 Millbury Ave
Millbury, Ma 01527



Prayers & Concerns

- † Our Community
- † Our Country
- † Our World
- † All Military Men and Women
- † All First Responders
- † Our Church and our Ministry
in Millbury and beyond
- † Ron Stead's sister in law
Kathie Stead
- † Bill Crandell and family on
the death of Marilyn on
October 25th

Graces Garments

As winter approaches please remember Graces Garments if you have any gently used winter clothes, coats, boots that you no longer wear. They are always in need of clothes especially with the change of seasons. Graces Garments greatly appreciates all donations.



Knitting/Crocheting

Our knitting/crocheting/looming group will be wrapping up another year of working on projects for Elmwood St. School children, the babies at Visitation House and the homeless people that attend Worcester Fellowship.



We Are Thankful

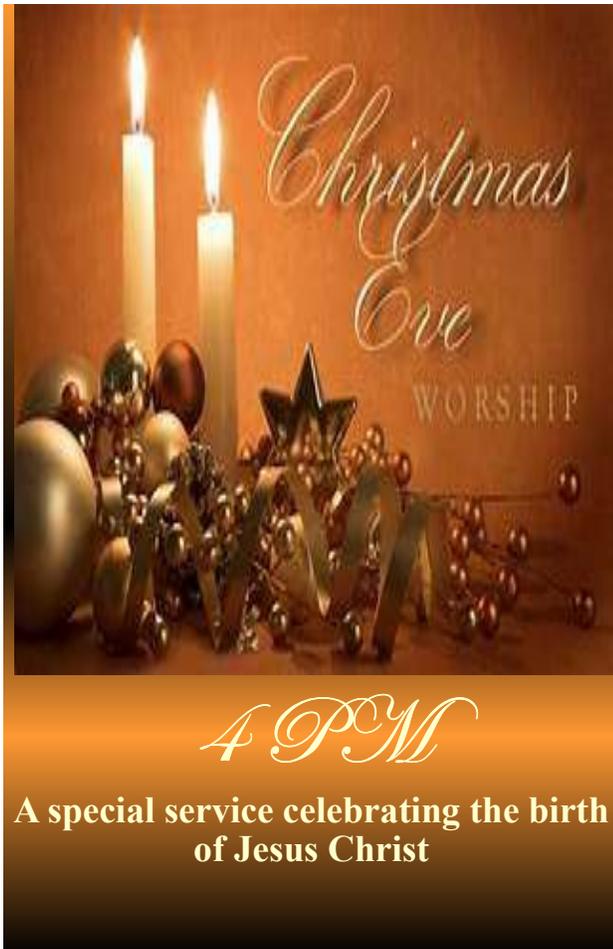
Our Turkey Raffle was a Great Success and we are thankful for that. So many wonderful people pitched in to help us out. When you see Judy O'Connor please thank her for inviting us back to the Senior Center. The Center is a perfect location for our event and the people of Millbury feel so welcome there.

We are fortunate to have wonderful news outlets to spread the details of our event, especially the Millbury Sutton Chronicle. They repeated our advertisement week after week throughout the town.

We are grateful to our church members, friends, and businesses for providing a wonderful array of raffle items that were organized in an inviting way. It was so kind of Ray's True Value and Goretta's Market to allow our ticket sellers to set up tables to sell tickets during the weeks prior to the Raffle. We thank those who helped us set up and clean up after the event.

We are especially thankful to those who attended the Turkey Raffle and are so grateful to the Girl Scouts in Troup 64669 who were our Runners again this year. They were full of energy and helped Leah Murphy, our great MC, move things along. Deanna & Michael Murray, along with the help of Justin Murphy ran the Snack Bar and kept us fed and hydrated throughout the evening.

Everyone who worked or contributed in any way helped us raise money for the needs of our church, as well as to allow us to continue our mission work. The total proceeds from the event were \$ 5755!



White Gift Service on December 15th

Our Church will be providing gifts for 5 children at Elmwood St. School who are in need. We will also be providing Gorette gift cards to the Millbury Senior Center for those in need that visit the center. The children's wishes will be listed on tags and there will be tags for Gorette gift cards hanging on the Christmas Tree at the back of the sanctuary. Please choose a tag for a gift you would like to provide and wrap in white tissue paper and write child's number on gift and attach tag and bring to it to White Gift service. I will deliver all gifts to Elmwood St School. There will be a basket for the Gorette gift cards and Jeri will deliver those to the senior center. Thank you in advance for your continued support and generosity of the white gift service.



POINSETTA FLOWERS ORDER FORM

Order by no later than December 11th

Mail check payable to

First Congregational Church

mail to Deanna Murray, 14 Stowe Rd. , Millbury, Ma. 01527 or e-mail forms to murrayapplegang@aol.com

For any questions contact Deanna Murray at 508-865-6069.

Please place my order for _____ poinsettia plant(s) at \$12.50, _____ to be delivered to the First Congregational Church of Millbury and displayed on Christmas Sunday.

Given in Memory of _____

Given in Celebration of _____

Name _____

Address _____

Amount Enclosed

**First Congregational Church
of Millbury, UCC**

148 West Main Street
Millbury, MA 01527

Address Correction Requested



Worship and Church School: 10:00 a.m.
Church Phone: 508-865-9737
Email: Millbury1stChurch@gmail.com
Web: <http://millburyfirstchurch.com>



**Resolve to
make a
difference
in someone's life!**



To add an event, please
email
Millbury1stchurch@gmail.com

Remember to check us out
on Facebook. See all the
photos. It's a great way to
introduce your friends to our
Friendly Church on the Hill.

The Beacon

Deadline for **January**
December 15th. The BEACON
is distributed by email or first
class mail. It can also be
downloaded from the church
website. Copies are available at
the back of the sanctuary.



2019