

**St. Paul's Church of Palmer
Universalist-Unitarian**

Box 307, 1060 Central Street
Palmer, MA 01069-0307

January 2010

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NEWSLETTER

There will be NO service at St. Paul's on the first Sundays of January, February, and March. Instead, we will carpool from our church for a VISIT to the Amherst UU church on Jan. 3rd; a VISIT to the Monson UU church on Feb. 7th; and a visit to be announced for March 7th.

CHURCH CALENDAR

Services are at 10 AM
Fellowship Hall

Jan . 3 Visiting the UU church in Amherst. Carpooling at 8:45 from St. Paul's
Jan. 10 Rev. Jon Rehmus
Jan. 17 Rev. Jon Rehmus
Jan. 24 Rev. Bill Baughan
Jan. 31 Craig Nowak, Student Minister

*** Coffee Hour immediately following the Sunday Service in Fellowship Hall. ***

Dear Friends,

It is hard to believe it but 2010 is upon us! As I was preparing to write this message for all of you I began to think of the excitement that often accompanies our various holidays and celebrations...the thrill of anticipation, the planning and preparations, the gathering of friends and family, and then finally, the holiday itself. But what happens when the party ends and everyone goes back home?

I remember when I was a child I didn't like New Year's Day very much because it signaled the end of Christmas vacation from school. I loved that time off from school, which always seemed so much longer than the seven or eight days it really was. The days immediately before Christmas were exciting and magical and then Christmas, well, that was just about the best day of year. The days after Christmas were spent playing with new gifts, or more likely, the boxes the gifts came in (boxes made really great forts!) And then came January 1st and with it the end of another Christmas season.

Now, as an adult, I know that New Year's Day is, in some sense, really the beginning of Christmas, a time to begin what African-American theologian Howard Thurman called "The Work of Christmas."

When the sound of angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost.
to heal the broken
to feed the hungry
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart. – Howard Thurman

Thurman's words remind us that while Christmas is indeed a season of hope, each new year is the time we are given to translate that hope into reality. As we pass the threshold from 2009 to 2010, let us be mindful that New Year's is not the end of Christmas, but the beginning. May it be so.

Happy New Year!
Blessings and joy, *Craig*

Coffee Hour

Terry King has been working tirelessly in the kitchen every Sunday getting the goodies ready for coffee hour. A big "Thank You!" to her for all her help.

Anniversaries and Birthdays

Jan. 5	Mark France	Jan. 25	Rick Dunderdale
	Steve Lisk	Jan. 27	Jane Alois
Jan. 9	Taia Lee	Jan. 29	Mary Papineau
	Victorinah Harvey	Jan. 31	Jerome Torrell
Jan. 11	Maurice & Virginia Tierney		Charles Thompson
Jan. 17	Sharane Tierney		Kaitlin Rathbone
Jan. 22	Larry & Holly Boulanger		

Food Share

It's a new year! Many people are struggling between putting food on the table, or paying a bill. Our friends need our help! Please feel free to place your non-perishable items in the Food Share box, located near the coat closet in Fellowship Hall. Palmer Food Share at 39 Walnut St. is open on Tuesday and Friday from 10 am to 11:30 am. Those in need must register prior to receiving food, and then are eligible to receive food every 3 months. If you choose, you can send monetary donations to Food Share, 39 Walnut Street, Palmer 01069.

Church Greeters

Gordon and Irene Christiansen and Verna Besaw have graciously offered to be greeters on Sundays. If you would like to also greet, you can call the church office at 283-8185.

Community Meals

The Community Meals are held on the 4th Saturday of each month. If you would like to help out you can give Barbara Stone a call at 413-283-5257. If you would like to donate a food item or make a monetary contribution, you can also let Barbara know. The January meal will be held on **Saturday, January 23**, beginning at 5:00 pm.

FYI

St. Paul's former minister, Rev. Gordon B. McKeeman and his wife Phyllis McKeeman recently celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary. Their address: 1550 Pantops Mountain Place #113, Charlottesville, VA 22911-8828. Reverend and Mrs. McKeeman came to St. Paul's in 1956. Besides promoting church activities, Mr. McKeeman was active in denominational concerns. He was known as an outstanding preacher.

The Fall Church Fair, the "Double or Nothing" couples club, the lobster dinners, and the parish dinners were successful enterprises encouraged by Mr. McKeeman's ministry. He was an active Rotarian and Mason, and he and Phyllis were deeply involved with scouting while they were in Palmer. He also worked with Gordon R. Stone in the formation of a DeMolay chapter and served as chaplain. Besides the merger of the Universalist Church of America and the American Unitarian Association into the Unitarian Universalist Association in 1961, the most memorable event during Gordon McKeeman's ministry was the construction of Fellowship House. It began in 1957 when the Hitchcock property, a two-family house on the corner of Converse and Central Streets, was purchased by the church. Plans were drawn for the addition of a meeting hall, and work began in the summer of 1960. Again, many members gave generously of time and effort to make the project a reality. In the basement of the expanded building, three classrooms, a children's chapel, library, nursery, and kindergarten were constructed. The chapel organ was donated by Esther B. Griswold. On the first floor, the assembly hall with stage, a kitchen, the pastor's study, the ladies' parlor, and the conference room were constructed. Upstairs rooms from the original property were left to be used for classrooms. After a successful ministry here, Gordon McKeeman left Palmer in 1961 to accept the pastorate at the First Universalist Church of Akron, Ohio.

The alter was absolutely beautiful during the holiday season ! Thanks to all of you folks who contributed a poinsettia to make it that way.

Poinsettias Given By:

Joan Allen.....in memory of Ken & Helen Marcy
Verna Besawin memory of Hollis and James Corey
Gordon & Irene Christiansen.....in memory of the Christiansen and Les Families
Harriot Henrichon.....in memory of Ed and Diane Henrichon
Peri Murdock.....in honor of the three Dorothys
Bonny Rathbone & family.....in memory of Laurence & Evelyn McLean and the Pierce Family
Barbara Stone.....in memory of the Bissell and Stone Families
Barbara & Dan Windoloski.....in memory of Andy & Fran Fulton
Bonny Rathbone, Barbara Windoloski & families.....in memory of Myrtle Fulton, Madelyn Masson and Barbara Branford

Thanks to those who helped with our lay-led Christmas Eve Service: ----

Readers:

Art Alois; Verna Besaw; Jane Alois; Peggy Corriveau; Robin Boulanger;
Terry King; Gordon Christiansen

Music:

Barbara Stone; Bob Faulkner; Rob Faulkner

Ushers/ Candlelighters:

June Bacon; Harriot Henrichon

Decorations:

Barbara Stone; Gordon Christiansen; Bob Faulkner

The October letter sent out by the Trustees, asking for donations to our Capital Fund has brought in \$ 8,055.95 as of Dec. 15th. We thank you for your support, and the results of our expenditures this year on various projects are showing nicely. Contributions to the Capital Fund are still welcome.

Thanks in advance to Rick Dunderdale who will be clearing our sidewalks this winter again. Snow blowing and shoveling a "city block" is no small job ! Speaking of SNOW—if church needs to be cancelled due to a snow storm, Channel 22 television will be the station to watch for that information.

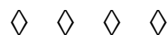
Bob Faulkner has been asked -- "How are the new furnaces working? Are we saving much fuel?" The answers are: It is much, much better with the three new boilers and six programmable thermostats. We are still learning how to best set the thermostats. The fuel savings are significant. By Annual Meeting time in June he will have a detailed report.

Re-installation of the nine restored stained glass windows is delayed until January due to some of the work crew having the flu !

Installation of the new two-sided lawn sign along Park St./ Rt. 20 has been completed. If you haven't done so, take a drive by and tell us what you think.

Daisy Scouts are meeting in Fellowship House on a weekly basis.

* Sunday services will be moved from the sanctuary to Fellowship Hall in order to save fuel again this winter. **December 27th to March 21st**, inclusive, are the dates the services will be in Fellowship Hall.



I always do my exercises regularly in the morning. Immediately after waking I sternly say to myself, "Ready, now. Up. Down. Up. Down." And after two strenuous minutes I tell myself, "Okay, now try the other eyelid."

