

DEERING COMMUNITY CHURCH

NEWSLETTER

Pastor's Corner

November / December 2010



Christmas: the Light Shines in the Darkness

One of the lovely things about living in the country, far from the lights of the city, is our ability to see the stars. As any of you know who practice star-

watching, the stars shine the brightest in the darkest night. If you like to light candles, you know that the candlelight is barely visible in the sunshine; yet in the darkness of the early morning, or during the night, the candlelight shines in a way that lights up its surroundings.

Did you know that the date chosen for Christmas is the darkest time of the year when the days are the shortest? John Shea, a Roman Catholic priest and one of my favorite authors, wrote an article called, "Have a Defiant Christmas!" In that article he reminisces about how as a boy he and his family left their city home every Christmas season and went to the suburbs to see the "lights". One year when he returned home, he noticed the tree lights shining from his second floor flat and realized that Christmas is not about light. It is more accurately about light in the darkness or as John's gospel says, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:5) In other words, the light defies the darkness and takes it away.

When Jesus was born, he was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid tenderly in a manger. Jesus was the beloved child of God. His earthly parents, Mary and Joseph, also showed by their care of him how beloved he was to them; however, the world rejected him. He was not given a proper room in the inn in which to be born. The world into which he was born was not hospitable to him. The old man Simeon warned Mary (Luke 2:33-35) that Jesus would be opposed and that a sword would pierce her

heart. So Jesus was beloved and yet there was rejection; again, there was a defiance of the darkness through the love and care given to Jesus.

For any of you who read a newspaper, watch the evening news, reflect on your own worsening economic condition, or observe the people around you, you know that there is a tremendous amount of darkness this year. For those of you who are concerned about immigrants and refugees, you know there is great inhospitality in this nation and in many places around the world. We also know there is so much grief related to the losses experienced by the

wars we have been fighting. If we are going to experience the HOPE and JOY of Christmas, we will need to defy these things. How can we celebrate when there is so much pain? Besides the global and national problems, you or someone close to you may be experiencing health problems. Your finances may not be as good as usual. Most of us do not have the money to have the kind of Christmas we are used to. Maybe for some of you there are relationship problems with a spouse, a child, a neighbor, a parent. What do we do—postpone Christmas; wait till the world around us is in better shape? Or will you join me in defying any and all of the darkness that is trying to shut out the light of



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Pastor's corner

the birth of our Jesus? How do we do it?

A few newsletters ago, I encouraged you to go deep within, where we become aware of our soul very much united to God, the Divine. In that place within, we can defy the things that make for difficulties this Christmas season. With God's help we can defy all the things that try to keep us down when our lives are not exactly as we want them to be. That HOPE and JOY of Christmas may come from outside things such as visiting with relatives, helping those less fortunate, giving or receiving a special present, cooking a lovely meal for those we love. Yet we all know how often the above don't go well, even in the best of times. The inside nurturing of HOPE and JOY in your soul can produce much different feelings and experiences. Vaclav Havel, a political prisoner for many years, says this about hope: "{Hope} is a dimension of the soul, and it's not essentially dependent on some particular

observation of the world or estimate of the situation... It is an orientation of the spirit, an orientation of the heart..." He sees hope as something we get from elsewhere, something transcendental.

As Christians we may do well, like Mary, to ponder in our hearts and minds both the story of Christmas and our own stories. Possibly we will change our perception if we ponder the deep truth of the season, if we defy all those things that make this year's Christmas difficult. I invite you to reflect on the meaning of Jesus' birth—as busy as you are. Maybe you'll have to do it in the shower or in that long grocery line. It is possible to find the light to dispel the darkness. Be awake and ready! The angel will come to the shepherds and to you with good news and a light, which will cause the glory of God to shine all around. May you all be blessed. I thank God for you.

Adult Education

Pastor Barbara

In our small church, it is difficult to get a large group of adults to come out for Bible Study or some other form of Christian Ed. We have had some very interesting and well-attended book studies over the years, however, most folks don't want to come except right after church on Sundays. I would like to offer several different Adult Classes or events in 2011. I plan to make a list to distribute to you all, probably in January. It's not possible to hold these events or classes only after worship on Sundays. I hope we will be able to give another time and day a trial run.

ADVENT SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

I have found a very interesting book called, *While We Wait: Living the Questions of Advent* by Mary Lou Redding. I would like to suggest meeting for four or five weeks starting on Tuesday, November 30th at 4 pm. The weekly meetings would last from 45 minutes to an hour. The reading of a chapter would take less than 20 minutes. The sessions would require reading the material the week before,

so the books would be available on November 21 and people would have to sign up by November 7th or buy their own books.

This book has an opportunity for Bible readings, daily reflections, and journaling as well as the teaching and practicing of breath prayers. These daily assignments would deepen your Advent experience, but are not required for you to be part of the group discussion. The Biblical characters are not all the ones in the familiar Christmas stories. The first chapter, "Living in Hope: What will you give me?" discusses Tamar, Rahab, and Ruth. In chapter 4, "Wrestling with Mystery: How Can This Be?", Mary's story is discussed.

All adults are welcomed to be part of this group. The class will proceed as long as there are at least three people signed up. If anyone outside of the Deering Community Church would be interested in joining us, please know that you are welcome. See me for questions or to take a look at the book.

Moderator's Musings

Stephen Waters

It's Fall – and again October in New Hampshire doesn't disappoint. The colors, ever changing, brightening and fading, against a clear blue sky, with a crispness in the air that simply makes one glad to be alive. Visitors stop to click our church into their cameras or phones, capturing the picture of idyllic New England to take back home.

Along with this season comes the call to reassess our commitment to the church we love so well, to determine what value we place on the relationships enjoyed here and the work that comes from these walls. So often we become so consumed by the need to make ends meet that we may forget the essence – the real purpose for the Deering Community Church.

At our monthly Council meeting the basics came through in one of the more vibrant sessions we have

experienced. Freed of the usual worry-laden discussions with the church's finances, folks expressed their hopes for what could be. How can the Guild perpetuate its level of giving to the community? How many more need the life-giving support of the Deacon's Fund? How can we begin to tackle the problem of homelessness right here in our town? How can our young people become more directly involved in working on these problems? What more needs to be done that we might be able to do?

The tone of the evening was one of spirited uplift. Yes, we recognized the importance of preserving the four walls, but the focus was on understanding problems that we might address. For those of us who are assaulted by financial realities, this session was a reminder of what we are about -- a source of renewed faith.

WSO

Jeanne Bartlett

CHRISTMAS CARDS NEEDED FOR WOMEN'S PRISON

The World Service and Outreach committee seeks your help in meeting this need once again for the 2010 holiday season. Rev. Richeson's heartfelt message follows. Her message clearly puts out a face of true compassion as we enter the season of Advent. We will need your contribution of cards by December 19. Please! Contact person for any further questions you may have is: Jeanne Bartlett 529-2540 milsite4@comcast.net

Thank you and your committee for the Christmas Cards for the women. They mean so much-- to know that they are not forgotten. I was visiting with

one woman this past week and the Mother's Day card from the Deering Community Church proudly sits on her desk--alone...

Re: The rules are:

no stickers or glued-on items

they can include inspirational words/scripture

you can sign first names and/or Deering Community Church

if you could provide around 150 that would be enough for each woman and the staff---

Rev. Beth Richeson, Chaplain

November 21st Cheese Sale Fund Raiser

The Glauners

Come One, Come All: At 11:30 on Sunday, November 21st, we will be selling off the last 20# block of cheese that was saved from the Summer Fair. Also, any remaining jars of jams and jellies will be featured for sale. The cheese and jams are wonderful additions to our holiday festivities. Also, raffle tickets will be offered for sale on the lovely **dollhouse fund raiser**. The drawing for that dollhouse is scheduled for Sunday, December 12th, so buy your chances for a wonderful Christmas gift for someone!

DOLLHOUSE RAFFLE FUND RAISER



This beautiful large wooden handmade dollhouse, started in the 1980's by Stuart Huggard, was donated by him for a church fund-raising effort. Further work has been done on it during the year. It has been wallpapered, is electrified with some working lights, and contains some furnishings of its period. It has a complete kitchen, bathroom and several pieces in other rooms. Raffle tickets are \$5.00 each or five for \$20 with the drawing on December 12th, in time for a holiday winner. To purchase tickets contact Stuart Huggard, 9 Reservoir Rd, Deering, NH 03244 or the Deering Community Church.

Guild Gleanings

Barbara Glauner

Once the Summer Fair was over, Guild members settled back into their regular routine of noontime meetings the first Wednesday of each month. We have had enjoyable lunches together, laughing and talking about all manner of things. Our November and December business meetings will take up voting on the new slate of officers for 2011 as well as making budget decisions for next year. By December, we will take some time off for a holiday luncheon at a restaurant in the area. It has been a great year and we are looking forward to 2011.

We are always looking for new members and invite other ladies to consider joining the group at noon with your lunch. Beverages and a cake are provided by the hostess of the month. Our monthly luncheon and following business meeting last about two hours in total. Please come, sample a meeting, and see what we are about!

WSO

Jeanne Bartlett

Here is a picture of Prosper Begedou and his bride Anna Kiba. Now I know where Togo, Africa is. Prosper was a guest in our home when the Fullbright Scholars were visiting in Deering last June. Wanting to be prepared, we looked up the name of his country and came up with "Toga", which is a garment that one wears. This was soon straightened out as we poured over our World Atlas. It is a learning experience to entertain these visitors when Donald Johnson brings them to Deering, where they get to experience rural New England town life. In return, we get to experience a stranger from another country, in our case, another continent. Prosper has kept in touch with us, forwarding a photo of himself and fellow colleagues in NYC enjoying our baseball. See his photo on the church bulletin board. He is the one in yellow on the right. He continued to email us and entreat us to pray for him and his fiancée as the date for their wedding approached in October. He even asked Bud and me for advice, since we have recently celebrated our sixtieth wedding anniversary. Our church congregation bent heads in prayer for them during "joys and concerns" on October 3, 2010. I am pleased at the willingness of our congregation to pray for people known and unknown.



Stewardship News

Cynthia Ward & Lee Marcroft

Everything Has a Season

Everything has a season, and so we embark on our fall and winter period with the return to school, resumption of Sunday School, fall foliage and farmers' markets, picking out pumpkins and tying up corn stalks, this year's holiday dollhouse raffle and our annual stewardship campaign.

While we plan for the work of the church, our missions, our outreach to the community and our future, we also prepare the budget. Knowing how our church family plans to financially support the

church will provide the foundation for the 2011 budget.

Your pledges and contributions are only the *financial* outpouring of love for the Deering Community Church. Through your faithfulness, you bring the church many more gifts and talents. Join us in celebrating another year in the life of our church and assist in planning for the promise of a stabile future.

The Stewardship committee invites you to make this a truly fruitful harvest season.

Sunday School News

Chris Nase

Thank you to all who have volunteered to help this year with Sunday School. We are off to a great start!

Recently, the children took some beautiful pictures of creation. They are looking for any other contributions you may have to offer. The pictures are on display in Sherwood Hall.



Do you need an extra hand with household chores? Could you use help with raking leaves, bringing in wood, bringing things up to the attic, or digging your garden in the spring? If the answer is "yes" then contact one of the Sunday School children. They would like to help.



Ruthie Robinson informed us that her Girl Scout troop is collecting toiletries for homeless children and their families. There will be a box at church to place the items. Please ask Ruthie for more information.

Community Thanksgiving Service

Pastor Barbara

The Deering-Hillsboro Ministerium is excited about the annual community Thanksgiving service on November 21 at 7 pm. This year we are especially thankful that St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Hillsboro has offered to host the event. St. Mary's is located at 38 Church Street.

As we did last year, a large number of different choral groups will present musical offerings. We also anticipate a large choir from the different churches singing together. We will have prayers, hymns, scripture and a message of thanksgiving. ALL ARE INVITED. The Ministerium includes Smith Memorial Church, UCC, the Hillsboro United Methodist Church, the Deering Community Church, UCC, and St. Mary's Catholic Church. People with no church affiliation are warmly invited to join us.

We ask that you bring a donation of food and/or money for the local Food Pantry. Also if you wish, bring some snacks for us to share after the service. Happy Thanksgiving!

Chicken Barbecue

After scheduling delays, the seventh annual Deering Community Church free Chicken Barbecue was held for residents on September 18th from 1 to 3 pm at the Rod and Gun Club facilities. It was a cloudy and cool day, but there were an estimated 60 attendees with a larger than usual number of people from outside our church. As you can see from the photos of the day, the food was plentiful and outstanding. Enjoy the photos taken by Christine Marcroft and Betty Dishong.

Glauner, Marcroft & Dishong



Musical Notes

Barbara Glauner

SEPTEMBER 12TH AFTERNOON PIANO RECITAL



Sunday afternoon at 3 pm, many of us were treated to an enjoyable two-hour concert given by Shizue Sano, faculty member at the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, MA. She has won many awards in competitions. She is active in solo and chamber music performances, and has organized and performed successful concert series over the years in the US, Europe and Japan. She played Chopin and Schumann selections along with Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata, and spoke about each selection and the lives of the three contemporary composers.

Finally she played an encore melody by Anton Rubenstein. Afterward, refreshments were served in Sherwood Hall, where she chatted with the audience members. Her CD recording of Chopin's 24 preludes on the Japan Victor label was offered for sale. She commented favorably on the wonderful piano we have in our church and how much she enjoyed playing it. She hopes to come back to this area of the world next year for a concert. We will look forward to that in Weare or possibly again in Deering. For further information about her, look at the page 6 article of the September- October 2010 church newsletter.



Other NOTES of interest

Jane Waters & Barbara Glauner

On **October 3rd**, we were treated to the musical talents of the Prices. Beverly Rollins, the daughter of Charlotte and Glenn Price, played the postlude with Jane Waters, Sicilienne by J. S. Bach for piano four hands. She also played piano accompaniment to Jane's lovely singing during the offertory.



On **October 29th** there was a community hymn sing at Smith Church with a dessert potluck reception following.

Mark your calendars!

November 5th, we will be treated to a concert starting at 7 pm in our church. Our former guest

organist, Michael Lianos, will be playing the organ and piano, with Lily Haley on the clarinet. They will play works by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Saint-Saens and Vierne. Don't miss this wonderful treat!

November 21st, the choir will participate in the Ecumenical Community Thanksgiving Service at St. Mary's church in Hillsboro at 7 pm. See Pastor Barbara's article about the service and music in this newsletter on page 5. If you went to the service held at our church last year, you will appreciate this service and glorious musical offering.

December 19th is our Christmas Vespers, this year featuring African-American spirituals. It starts at 5 pm, followed by a reception.

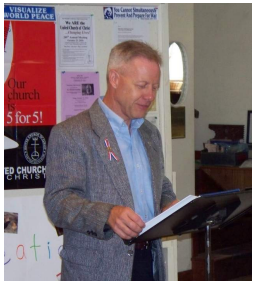
December 24th is our Christmas Eve Service and Carol Sing at 5 pm.

ALL ARE WELCOME !

October Forums

Don Johnson

Barry Nilson offers a new way of thinking about justice.



Imagine being able to support a system of justice that would ensure that victims of crimes were looked after, released prisoners would be less likely to repeat their crimes, tax payers' money would be saved and the sense of community

strengthened. That is the vision Barry Nilson offered at the Deering Church forum on October 3rd. Mr. Nilson, who has devoted many years to prison reform, especially in the area of sentencing, explained that he and his supporters want to see a new system of "restorative" alternatives to jail sentences introduced in New Hampshire. This plan grew out of his experience working for many years in the Prison Fellowship Program, an initiative begun by Chuck Colson, who earlier had been incarcerated for his participation in the Watergate cover-up.

According to Nilson's proposal, instead of sending convicted prisoners to jail, sentencing judges could send them to a community board with the power to recommend sentences that would help the prisoners make restitution for their crimes and restore the sense of community those crimes had broken. After

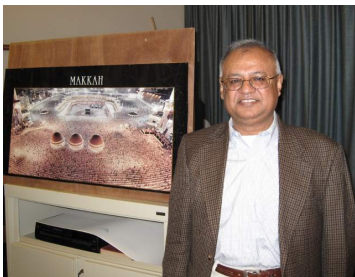
taking full responsibility for his or her actions, a convicted prisoner might sincerely work to repay the victim in cash installments, speak to community groups about the crime and why she or he committed it, and/or work on community service projects on their way to becoming productive citizens.

Nilson has already founded the Community Justice Partnership as part of the Emmaus Institute in Nashua and he has testified before the New Hampshire legislature. He bases his restorative justice plan on what he calls Biblical Justice. Instead of focusing on punishment and retribution, he wants to involve those who are good candidates for rehabilitation to serve their sentences in a variety of projects all aimed at rehabilitation rather than incarceration in a jail.

There was much interest on the part of those who attended this talk. The World Service Committee has involved the church in a program at the Goffstown Women's Prison for several years and Mr. Nilson's vision seemed to offer a possible way the church could extend their prison initiative. The Committee hopes to follow up on Mr. Nilson's exciting innovation in the months ahead. For more information or to share your reactions to this initiative, please speak with Pastor Barbara and/or members of the World Service committee.

Islam, A Misunderstood Religion

Barbara Glauner



On October 24th at 11:30 am, the WSC sponsored our second forum, arranged by Don Johnson. Dr. Mahboubul Hassan, President of the Islamic Society of Greater Manchester and Professor at Southern New Hampshire University, presented a program on Islam in America, sponsored by the New Hampshire Humanities Council. There were about 35 people present, some of whom traveled from Bow, Antrim and Hancock to hear him speak. Dr. Hassan was raised in Bangladesh and moved with his wife to this country in the 1980's for graduate study. For his talk, he drew on his personal experience with

Americans and their attitudes toward Muslims both before and after 9/11. He tried to help us understand one of the world's great religions, with over 1.2 billion world-wide followers and some 7 million American Muslims, of which 3,500 live in NH. He said a Muslim believes in one god, Allah, and teachings of Muhammad, the Last Messenger, just as Christians believe in one God and follow the teachings of Jesus. There are different schools or political divisions of Islam, such as Sunnis, Shiites, Sufism and (see pg. 9)

For Your Information

Food Pantries

We continue to collect alternating weekly donations of non-perishable food for the Food Pantries. Starting November 7 and December 5, donations go to Weare with alternating weeks to Hillsboro.

Weare: Donations of all types of food and personal care products are sorely needed.

Hillsboro: There is need for small cans of meat for **November**, such as ham, tuna, chicken, etc., and diapers for babies for **December**, but each week you're welcome to bring whatever food or personal-care items you have. The Food Pantry is still in need of large brown paper bags.

Cash donations are always welcome. Please make checks payable to Deering Community Church and note "Food Pantry" on the memo line. Periodically, accumulated cash donations are divided and half is sent to each of the above food pantries.

Food Pantry donations are part of our outreach program to help others less fortunate. Please help if you can. **THANK YOU !**
Suzanne Huggard,
Financial Secretary



NOVEMBER

Hope Thomas, Nov 13

Barbara Glauner, Nov. 18

Kathryn Daniels, Nov. 26

Jane Waters, Nov 27

DECEMBER

Christine Marcroft, Dec 5

Marjorie Bryce, Dec 8

Kate Kelly, Dec. 12

Andrea Ramirez, Dec 25

*Happy
Anniversary*

DECEMBER

Cynthia Ward

Robert Fuller

Dec. 24th



Forum, ISLAM continued

Al-Wahabi, just as there are different groups of Christians, such as Protestants, Baptists, and Catholics. A common thread of Islam and other religions is to unite people and bring peace. Muslims should be humble; do good to others; learn ethics and morality from their family values taught at home, and always be truthful in what they say. Flexibility of thought is the key to good things and success with others. They are accountable personally for their own actions, which are not a reflection of their religious beliefs, and must atone for their behavior on earth on the Day of the Judgment. After his talk, the audience asked questions about Islam, being a Muslim, and some of its practices. They asked why there is the variety of clothing worn by women in various places, why they pray five times a day and how that came about, what do they believe happens after death? At 1 pm, the talk ended, but Dr. Hassan stayed for more questions from attendees who chatted with him afterward. A booklet was handed out to all called "Understanding Islam and the Muslims" along with a handout from the Islamic Society of Greater Manchester about Islam, A Misunderstood Religion, which laid out the differences between Judaism, Christianity and Islam. It was a very interesting program.

November 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Election Day 9 am Yoga	3 Noon—Guild 7 pm Deacons	4 7 pm Choir	5 7 pm Classical Music Concert Michael Lianos & Lily Haley	6 7 am Breakfast & Workday Turn clocks back one hour by 2 am Sunday morning
	7 9 am Choir 10 am Worship & Communion Deacon's Fund Offering Food Pantry gifts CE Standard Time begins	8	9 9 am Yoga 7 pm Council	10 7 pm World Service & Outreach	11 Veterans Day 7 pm Choir	12 13
14 9 am Choir 10 am Worship Food Pantry Gifts, CE	15	16 9 am Yoga	17 7 pm Trustees	18 7 pm Choir	19	20
21 9 am Choir 10 am Worship Food Pantry Gifts, CE , Cheese Sale 11:30 PFLAG 3 pm Ministerium Service 7 pm	22	23 9 am Yoga	24	25 Thanksgiving Day	26	27
28 9 am Choir 10 am Worship Food Pantry Gifts, no CE	29	30 9 am Yoga				

December 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7 pm Deacons	2 7 pm Choir	3	4 7 am Breakfast & Workday
5 9 am Choir 10 am Worship & Communion Deacon's Fund Offering, Food Pantry, CE	6	7 9 am Yoga	8 7 pm World Service & Outreach	9 7 pm Choir	10	11
12 9 am Choir 10 am Worship Food Pantry Gifts & CE	13 Newsletter Deadline	14 9 am Yoga 7 pm Council	15 Guild - luncheon out—noon 7 pm Trustees	16 7 pm Choir	17	18
19 9 am Choir 10 am Worship Children's Pageant Food Pantry 3 pm PFLAG 5 pm Vespers & Reception after	20	21 9 am Yoga	22	23 7 pm Choir	24 Christmas Eve Service & Carol Sing, 5 pm	25 Christmas Day 
26 9 am Choir 10 am Worship Food Pantry Gifts, CE	27	28 9 am Yoga	29	30 7 pm Choir	31 New Year's Eve 	

**Deering Community Church
United Church Of Christ
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Deering, NH 03244
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We're on The Web
deeringcommunitychurch.org



PEACE CORNER Martin Luther King's "Nonviolence Pledge"

In a recent publication of SoJomail's weekly email ezine, Jim Wallis, founder of Sojourners suggested we tell the Democrats, Republicans, and the Tea Party that what we want from them all is truth and civility as we get ready for elections. Wallis says, "As I watch the degeneration of political rhetoric in campaign ads and cable television, and think about our Truth and Civility Election Watch, Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Nonviolence Pledge" reminds me why this is all so important."

1. As you prepare to march, meditate on the life and teachings of Jesus.
2. Remember the nonviolent movement seeks justice and reconciliation -- not victory.
3. Walk and talk in the manner of love; for God is love.
4. Pray daily to be used by God that all men and women might be free.
5. Sacrifice personal wishes that all might be free.
6. Observe with friends and foes the ordinary rules of courtesy.
7. Perform regular service for others and the world.
8. Refrain from violence of fist, tongue, and heart.
9. Strive to be in good spiritual and bodily health.
10. Follow the directions of the movement leaders and of the captains on demonstrations.

Again I am so thankful for King's and Wallis' leadership. May we all encourage our politicians, whether campaigning or governing, to be mindful that it is possible to disagree without demonizing the other. If we could begin to get along, I believe justice and peace would not be far behind.

Peace, Shalom and Salaam to you all, Pastor Barbara