



Inside this issue:

From the Senior Minister

Calendar	2
ElderSpirit	3
Outdoor Church	4
Birthdays	4
Sunday School	5
Student Minister	5
Mission 1	6
Joys & Concerns	6

Dear Friends,

I wanted to share with you a piece I wrote exactly twenty years ago. I was looking through my old writing, thinking about gathering some of it for publication. This one still fits a lot of my thinking about life. I hope you enjoy it.

She sat, as she very often did when she had company, in her overstuffed chair. Around her were the artifacts gathered over a lifetime, randomly displayed on almost every available surface. The nonchalance of their placement was mirrored in her own appearance. A curious coalition of the haphazard and the attentive, both her environment and her person portrayed an easy alliance between emancipation and carefulness.

That was why I came. At least in part it was. Sarah, now near the end of her life, was a happy person. She was at peace with herself and her world. That sounds so simple-minded, but I don't know a better way to say it. Sarah was a happy person, that despite

more than her share of sorrow. And I wanted to know why or how. How is it that some like Sarah find satisfaction while others in even better circumstance find only discontent or even bitterness?

Her guileless carriage always seemed to invite directness, and so I spoke concisely. "Sarah," I said, "How are you so content? You have experienced a great measure of pain in your life. I'm sure you must have some regrets, things that you'd like to do over, or things you never got to do. I know you are concerned about difficult problems, in our society and in the world, that seem to defy solution. And yet, there's always laughter in your eyes. How do you do that?"

Her eyes laughed even louder, and she said mischievously, "Why, I thought you knew; I learned it on the way out of Egypt." She had caught me, and I had almost finished saying, "I didn't even know you had ever been to Egypt," when I recognized her meaning. And she cut me off to save my embarrassment, "Well, we've all been to Egypt, haven't we, pastor?" I nodded

and knew I would be saying no more



**All-church pot luck
October 30, following worship**

Coming Up

Sunday, October 2

Acolyte, Anthony
Childcare, Neldy MacKinnon
11:00am Rev. Rose

Wednesday, October 5

ElderSpirit

Sunday, October 9

Acolyte, Zach
Childcare, Cheryl Spada
Sandwiches for Outdoor Church
11:00am Vanessa Colesworthy

Monday, October 10

Columbus Day

Sunday, October 16

Acolyte, Kai
Childcare, Fellingiers
10:40am Hymn Sing
11:00am Rev. Rose

Sunday, October 23

Acolyte, Matthew
Childcare, Sherrie Galante
11:00am Rev. Rose

Sunday, October 30

Acolyte, Alexis
Childcare, Shelley Scruggs
Pot-luck
11:00am Rev. Rose

Monday, October 31

Halloween

Wednesday, November 2

ElderSpirit

Sunday, November 6

Daylight Saving Time Ends
11:00am Rev. Rose

Tuesday, November 8

Election Day

Friday, November 11

Veterans Day

Sunday, November 13

Sandwiches for Outdoor Church
11:00am Rev. O'Brien

Sunday, November 20

Bake Sale
10:40am Hymn Sing
11:00am Rev. Rose

Thursday, November 24

Thanksgiving

Sunday, November 27

First Sunday Advent
11:00am Tom Hathaway/Vanessa Colesworthy

Sunday, December 4

Greening
11:00am Rev. Rose

Wednesday, December 7

ElderSpirit

Sunday, December 11

Christmas Pageant
Sandwiches for Outdoor Church
11:00am Rev. Rose

Sunday, December 18

10:40am Hymn Sing
11:00am Rev. Rose

Saturday, December 24

Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 25

Christmas
11:00am Rev. Rose

Saturday, December 31

New Year's Eve



for awhile.

She continued, "I think all of life is lot like the Israelites coming out of Egypt. I mean, first of all, nothing ever stays the same. You have to leave a place. And no one really likes doing that; it always feels unsafe and unfamiliar. God knew that. God worried right from the beginning that the people would change their mind and want to go back. In fact, they tried to several times. Remember how they shrieked at Moses even at the start, 'Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness?'" No one likes change; people think they're going to die. But of course, what God wanted to deliver them from was the real death of staying put. You can spend a whole lifetime trying to make things stay the same, or trying to return to the way things were. It won't work, and you die a little more each day in the attempt.

"That's the first thing I learned on my way out of Egypt: things don't stay put. I suppose it's the obvious lesson, but it's not too easy to digest even so.

"But you know, it's fascinating to me that the carrot to get the people to move out of Egypt was the Promised Land. I hope you don't find this too sacrilegious, pastor, but if I read the story right the Promised Land was a crock. I mean, look at the facts. They were in the wilderness for a long, long time. Many of them, including Moses, died before they ever reached Canaan. When they got there, the land was occupied. There was no milk and honey. And even at its zenith, David's so-called empire wasn't much bigger than New England, and it didn't even last two generations. That doesn't seem much like a promised land to me.

"And that's the most important thing I learned on my way out of Egypt. One belief that's fatal is that you can stay in Egypt and make time stand still. But another, just as deadly, is that you can get to the Promised Land. Wanting things to stay the same and wanting to get to paradise sound like opposites, but they have a lot in common. They both want you to believe that if you do it just right--one says, recapture the good old days, the other says, work your way to the promised land--they both say if you do it just right, everything will be perfect.

"Then everybody gets all mixed up. They keep trying to go in one direction or another to make things alright, all the time assuming that the wilderness they're in is just some temporary chaos or some parody of life they are passing through on the way to the real thing. They think they ought to go back to Egypt or forward to the Promised Land. And they don't pay much attention to the wilderness. Truth is, and what I learned on my way out of Egypt is that the wilderness is where most of the real living takes place.

Sarah continued, now slowly, "I think many people are afraid of that. The wilderness is kind of unpredictable. It's always in motion. And God knows it's certainly blemished. But you know what? It's also very beautiful. In all its disorderliness, even in all its sorrow and struggle, it is magnificent.

"I suppose my secret, if I have one, is that there is only discontent in trying to recover Egypt or in aspiring to get to the Promised Land. But ironically, if you give the wilderness, this life we have, a chance, right in the middle of the tumult, you may find gladness and delight. At least I have, pastor," she concluded.

We exchanged a little more conversation, and tea, as I recall. But what I remember most is that I left Sarah's house aware that I was somehow different for the time I had spent there, the time I had spent learning about the way out of Egypt.

Grace and peace,
Dudley

ElderSpirit ~ November 2, 11:30

We'll be brown-bagging it again (looking forward to a hot dinner in December!) and reading aloud some of our favorite short-stories or poems. You needn't read the whole piece, or read at all, if you choose, but you can still bring something you'd like to share. Also, we'll be swapping our seldom-used cookbooks. Most of us have a few we never use. Bring some if you have too many; take home whatever looks tempting.

Visit the Outdoor Church on Facebook



A couple weeks back it was announced that the Outdoor Church has a new Facebook page. To many that may seem like a very strange concept – why on earth would a church among chronically homeless men and women need to have a profile on Facebook? The answer hits to the very heart of the Outdoor Church's ministry.

Because it is a church without walls, the Outdoor Church exists only in the interaction between its ministers and its congregation. Yes, there are services every Sunday. But when the service is over, no visible sign is left behind to indicate that a church was there at all. In other words, the Outdoor Church exists only inside of relationship, the relationship between its congregants with each other and the relationship between the Outdoor Church's ministers and its congregants.

In order to build and maintain these relationships with the chronically homeless, the Outdoor Church's ongoing ministry depends also on its relationships with the congregations and individuals who support it with material and financial donations. Because there is no concrete, tangible way to interact with the Church outside of Sunday services, it is often hard for our supporters to stay involved on a day-to-day basis. By creating a Facebook profile we are able to provide news and updates to those interested to provide greater engagement with the Church's ministry. In the end, Facebook is just another way of supporting the Outdoor Church's relationship with those who support its ministry. If you want to stay connected with the Outdoor Church's ministry with Facebook, find us by typing "the Outdoor Church of Cambridge" into the Facebook search box and then click "like" on the Outdoor Church's profile page. We're looking forward to being your friend.

Tom Hathaway

Executive Director, the Outdoor Church



OCTOBER

- 1-Ariana Spada**
- 4-Debbie Nevers**
- Sherry Galante**
- 6-Bruce MacKinnon**
- 8-Penny Light**
- 12-Deb Bears**
- 16-Neldy MacKinnon**
- 17-Michael Mitchell**
- 22-Agnes MacDonald**
- 23-Bryce Sady**

If we've left out your birthday, please call or email the office.

Sunday School Schedule

Greetings NPU families! We are shaping up for another good year of Sunday School and childcare. Per Laurie's (who was in charge of our childcare last year) advice, we are making some changes to the way we do childcare. Each week we are asking for one parent volunteer to be downstairs in addition to the childcare person. With this extra set of hands in the room getting the little ones to the bathroom or back upstairs to their parents won't be such a challenge. And, once we finish trouble-shooting our speaker system, those in the childcare room will be able to hear the service upstairs so they won't have to miss the service! Below you will find a tentative schedule for October. Please let me know if these dates won't work for you.

	<i>Childcare</i>	<i>Acolyte</i>
October 2	Neldy MacKinnon	Anthony
October 9	Cheryl Spada	Zak
October 16	Fellingiers	Kai
October 23	Sherry Galante	Matthew
October 30	Shelley Scruggs	Alexis

Many thanks to you all. I hope I see you all on Sunday.

Blessings,

Tom



From Our Student Minister

I come from Yarmouth, ME, the oldest of five children. I've been a member of First Parish Congregational Church in Yarmouth most of my life and participated in the Diaconate, hand bell choirs, and stewardship committees. I went to undergrad at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland and now am going to Harvard Divinity School pursuing ordination in the UCC. At Harvard, I am currently working as a chaplain in the Massachusetts Department of Correction, leading the student UCC group, and participating in a new group on ordination for women in all traditions. I love to sail, ski, and spend time with my fiancé Brian and his three boys, Jace (age 5), and Kobe and Kaden (twins, three). We also recently got a Boston terrier puppy, Tyson, who is making our lives even more interesting! Here at North Prospect Union I will be teaching Sunday school, participating in worship, preaching on occasion, and learning more about how parish ministry works. So far the church has been a wonderful, warm, and welcoming place, and I look forward to getting to know all of you in the upcoming months!

Blessings,

Vanessa Colesworthy

Take a Bite out of Hunger

What is Mission 1? One United Church on a shared mission for 11 powerful days to feed the hungry and confront food-related injustice. It is the opportunity to make real Jesus's prayer for his disciples: That all may be one. It is also an opportunity to live out our faith - in unity - by offering the worship that God most desires from us, loosening the bonds of injustice and sharing our bread with the hungry. The staggering facts compel us to act with compassion and to be voices for justice. 925,000,000 people suffer from chronic hunger worldwide, nearly 90 million higher than just ten years ago. In the US alone, 50.2 million people, including *17,200,000 children*, are food insecure. They aren't certain where the next meal is coming from, or they don't have the wherewithal to provide food for themselves and their families on a regular basis. We can be God's instruments of change!

For the first 11 days of November, UCC congregations, colleges, seminaries, and health and human service agencies will join together in a collective mission campaign to collect more than one million items for local food banks, raise \$111,111 in online donations for Neighbors in Need, the same amount for East Africa famine relief, and write 111,111 letters to congress asking that US foreign assistance be reformed to more effectively serve the world's poorest people.

What can you do in eleven days?

Forego restaurants and take-out, if possible. Then calculate what you've saved and donate it.

Skip the expensive cheese or wine, or buy a lesser cut of meat, and use the money to purchase non-perishable food for the local pantry.

Call a local pantry to see if it needs your services.

Volunteer at a hot meals program.

Write a letter to your US senators and representative.

Eliminate the unhealthy snacks and donate the money.

Any more ideas? Contact the office and we'll put them in the November newsletter. Food and checks (or cash in a marked envelope) will be distributed by NPU to the local pantries.

Joys & Concerns

Jerry Rockwood has moved to a new health care facility to continue rehab following last summer's car accident. He's in Natick, not so convenient to visit for family and friends, but has a phone and would love to hear from you. He's walking more, working on his crafts, doing some writing. Peggy Rice is also bouncing back following her surgery. Contact information for both is on the bulletin board. Others in the congregation have relatives and friends who are battling illness, job loss and other distresses. Please keep them all in your prayers.