



December  
2010

# Herald of Good TIDINGS

*“Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah,*

## Advent Schedule

Nov. 28<sup>th</sup>  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent  
Worship Service at 10 a.m.

Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent  
Communion Sunday with  
Deacons’ offering  
& food pantry 10 a.m.

Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent  
Cantata during Service 10 a.m.



Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent  
(Cantata Snow Date)  
Worship Service 10 a.m.

Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>  
Christmas Eve  
5 p.m. Family Service  
11 p.m. Candlelight  
Communion Service

~ All Are Welcome ~

Also in December we’ll be having our **“Parents’ Night Out”** on **December 11th** from 5 to 7 p.m.; a **Christmas Potluck and Sing-along** on **December 18th** from 5 to 7 p.m. and our annual **Cookie Walk** during coffee hour on **December 19th**.

### Christmas Fund 2010

Like the magi of old, we can honor the Christ Child by bringing gifts that can be used to support and honor those who have served and are serving our beloved Church. Gifts to the Christmas Fund will help Veterans of the Cross, who dedicated their lives to the ministry of the church in their years of active service.

Gifts to the Christmas Fund provide resources for the Emergency Fund, which offers assistance to those who serve the church today. Gifts to the Christmas

Fund help provide Pension and Health Premium Supplementation to lower -income retirees and Christmas “Thank You” Gift Checks to hundreds of annuitants. The offering is an expression of joy and gratitude to, and for, those who serve the church.



The 2009 Christmas Fund received \$1,504,420 providing assistance to nearly 1,600 families during 2010.

Your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose low income annuities make it difficult to meet increased living costs. You’ll find an offering envelope enclosed in this month’s *Tidings*. Please return it to the church, and thank you for your generosity.

**Heifer International's Celebration of Living Gifts**

December 11th and 12th 11 a.m. -- 4 p.m.

At Heifer International Learning Center, Overlook Farm, 216 Wachusett Street  
Rutland, MA 01543 Tel: 508-886-5002

What do you buy the person who has everything? How about a goat, a llama or a water buffalo? At **Heifer International's Celebration of Living Gifts**, learn how sponsoring animals like these can provide food and income for hungry families. You get a handsome card to give and a hungry family receives hope for a better future. Take pictures with the animals and purchase gifts from around the world in our fair trade Shop@Heifer. Enjoy hot cocoa and cider, make gingerbread animal cookies and warm yourself by a bonfire. **Admission:** Canned goods which will be donated to a local food bank. Last year we collected over 450 pounds of canned goods!

**SPIRIT SUPPERS - ALL ARE WELCOME**

The Spirit potluck suppers are back!!! We will be having these casual times of fellowship every 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month. In an effort to try to accommodate people's schedules, we are open to having these suppers on an evening that works best for the most amount of people. So, if another evening fits your schedule better, please let us know! For more information, please contact Cindy Ryan at 508-832-3416 or Nan Johnson at 508-832-5128.

**Christmas Blessing Bows – Instead of Poinsettias**

This Christmas season we will be placing ribbons on two wreaths at the front of the sanctuary to lift up the names of people who have blessed our lives and the life of our church. To place a bow on the wreath and give thanks for a special person, a free will offering is requested. These funds will be given to the Outreach Committee to disperse to those in need. We hope you will join us by participating in this new way of thanking God for loved ones during this joyous season while helping those in need. As in the past, those names lifted up will be recognized in the holiday bulletin. Thank you all for your input in revising our tradition while still celebrating and thanking God for the gift of friends and family. Merry Christmas!

Your name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Please **PRINT** name(s) as they should appear in bulletin insert.

Bow requested by \_\_\_\_\_

Please place a bow on the wreath in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

or in honor or celebration of \_\_\_\_\_

### When Christmas is not Christmas

It is barely a week before Thanksgiving, and already the “seasonal” aisles at the local drugstore are filled with Christmas candy, cards, stuffed animals and Santas. The “seasonal” aisle is a ubiquitous place, aptly named, in which the wares du jour are hawked. The merchandise on parade moves relentlessly, without interruption, from Halloween to Christmas to Valentine’s Day, to Mothers’ Day to... etc. As they say, it is “seasonal.”

We love to give gifts at Christmas, and we like to receive them. But we of the Church must confess, first of all, that culture Christmas and the Church’s Christmas are not the same. The dates are not even the same. Culture Christmas, or Commercial Christmas, we might call it, ends on December 24 when the last lights go down at the shopping mall and the cash registers clang closed for the final time. Just when culture Christmas finishes, Christmas in the Church begins, and we have the next 12 days to celebrate the Real McCoy.

During the time when culture Christmas roars on with its relentless jangle, we have another and different spiritual time to celebrate: The Season of Advent - a time of quiet, not noise; a time of reflection, not frenzy; a time to remember, not forget where we put the shopping list; a time to savor the sweet anticipation, not curse the endless tasks demanding to be done.

For some, perhaps for too many, Advent is a time of sorrow, not joy. The remembering brings sadness and the anticipation is dread, not hope. Looking forward means seeing a bleak and empty darkness instead of the abundant promise of God.

I remember an old man on a cane who used to negotiate the stairs slowly in a church I once served as he came up from the A.A. meeting in the lower hall. I would ask, “How are you?” “Splendid,” he would say, and then he would add, “If I can open my eyes in the morning, it is a wonderful day; if I can’t, then I have nothing more to worry about...” He was not a member of the church. I never knew his name. But I sensed that he had fought the battle of faith more often than many of us, and had won the battle more often than most.

I pray an Advent season of peace and promise for each and all. The foundation of that Promise is the Incarnate Christ, both a mystery and a gift beyond compare.

- Pastor Duke

#### FROM THE TRUSTEES

All Committee budget requests are due immediately.  
Also, there will be no December church supper. Please pass the word.

#### Coffee Hour Hosts:

12/5 & 12 ~ Nominating/Scholarship  
12/19 & 26 ~ Deacons  
1/2 ~ Trustees

On September 6, 2010 Karyn Slomski lost her battle with cancer. Karyn was a Here We Grow parent and served on the HWG Board. She leaves her husband, Jeff, her son, Brendan, a former HWG student and her 4-year-old daughter, Maggie, who currently attends HWG. The preschool and Here We Grow Board are organizing a fundraiser to help this family in practical ways during this very difficult time.

They are requesting gift certificates to the Slomski’s favorite establishments. Suggestions include: Shaw’s, BJ’s Wholesale, Old Navy, Sears, Toys R Us, 99 Restaurant, The Red Robin Restaurant and Friendly’s Restaurant. We know these cards will be a blessing to this precious family and will serve as a reminder that others are thinking of them. (Please leave any donations in the church office.)

Thank you!

#### CRADLE ROLL ATTENDANTS

12/5 Jennifer Bohn                      12/12 Cindy Dube                      12/19 Diane Moore  
12/26 Bessie Morgan                      1/2 Kay Shapter & Devon Orcutt



A CHRISTMAS CANTATA

FEATURING: The First Church Choir  
THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUBURN

Sunday, December 12th, 2010 10 a.m.

'Born a Savior, Born A King' by John Purifoy

- I Born a Savior, Born a King
- II Deliver Us, Lord!
- III Prepare the Way
- IV Carols of the Angels
- V He Is Born Now the Prince of Peace
- VI Christmas Benediction
- VII Born a Savior, Born a King Reprise

Minister of Music: Heather Moore

The Cantata Singers

Soprano I  
Lori Stockhaus  
Pam Tentor

Soprano II  
Shantelle Anderson  
Sue Klaucke  
Linda Mahlert

Altos  
Lisa Cove  
Darshan Mahlert  
Debbie Mahlert

Baritones  
Alex Brownell  
Ron Hanks  
Gordon Mahlert

**Trumpet** - Rolph Holly  
**Narrator** - Pastor Duke Gray



**The Nominating Committee** would like to thank everyone who has stepped up to the plate sharing their time and talents for various committees over the next three years. This is not a commitment to be taken lightly and we appreciate your servitude toward the Lord and First Congregational Church.

With that said, there are committees requiring more volunteer talent in order to meet with the requirements set forth in our Church's by-laws. The most critical of those is the Board of Deacons. We all know the role and level of involvement the Deacons play in the life of the church, not only during the course of a normal week and on Sundays, but even more so as our Christian holidays approach. At press time, we still have (7) open slots to fill on this board – (2) open slots for a 1-year term ending 2011, (4) open slots for a 2-year term ending 2012 and (1) more open slot for a 3-year term ending 2013. Are you ready for the rewards and spiritual growth you will experience being a part of this team? If so, please see Pat or Michele!

As for the other Boards/Committees of our church, the returning members on each board or committee for the upcoming year 2011 will be as follows:

| Board/Committee Name (By-law # of members) | Remaining members |
|--|-------------------|
| Board of Education (9)                     | 4                 |
| Board of Outreach (6)                      | 2                 |
| Board of Trustees (9)                      | 3                 |
| Memorial (3)                               | 2                 |
| Music (6)                                  | 3                 |
| Nominating (3)                             | 1                 |
| Scholarship (3)                            | 2                 |
| Stewardship (6)                            | 2                 |

As you can see by the above illustration, all of our boards or committees have a great need of additional members/support; some, more so than others.

The Lord gave each one of us many talents in order that we can serve Him....and we all understand the busyness of our secular lives, but also need to pray long and hard about how we can grow in our spiritual lives by volunteering on one of the above boards or committees to help support the future growth of our church.

Are you ready to share your time and talents? If so, please see either Pat or Michele to find out more about how you can help serve on one of the above Boards or Committees.

We are waiting to talk with you.

In His Love,

Your Nominating Committee: Michele Schillinger (Chair) and Pat Bukoski

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### **Marjorie A. (Stone) Tucker**

Marjorie A. (Stone) Smith Tucker, 89, of Auburn, died Sat., Nov. 27, 2010 at the Life Care Center of Auburn, following an illness. Her husband of 19 years, George N. Tucker died in 2007. She leaves her two children, Kenneth I. Smith of Auburn and Stephen C. Smith of Maynard; her brother, Roy F. Stone of Wilton, NH; her sister, Phyllis Hardy of Auburn; her four grandchildren, and three great grandchildren; her former husband, Gerald I. Smith of Auburn; as well as many nieces and nephews (including Debbie Pranaitis and Linda Hardy). She was predeceased by her two brothers, Chester and Howard "Bud" Stone. Marjorie was born in Auburn, daughter of the late Clifton and Mary E. (Freeland) Stone and lived here all of her life. She graduated from Auburn High School, and the Hahnemann Hospital School of Nursing. She was a member of our Church, and a lifetime member of the Auburn Grange. The funeral was held on Tuesday, Nov. 30th at Britton-Wallace Funeral Home, with burial at Hillside Cemetery, Auburn.

*"I am the resurrection and the Life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies." John 11:25*





### *Happy Holidays from Here We Grow\_Preschool*

The children and staff are preparing for the holiday season and the time off it will provide. I am hoping that once we are gone for the holidays, it will give everyone time to get over the colds, sore throats and fevers that have been plaguing HWG for the past few months. Moving on to the events which took place in November; the children of *Here We Grow* learned about the first Thanksgiving and the act of giving to others. They had the opportunity to bring in food items for the Giving Basket. Denise and Judy were kind enough to sort the foods donated to families in need.

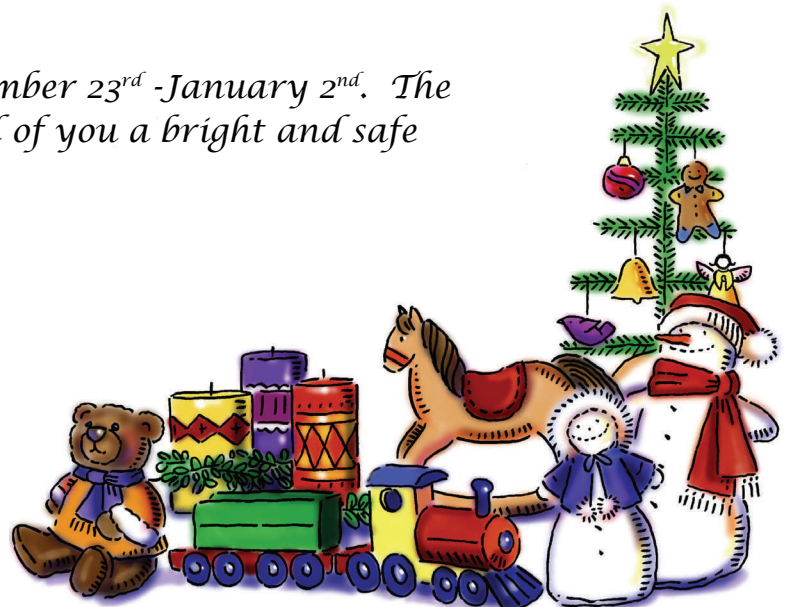
We celebrated our Thanksgiving feasts on Monday the 22<sup>nd</sup> with the 4 year old children and on Tuesday the 23<sup>rd</sup> with the 3 year old children. Both days went well with a lot of help from our parent volunteers. Our appetizer was cornbread which was made by the 3 year olds, a friendship fruit salad and dip, cold meats, cheese and crackers, and for dessert brownies which were made by the 4 year olds topped by cool whip. A big thank you to our helpers (you know who you are) for their help with carrying the tables and chairs to the vestry and then returning them to the classrooms.

With plans well on the way, the children went from Thanksgiving to preparing for our winter holiday programs. During the month of December, *Here We Grow* will once again participate in the Marines' "Toys for Tots" Campaign. The holiday programs will be on December 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. A tradition we have had is that the 4 year old children will sign and sing Happy Birthday to Baby Jesus. The children are eagerly awaiting the arrival of Santa. As of this writing I still have to call the North Pole and hopefully book him for our party days. So Santa Bob M., I'll be calling you soon.

The school will be closed from December 23<sup>rd</sup> -January 2<sup>nd</sup>. The *Here We Grow* staff and families wish all of you a bright and safe holiday season.

Until 2011, Happy Holidays to all.

Dawn Murphy  
Director,  
*Here We Grow* Preschool



## Library Tidings

As I write, there are still a few days left to make preparations for Thanksgiving dinner when we'll celebrate the many blessings God has gifted to us in 2010. That word—gift—enters our mind often as we listen to the radio, open the newspaper or receive hints or help from family and friends. It also makes us think of all of the wonderful gifts that church members and others have given to the library through the years. There's probably nothing on this week's bestseller list, but we do have a great selection of Christmas reading for everyone who walks through the portals of the First Congregational Church of Auburn.

In hopes it will be an eye catcher as well as offer a sentimental, humorous or pleasant thought, we're presenting a list of Christmas books, their author and the name of their "giftor." CODE: C = Children A = Adult

- C. *Christmas* by Jan Pienkowski - large print, the King James Version with pictures - Nan Johnson
  - A. *The Christmas Tree* by Julie Salamon - "I'm not a sentimental man, but when I saw her standing there, under the Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center, I started to cry." - Maybelle Stone
  - C. *Christmas and the House Gnome* by Sven Nordquist, from their Swedish exchange student, Maria 1973-1974 - Ted and Phyllis Hardy
  - A. *A Christmas Promise* by Thomas Kinkade and Katherine Spencer - a minister who runs a mission in Central America travels to the warm hearted village of Cape Light to spend time with Rev. Ben — interesting episodes - Cindy Ryan
  - C. *The Polar Express* by Chris Van Allsburg - After the town had gone to sleep on Christmas Eve a boy boards a mysterious train headed for the North Pole. Upon arrival, Santa asks the boy which one gift he would most like and he chooses a bell. A mystery ensues. - Peggy Smith
  - A. *The Woodcutter's Christmas* by Brad Kessler - every year on Christmas Eve, the woodcutter repacks the leftover Christmas trees from his traditional sale spot in New York City and drives his truck back to Vermont. One year passes, and then several more without the woodcutter, the scent of balsam and the colored lights appearing. Then a family of summer vacationers' memories are jogged as they pass the woodcutter's home. They stop. The cabin is isolated and here begins the answer to a lovely tale. - Charlotte Steffen
  - C. *The Gift of Christmas* by Philemon Sturgis is filled with entertaining and warm pictures of all sorts of holiday sights, sounds, sweets, gifts, trimmings and more. Underlying all of this is the spirit of peace and goodwill, hope and love, the real gift of Christmas. - Judith Dufault who made precious gifts to the Children's Library in memory of her parents and in honor of each of her two granddaughters
- All of these books would love to be borrowed.

Chances are slim that we've caught half of those that qualify, so don't hesitate to give us a slip of paper with the above information on it, and we'll publish it in the January *Tidings* if you'd like. We still have other gifts to "announce." Most of all, speaking for the congregation, LOVING THANKS FOR THE MANY PRESENTS you all have made to the libraries from 2010 backwards. May we all sense the PRESENCE of Christ in this Christmas.

As we will be approaching a new beginning in the next *Tidings* (in 2011) please look to YOUR LIBRARY for some inspirational and engaging gems.

May the Star of Bethlehem guide you through the holidays and all of the days of the New Year.

The Library Committee — Jean McPherson, Debbie Pranaitis,  
Charlotte Steffen and Gloria Whitehead

**IMPORTANT ALERT:** When gifting a book to the church library please put your name on a slip of paper inside the book. It saves us several problems. Thanks - we do appreciate your gifts!

*A message from your Stewardship Committee...*

Luke 6:38 reads "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

As of November 22<sup>nd</sup>, we have received approximately 110 pledges for the upcoming year totaling \$116,607. For those of you who have returned your pledge cards, we thank you.

If you have yet to submit your pledge or have not received a pledge card and would like to submit a pledge in support of First Congregational Church of Auburn, we invite you to do so at your earliest convenience. Pledge cards are available at the front of the Sanctuary, in Fellowship Hall, and in the Church Office. Envelopes are also available for your discretion. Remember - pledges can be either credit card submissions processed once a month, or you can receive offertory envelopes and present your pledge during Sunday worship service. Completed pledge cards may be placed in the offering plate during worship service or mailed to the Church Office.

Faith in Action. It is our faith which causes us to examine the purpose for which we manage our money. When our purposes come in line with God's plan, our stewardship becomes a great blessing to God, others, and ourselves.

Again, thank you all for your commitment of First Congregational Church of Auburn. In your prayers, remember to thank our Lord for all that He provides so that we can continue to be faithful to Him.

In His Love,

Your Stewardship Committee:

Michele Schillinger (Chair), Ron Klaucke, Mike Dube, Donna Dube, Linda Hardy

Joyful Noyse Schedule

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| 12/5, 12/12, 12/19 | 11:15 a.m. rehearsal                         |
| 12/24              | 5:00 p.m. Service<br>"Lights of Christmas"   |
| 12/26              | 9:15 a.m. rehearsal<br>"Lights of Christmas" |

St. Joseph's Parish Center  
68 Central Street, Auburn

**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR**

Saturday, December 4th 9 am to 2 pm

Featuring, Baked Goods, Christmas Candy, Holiday Items, Raffles, Handmade Crafts, Jewelry, Attic Treasures and much more. Join us for a cup of coffee and try our homemade chili!



Pictured above is our Pastoral Search Committee hard at work. During this meeting they are utilizing Skype (a free video conferencing program) to interview a candidate via the Internet. New technology such as this aids the committee in the search process while also reducing the costs associated with the search.



### Outreach News

A very Merry Christmas to all! We wish to thank those who are helping us fulfill this year's unusual Christmas request for the Goddard School. If you weren't able to pick up one of the giving cards, this is the information that we added to the backside of each card. Drop off deadline for items is December 5th

*The Goddard Elementary School informational website page states: "The Goddard School of Science and Technology is a large urban school situated in the Main South section of Worcester....Our demographic data tells us that 98% of our families are living below the poverty line. Eighty one percent of our families are minority. Of the 656 students who attend Goddard 530 are second language learners. Many of our families have never had schooling due to the conditions of their homelands. They seek not only refuge from a life of strife but also one of America's greatest promises, free public education for all."*

The gift(s) you have chosen to purchase aren't the kind of Christmas present that's familiar to us; however, even though our gifts aren't jackets this year we, the Outreach Committee, ask that you please understand how your gift will bring comfort and balance when needed. The decision for these requests comes from a school representative that cares very much for these young children.

The Goddard School of Science and Technology is located at 14 Richards Street, Worcester, MA 01603

Results are in from the 'Walk for Hunger' to support Auburn Youth & Family Services and their heavily used food bank. The First Congregational Church brought in a total of \$625.50 and the combined total of all churches was \$5,060.31.

Have some of you wondered how much our church has raised for 'Hope For Housing' grocery funds? I'll be posting that information in the Annual Report so if you'd like to give December a boost in the numbers, stop by after church and purchase a card as a Christmas gift or for your personal use. The store cards available are: Shaw's, Hannaford's, Big Y & Stop & Shop. Each card adds another 5% of the card's face value to the program.

In Love, Hope, Peace & Understanding,  
Sue MacPhee, Outreach Committee Secretary

Christmas arrangements made of fresh greens will once again be available for you to purchase during coffee hour on December 5th and 12th. All the greens are gathered locally, so there is no expense involved.

All monies taken in will be split equally and go towards the Outreach Ark and the church's general fund. When doing your holiday shopping keep these in mind, they make lovely hostess gifts and most will be suitable to use as a table centerpiece.

We enjoy making these and hope you will support this small fundraiser.

Judy Murphy & Cindy Dube



### Happy birthday to:

- Rebecca McPherson ~ Dec. 28th
- Lori-Ann Stockhaus ~ Dec. 28th
- Donald Slongwhite ~ Dec. 30th





December is Safe Toys and Gifts Month. December 1st is World AIDS Day, the 1st-7th is National Aplastic Anemia and MDS Awareness Week, and the 5th -11th is National Hand Washing Awareness Week. Hand washing should be ongoing, especially through the cold and flu season. It is still the best prevention according to the Committee for Disease Control (CDC). The preschool children at Here We Grow sing ABC's or some other song while washing their hands.

It's both educational and healthy!

Flu shots are available if you want one. The H1N1 is included in the one injection, and there are many places to get the protection.

I hope and pray that everyone has a Happy and Healthy Holiday!

Debbie Pranaitis, Parish Nurse

We currently have six young people who have expressed an interest in Confirmation Class. We are looking to start a class in January, if possible. We have the kids, we have many opportunities for service projects right in our area, and we have a budget for any materials that might be useful.

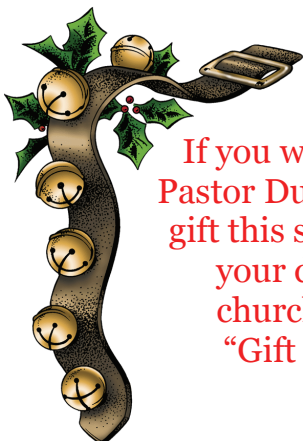
All we need is you! - one or two adults to run a confirmation program. Maybe you have fond recollections of your own confirmation class, or have been inspired by a religious program such as Alpha. If so, here is a wonderful chance to give back by exploring God's word with our kids.

Please give this opportunity your prayerful consideration. And, if you have any interest, please contact a Board of Christian Education member (Jen Bohn, Ellie Lowell, Cindy Dube, Gayle Farley, Ron Hanks, or Marion Woodcock). We'd be happy to answer any questions. Thank you!

Sincerely,

The Board of Christian Education

*Congratulations to the Chirsky/Murray Families on the recent marriage of Andrea Bess Chirsky and Matthew Sean Gautreau. They were wed here on November 6th. Andrea is the daughter of Stephen and Karen Chirsky. Proud grandparents are Bob and Carol Murray.*



**If you would like to honor Pastor Duke with a monetary gift this season, please send your donations to the church with the note: "Gift for the Pastor."**


**Thank you.**

### Fire Alarm Fund

As many of you know the church was completely destroyed by fire in 1896. We have therefore started a Fire Alarm fund to save up money to outfit the church with a fire alarm system. We have already received a \$10,000 anonymous donation to start funding this system, and anticipate we will need an additional \$25,000. If you would like to contribute please write "Fire Alarm" on your donation.


Thank you!

 **From the Director of Religious Education** 

I can't believe we are already in Advent. This year has flown by. As we enter this most blessed season let us all take time to remember "the reason for the season." Let us spend more time in prayer and with our families and friends and not in the check out line of the local store. How about spending some time making gifts with your family or friends? It is a gift of time you give to your children/friends and a gift of love for the recipient. The time we spend with each other and praising our Lord is the best gift we can both give and receive. 

Much is happening in Sunday school. We continue to grow with new children joining both cradle roll and the Sunday school class weekly. I have 4 exceptional women who stepped up to the plate and have volunteered to assist me in the classroom. Thank you to Ellie Lowell, Connie Hanks, Caitlin Gardner and Beverly Scobie I could NOT do it without your help. I do need a few weeks covered since I am trying not to wear my wonderful volunteers out. Would you consider helping just **ONE** Sunday? The dates I need help are: December 12, January 30, March 13, and May 1. Please speak to me or sign up outside the Sunday school room. Thank you in advance.

**I still need advent readers!** Thank you to the Premo and Stockhaus families, and Cliff Peterson for volunteering. I have a sign up sheet in fellowship hall and outside the Sunday school room. 


We have **6 candidates** for Confirmation class. Unfortunately, we have no teacher. Would you be willing to assist in this worthwhile endeavor? Even if you would just like to assist, please speak with a Board of Ed. member. We are looking to start in January. 

**December 11 from 5:00-7:00 Parents' Night Out** The Board of Ed and Youth on a Mission would like to give all parents/caregivers of young children a gift! Take a few hours and relax with your spouse and/or friends while we entertain the kids.

**December 18, Potluck & Carol Sing-a-Long 5:00-7:00** Join the church family as we share good food and raise our voices in celebration of Jesus' birth. All are welcome, singing voice optional. So we don't have all desserts and no entrée we have a sign up sheet in fellowship hall.

**December 19 ANNUAL COOKIE WALK** Please support Youth On a Mission while filling up on delicious cookies. Anyone wishing to donate cookies or tins please let me know.

**December 24 5:00 Family Christmas Eve service** Take some time to celebrate the birth of Jesus in a kid friendly service. 

**February 4-6** Youth On a Mission will be attending Deep Freeze. This is a weekend retreat geared toward jr.-high school aged kids. The weekend is filled with games, chapel sessions, music and activities. Anyone wishing to go please contact me ASAP. 

**\*PLEASE SIGN UP FOR ALL EVENTS SO I MAY PLAN ACCORDINGLY.**

Sign up sheets are in fellowship hall and outside the Sunday school rooms downstairs.

*MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL! \**

Jean McPherson  
Director of Religious Education

 **NOEL HALLELUJAH MERRY CHRISTMAS HAPPY NEW YEAR**    
 *Noel Hallelujah Merry Christmas Happy New Year*  



The Pumpkin Patch is closed for another year. It was a very successful fundraiser. Total proceeds for the church: \$4,879.79!!!

We want to thank the people that sold the pumpkins and made the "patch" so much fun for all involved. Pumpkins were selling so well that we accepted another load on the Monday before Halloween. Our total of "large" pumpkins was almost 2,800 plus smaller gourds, minis and others.

Those who helped dispose of the pumpkins estimate less than 400 left. We gave many to non-profit organizations including the Boy Scouts and nursing homes.

A special thank-you to Mark Mahlert for his heavy equipment to unload and dispose which saved us time, and to Denise who, once again, helped with schedules, selling and many more chores that were always needed.

Thank you, and we look forward to next year.



Shirley, Jen and Diane

*TIDINGS is a monthly publication of*

**First Congregational Church,  
United Church of Christ  
128 Central St., Auburn MA 01501**

Phone: (508) 832-2845

Office Hours: Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Pastor's Office Day: Thursday

*God's church in Auburn Center  
doing Christ's work in the world.*

*Web: auburnfirstucc.org*



BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Non-Profit Org.  
Permit No. 6  
Auburn, Mass

**December 2010**

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |