



Good News

North Prospect Union UCC

Volume 29, Issue: January-February 2012

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From the Student Minister

Dear Friends,

Winter is not one of my favorite seasons. It certainly has aspects that I enjoy; Christmas, skiing, being warm inside reading a book under a blanket with my puppy, but often I find myself waiting for the bus with whipping winds, standing ankle high in dirty freezing slush and dancing around impatiently waiting for the dog to do his business as the cold air pierces my lungs. My fiancé Brian often jokes that I am a warm blooded animal and that I don't adapt well to the cold, despite my being born in Maine. Probably the most uttered expression I use during the winter is, "it's not just cold, it's **wicked** cold!"

Most of the bible takes place in warm climates where they didn't have to deal with these issues and yet we still have references to winter in Scripture such as in Psalm 147: 12-18:

"Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion!...He gives snow like wool; He scatters the frost like ashes. He casts forth His ice as fragments, who can stand before His cold? He sends forth His word and melts them. He causes His wind to blow and the waters to flow."

After reading this, I was struck by the fact that winter is a season that has a beauty unique to itself and one that not everyone in the world

gets to enjoy. This passage also reminded me of the great beauty found in God's creation. While I may begrudge the cold temperatures and dry air, there is something wonderfully uplifting in the design of a snowflake and in the totally unblemished blanket of snow sparkling in the sun after a heavy snowfall. For me, remembering to appreciate these small and deliciously complicated details of the winter reminds me to be grateful. Grateful for a warm home, kids and dogs to mess up that wonderful pristine snow and grateful to be a part of God's blessed creation. As we go forth in this winter season, I invite you to take the time to notice these wonderful parts of winter. The next time I am cursing the horribly cold weather, I will attempt to remember the blessed parts of this winter and encourage you to do the same. So pile on all those layers and step outside into the snow, the cold, and breathe in the wonderful winter air! Enjoy the season, friends, as we continue to celebrate the coming of God's son into the world, bringing light to these dark wintry months.

Blessings to all and warm wishes this winter season,

Vanessa



Ash Wednesday Service followed by soup and sandwiches.

February 22 ~ 6:00pm

Coming Up

Wednesday, February 1

ElderSpirit

Thursday, February 2

Groundhog Day

Sunday, February 5

11:00am Rev. Rose

12:30pm Council Meeting

Sunday, February 12

Sandwiches for Outdoor Church

Lincoln's Birthday

11:00am Vanessa Colesworthy

12:30pm Study Group-Year Living Biblically

Tuesday, February 14

Valentine's Day

Sunday, February 19

10:40am Hymn Sing

11:00am Rev. Rose

12:30pm Study Group-Year Living Biblically

Monday, February 20

Presidents Day

Wednesday, February 22

Ash Wednesday

6:00pm Ash Wed Service & Supper

Sunday, February 26

11:00am Rev. Rose

Saturday, March 3

Staff Retreat

Sunday, March 4

11:00am Rev. Rose

Wednesday, March 7

ElderSpirit

Sunday, March 11

Sandwiches for Outdoor Church

Daylight Saving Time Begins

11:00am Rev. Rose

Saturday, March 17

St. Patrick's Day

Sunday, March 18

10:40am Hymn Sing

11:00am Rev. O'Brien

Sunday, March 25

11:00am Rev. Rose

Sunday, April 1

Palm Sunday

April Fool's Day

11:00am Tom Hathaway

Wednesday, April 4

ElderSpirit

Thursday, April 5

Maundy Thursday

Friday, April 6

Good Friday

Sunday, April 8

Easter Sunday

Sandwiches for Outdoor Church

11:00am Rev. Rose

Sunday, April 15

10:40am Hymn Sing

11:00am Rev. Rose

Sunday, April 22

Earth Day

11:00am Rev. Rose

Sunday, April 29

11:00am Rev. Rose

Wednesday, May 2, 2012

ElderSpirit

Saturday, May 5, 2012

Cinco de Mayo

Sunday, May 6, 2012

10:40am Hymn Sing

11:00am Rev. Rose

ELDERSPIRIT

WEDNESDAY ~ FEBRUARY 1 ~ 11:30

Coffee and catching-up, followed by brown-bag lunch and discussion. Dessert provided.

COUNCIL MEETING

SUNDAY ~ FEBRUARY 5 ~ 12:15

All are welcome to attend.



ECUMENICAL LENTEN CARBON FAST

(from Jim Antel, Conference Minister and President of the MACUCC)

For hundreds of years, Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of a time when Christians engage in spiritual disciplines involving repentance, fasting, prayer, study and works of love. Living as we are at a time when our actions - along with the actions of only a few generations - have threatened creation as we know it by the excessive burning of fossil fuel, it is fitting to engage in a spiritual discipline of fasting from carbon.

Here at North Prospect Union, Rebecca Ramsay and Penny Light will be leading our efforts and keeping us on track. We are urged to sign up for emails which will be sent daily during Lent. Suggestions of where we might “give up” carbon usage will be accompanied where possible by an accounting of how much we’re saving our environment. Sign up by February 22 at [macucc.org/carbon fast](http://macucc.org/carbon%20fast).

Spiritual Formation Retreat ~ February 17-18

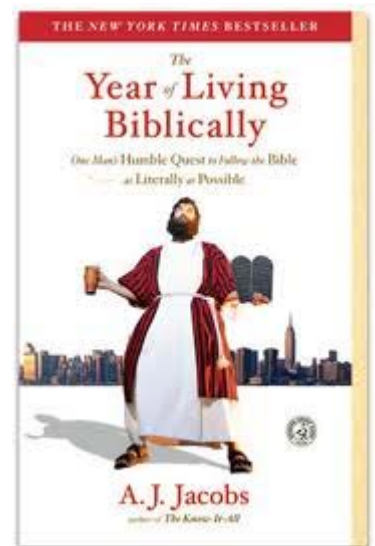
The Massachusetts Conference of the UCC is sponsoring a Christian spiritual formation retreat at its guest house in Framingham. Entitled, *Filling Your Cup: Thin Places*, the retreat offers nourishment for the soul for people in all stages on the spiritual path. It runs from Friday evening at 7:00 through Saturday afternoon and costs \$65, plus \$25 if you stay overnight on the premises. Register online at www.macucc.org/registrations/register/79 or speak with Barbara this week.

Ordination ~ Jasmine Beach-Ferrara ~ February 19

Our former student minister, Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, contacted us with an invitation to her ordination which will take place at Hope Central Church in Jamaica Plain. She will continue her work with the Campaign for Southern Equality, a national effort to assert the full humanity of LGBT people in American life, and to increase support for their rights. There's a great video on YouTube, which you can also view from the CSE Facebook page: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IvjzOSD2E2Y&list=UUVV9II17A5ItD84waIsqX0Q&index=1&feature=plcp>

Study Group ~A Year of Living Biblically

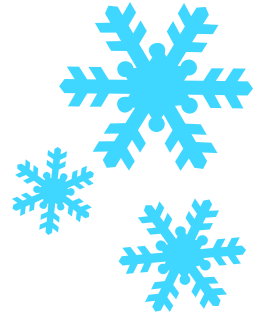
Beginning February 12 after worship, we'll be reading and discussing *The Year of Living Biblically* for our Lenten study group this year. I think we will meet twice or perhaps three times, and, having read the book, I expect the discussion will be lively and fun. The book isn't scholarly, but it's a great account of a regular guy really engaging the Bible, striving with his whole heart to live the way it says we should. The book is available at libraries, or on Nook or Kindle. Eight people have already signed up; it's not too late to add your name to the group.



Christine Parsons

Storm Closings

Big storm? Wondering whether there will be worship? Tune in to WBZ News Radio 1030 AM (that's on your dial, not the time) at :05 or :35 past the hour. Closings will also scroll across the screen at WBZ-TV and be available online at WBZ.com and WBZTV.com.



FEBRUARY

11-KATE ESHELMAN
12-STEPHEN MOYER
18-JENNIE GALANTE
20-SALLY ADDISON
28-PHYLLIS DIXON

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

Joys & Concerns

Leona Graham is back in rehab, following hip surgery. Contact the office for her address or phone number. We know how much Leona loves her church, and hearing from the friends she sees every week would be particularly welcome. Erika Fellingner has had surgery, as has David Galante. John Micco's mother is also recovering from recent surgery. And Shawn Scruggs had a procedure this week. His recovery involves just a few days of taking it easy, fortunately, whereas the others are dealing with pain, crutches, immobility and more. All would appreciate your prayers.

We have learned from Karin Perry of Cliff Heap's death. He and his wife Mary were members of North Street Union for many years.

David Krebs's sister Kathy sent a newsy letter, including a great photo of Dave with his sons, taken at the family farm on Christmas. George at present is in DC working for the FCC, and Adam, after a semester in Germany, will graduate from NYU with a degree in computer science.

We also heard from Nathan Willard who is living in the mountains of North Carolina, enjoying his ministries with new families at a local Episcopal church, and with a Baptist campus group. Beth is teaching at Western Carolina U, and Martha Jane sounds like a delightful two-year-old. Nathan reports that when she is bored during worship, she insists on "reading" the Bible, declining other forms of entertainment!

NORTH PROSPECT UNION UCC

*144 North Street
Medford, MA 02155*

Address Service Requested

*Phone: (781) 396-8435
E-mail: office@northprospectchurch.org
www.northprospectchurch.org*

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