



THE TIDINGS

Covenant Congregational Church

Celebrating over 125 years of ministry

January 2012

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God..."
-2 Corinthians 5:17

In the darkest days of World War II, English poet W.H. Auden wrote a long poem entitled *For The Time Being: A Christmas Oratorio*. In this 52-page poem, Auden imagines the thoughts of the main characters of the Christmas story, and what spurs them on to do what they do. He uses common everyday language, and presents the events of the story as if they were happening in the contemporary world. Through a series of dramatic character monologues, interspersed with narration and choruses, we encounter the people of the Christmas story in a very personal and captivating way. Ultimately, his goal is not to just retell the events of that first Christmas in a new way, but to remind us that the events of that incarnation forever impact our lives.

As I read through this poem for the first time ever last month, I was intrigued by his portrayal of the wise men. The gospels don't tell us much about them in terms of details. Matthew doesn't even reveal to us how many of them there were. We know they came from afar, following a star, bringing gifts of great symbolic value, and that when they left, they went home "another way."

Auden points out that not only did they go home "another way" directionally, but they also went home "another way" as different people. The events of that holy moment transformed each of them into new creations. In his poem, each wise man came for a different reason. The first, a scientist, came seeking truth, and to become more truthful about himself. ***"To discover how to be truthful now is the reason I follow this star."*** The second was so fixated on the past and the future that he had forgotten how to live in the present. ***"We anticipate or remember but never are. To discover how to be living now is the reason I follow this star."*** The third is so self-centered and narcissistic that he cannot love. ***"To discover how to be loving now is the reason I follow this star."*** Each, after the experience of being in the presence of the Christ-child, found a new way of living. They went home "another way" because they had become new creations.

During this season of Epiphany, we too who have made the journey to the manger, are called to allow that encounter to transform our lives; to let the incarnation of Christmas re-create us into new people...people whose old lives are replaced with new lives of meaning and substance and purpose. People who will go forth "another way."

Auld writes in a prayer by Simeon: ***"And because of His visitation, we may no longer desire God as if He were lacking: our redemption is no longer a question of pursuit but of surrender to Him who is always and everywhere present. Therefore at every moment we pray that, following Him, we may depart from our anxiety into His peace. It's errors forgiven, may our vision come home."***

Youth & Children's Ministry News!

Confirmation

We meet in room 4 at 9:15am on Sunday mornings. Remember if you miss a week—just do the next chapter in your book!

Jr. Hi. Winter Retreat

February 24-26

Pilgrim Pines

\$110

*Forms available online at
Www.ecovchurch.org*

Trailblazers winter retreat

Jan. 20-22

Pilgrim Pines

\$105

*Forms available online at
Www.ecovchurch.org*



WINTERFEST

JANUARY 6-8

YOUNG LIFE'S LAKE CHAMPION

Please pray for our many students and adult volunteers as they travel to our East Coast Conference's Winterfest Retreat, an annual gathering of 500+ high school students, the weekend of January 6-8. This amazing weekend of worship, challenging faith-based seminars and speakers, artists, food, fellowship and fun is co-planned and led by our own Pastor Johnny!

Sunday, December 25th
10:30 a.m. Christmas worship
Sunday, January 1st
10:30 a.m. Worship
(no Sunday School on 12/25 or 1/1)



CCC Book Club

CCC Book Club will be on Thursday, January 19th at 7:30 p.m.

Book to be discussed:
Area 51
by Annie Jacobsen

All are welcome.

Further information call:
Judy Tyler at 508-238-6827



There will be **no breakfast** served on Sunday December 25th, January 1st, and January 8th.
See you at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday, January 15th, for breakfast!

Friendship Club



Please join us Tuesday, January 17th at Noon for the Friendship Club meeting and lunch in the Fireside Room.

The speaker will be Alynne MacLean.

Bring a dish or dessert to be shared and your own place setting.

All are welcome.



Knitting & Crafts

Join us *every* Monday, at 7 p.m. in the Fireside Room.

If you knit, crochet, needlepoint, stamp, etc. bring your craft and join us for fellowship.

For more information call
Connie Dumoulin
(508-238-3175).



SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, January 21st 2012
Progressive Dinner
Watch for more information and sign ups soon!

Announcing the Annual Meeting of Covenant Congregational Church 1/29/12:



Announcing the Annual Meeting of Covenant Congregational Church:

All members and friends are requested to attend this important meeting which will follow morning worship on January 29, 2012. Agenda will include distribution of Annual Report of Pastor and Ministries, Budget proposal for 2012, presentation of ballot for open positions for 2012 and a financial update.

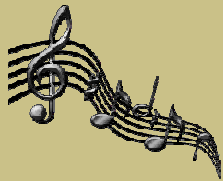
Child care will be provided during the meeting.

WEEKLY REHEARSALS

ADULT CHOIR REHEARSAL SCHEDULE AVAILABLE

MUSIC MAKERS REHEARSE WEDNESDAYS 3:45—4:30 PM @ THE CHURCH

JOYFUL NOISE REHEARSES SUNDAYS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING CHURCH IN THE CHAPEL



QUESTIONS???

Please contact:
Kirstie Wheeler

Phone: 508-238-6423
E-mail:
kirstiewheeler@verizon.net

Worship & Music

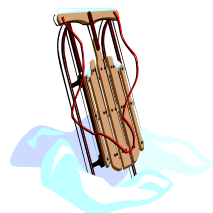
"I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." (Romans 12:1)

Thank you!

A huge thank you to all who were involved in our worship services during Advent. Each service was unique and beautiful.

As we look forward into the new year, please consider your role in worship. We always need communion servers, choir members, lay readers, sanctuary keepers, ushers and worship leaders.

Sanctuary Keepers: Each week there are "church mice" who come and make sure that the sanctuary is prepared for worship. Currently, they need more help. The goal is that each team is only responsible for one month during year. Please consider becoming part of this special group who work behind the scenes.



Fellowship Hour Schedule:

<u>JANUARY</u>	Fellowship & Care Ministries
<u>FEBRUARY</u>	Worship & Music
<u>MARCH</u>	Evangelism & Outreach

ADULT SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Happy New Year! Our January sessions will begin on Sunday, January 8th at the usual time of 9:15 a.m. The study entitled *Community* will again be our focus for five more weeks. Although, we may break this up again, so stay tuned.

- * The first part of our session will be used as sort a debriefing session to find out what people did this Christmas in response to the Advent Conspiracy material/discussions. Then we are hoping to complete *Counting the Cost of Community* (Philippians 2:1-4).
- * The next session is *Moving Beyond Superficiality* (John 4:4-26). This session focuses on how “we too often settle for relationships that stay on the surface”.
- * *Healing Relational Viruses* (Romans 12:9-13), focuses on the reality that “we live in an imperfect world filled with imperfect people” (like ourselves).
- * *Setting Healthy Relational Boundaries* (Exodus 18:13-27) talks about how “without boundaries, relationships can be very unhealthy”.
- * The final session, *Extending Community to Others* (Luke 15) talks about reaching out to people.

Join us when you can as we have further discussion about community, and what it means to us as followers of Jesus. As we read over the material and discuss it, each of us benefits from what the others have to say—each of us can grow from listening to one another as we share what the weeks “topic” means to us.

As we enter a new calendar year, let us not only remember that “God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble”, but also be cognizant that He joins us in the good times as well, celebrating them with us.

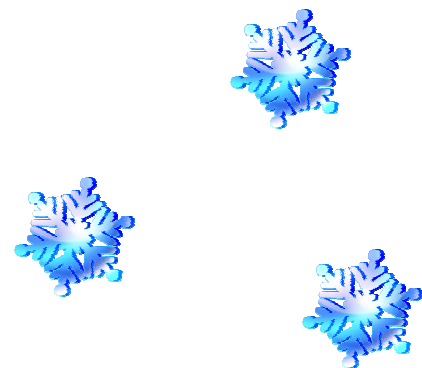
In His service,
Karen McSherry, Linda Cohen, Joe Barrett, Dom DiBattista



Quilt Show Saturday, March 24, 2012 to benefit Science With a Mission

Mark your calendar and come to church on Saturday, March 24th, starting 9:30 to 3:00 and see the sanctuary filled with a display of beautiful works of art and history - no, not paintings of oil but fabrics of all colors and designs. The stories of these quilts are written in a booklet for all to read and enjoy. Each year brings more treasures.

Please call Hazel Hayes at 508-238-0202 or email at Hohaz@verizon.net if you have any questions.



Dear friends at Covenant Congregational,

Advent greetings from Mexico City. Today is your church's day in our ministry partners prayer calendar. You and your congregation are in our prayers. May you wait well and prepare well for the celebration of Jesus' birth.

Blessings, Tom and Janice Kelly



*You're Invited
Flavors
of the World VII*

"A Wine & Food Extravaganza"

Saturday, February 4, 2012

7pm—11pm

\$75 per person

Thorny Lea Golf Club, Brockton, MA

Proceeds to benefit

HUGS II in Easton

and

Penelope's Place in Brockton.

Sponsored by:

The Men's Group of the

Covenant Congregational Church of North Easton.

For information or tickets contact:

the Church (508-238-6423) or

Denise Papagno

(508-942-5060 or dpapagno@comcast.net)



Please pass in pledge cards!

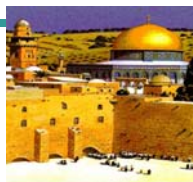
The Whole Life Stewardship Ministry & Church Council remind you to prayerfully consider pledging a proportional gift to the church for 2012. If you need a pledge card, please stop by the welcome desk in the Narthex or call the church office. Please pass in your pledge card by placing it in the offering plate or mailing it into the office. This will greatly assist the Council and the Ministries as they come up with their budgets for 2012.



January Birthdays



Cheryll Gagnon	1-Jan	Ella Haynes	12-Jan	Douglas Berardi	24-Jan
Sabine Chibueze	2-Jan	Nancy Marvonek	13-Jan	Eric Whitelaw	25-Jan
Joyce DeCosta	3-Jan	Roger Miller	13-Jan	Nick Zelinski	25-Jan
Natalie Fredericksen	4-Jan	Ashley Caylor	14-Jan	Tyler Ingalls	26-Jan
Ana McNeil	5-Jan	Robert Davis	14-Jan	Doris Strachman	27-Jan
Ernie Ortega	5-Jan	Natalie White	16-Jan	Connie Dumoulin	28-Jan
Jordan Benvie	8-Jan	Harry Keselman	18-Jan	George Svajian	28-Jan
Jake Benvie	8-Jan	Ashley Gagnon	19-Jan	Tatum Fritchman	29-Jan
Sue Moriarty	8-Jan	Lisa Bailey	20-Jan	Alexa Malasi	29-Jan
Emily Saltmarsh	9-Jan	Eric Hammond	20-Jan	Robert Marshall	29-Jan
MacKenzie Merrill	10-Jan	Tyler Haynes	21-Jan	Janet Linehan	30-Jan
Christine Sutton	10-Jan	Olivia Dupont	22-Jan	Olivia Orphanos	30-Jan
Brian Edlund	11-Jan	Alexis MacLean	22-Jan	Debora Fiore	31-Jan
		Lauren Berardi	23-Jan		



Holy Land Pilgrimage 2012

With Pastor Johnny &
Pilgrim Pines

Space is filling up fast! Don't miss this once-in-a-lifetime adventure that will deeply impact your faith walk and your understanding of scripture. Details are available in the narthex!

CCC- A Caring Community!

We here at CCC think taking care of our each other, especially in the midst of crisis, is one of the most important things we do.

Toward that end we want you to know the resources that are available to all who attend our church. These are ways we can serve you and ways you can be involved in serving others.



- ♥ Church benevolence fund – used for financial crises such as unexpected deaths or unemployment. (White offering envelopes are available in the pews each week for any donation to our *Benevolent Fund*.)
- ♥ Meals for you and your family. If there is ever a time where it would be helpful for you to receive meals from the church family to ease your burden we are here to help. Often families take advantage of this during times of childbirth, extreme stress, times of illness, recovery from surgery or a hospital stay or the passing of a loved one.
- ♥ We have a ministry of prayer shawls and squares. These are shawls or squares that have been prayed over and can bring comfort in a variety of situations.
- ♥ We have a church prayer chain (via email) that allows us to send out information and prayer requests in a timely manner. Simply send an email to webmaster@ecovchurch.org to get signed up.

Please do not hesitate to contact the church chair or Pastor Johnny if you are in a time of crisis or stress, we are here to serve you.



Prayers

- *Heather Willis' mother* as she recovers from hip surgery, and for Heather and Ed as they travel home from Canada.
- *Joanne Lundin*, Sandie Corradina's sister-in-law, passed away after a brave battle with cancer. Prayers to Sandie and her family.
- The 1000+ members and vital ministry of the *St. Andrews Hindustani Covenant Church* which was completely destroyed by a suspicious fire on November 30th.
- *The family of Melinda and Mike Ryan*. Melinda's dad, John Luke, passed away November 23rd.
- For *Rev. Whitney Hall* during this time of transition in her ministry.
- *John-Erik Nelson* who is recovering from hip surgery.
- *Todd Cudmore* as he recovers from back surgery.
- *John Gallagher* who is recovering from surgery.
- *Bob Clary's mother* is home recuperating.
- *Brian Edlund's brother Chuck*, who is undergoing treatment for a tumor in his eye.
- For *our congregation* as we navigate the transitions of these coming months.
- *The Edlund's 14-year old nephew, William*, who has been diagnosed with Stage I osteosarcoma and is receiving chemotherapy treatments.
- *Ernie and Pearl Robertson* for ongoing health challenges.
- *Linda Wainwright* as she struggles with severe and chronic back pain.
- *Carole DesLauriers*, Ed Willis' mother, for continued healing and peace.
- *Cindy Doherty*, who was diagnosed with throat cancer.
- *Murray Johns*, brother of Heather Willis, awaiting a liver transplant within the next 2 months.
- *Angela Whitley* as she undergoes treatments.
- *Don MacLeod Jr.* is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- *Rob Driscoll* continues to receive treatment for kidney problems.
- *Joe Davis* and his ministry in Sweden.
- *Gail Hubbard*, friend of Lynda Valenzuela, receiving treatment for a brain tumor.

Prayers of Celebration

- For the many ways in which God has provided, challenged, and blessed us as individuals and as a congregation this past year.
- For our wonderful children, their faithful teachers and the gift of worship they share with us today.
- The many faithful financial *pledges for 2012* that have been submitted by members of the congregation.
- The men and women of our *Armed Forces* serving around the world & for their families back here at home who await their safe return.

Ephesians 1:16

11/21/2011

Dear Rev. Johnny and church members,

Thank you for opening your doors, arms, and hearts to me. I was so concerned about finding a church while at college, but God is loving and providing. He has blessed me with a church family at home and with you all.

In honor of Thanksgiving I praise God for putting me at Covenant Congregational Church. Thank you for being open to God and to each other.

Love,

Julie

(Julie Forest, the Stonehill "bike" student)



Mission Thank You's

Thank you for your recent contribution to My Brother's Keeper. Your generosity does so much good and is appreciated greatly by those we are privileged to serve in Christ's name.

After a recent delivery, Marie from Quincy expressed her gratitude with these insightful words: *"I am not sure of what to say...How can I thank you, you helped me without me feeling like I was a beggar. You've showed me people still care. I am dying and have been feeling pretty low. God does listen to us. Thank you again. With love and God bless you all."*

As we praise God this Christmas season for the many blessings in our lives, please know how much we appreciated your friendship and good will. You are dear to us and, as a valued member of our community, we will continue to remember you in our daily prayers.

Yours in Christ,
Erich Miller
President



Dear Friends,

We have received your generous gift in the amount of \$700.00, and on behalf of seafarers from around the world I would like to thank your church body from the bottom of my heart. As I write this letter, our ship visitors, including myself, are continuing to visit these hard-working men and women who work under such difficult conditions.

Each day ships continue to steam into our ports from around the world, carrying those products we need and use. But how often do we think of the men and women who risk their lives to get those ships through stormy seas and great personal peril. Almost before the lines are set on the docks, they are calling our center, hopeful of a visit and the help we can bring onboard.

On a recent visit, we met a young Romanian female cadet, probably no more than 19 years old, serving on a container ship. She had transferred from another vessel and had only been on the ship for a week. She was nervous and, as the only woman onboard, cautious around her crewmates. We told her we would check on her each visit to Boston, which greatly relieved her. She had never experienced the power of the winter-time North Atlantic seas and I hoped for safety amidst great stress.

Because of your thoughtful donation, we are able to bring the comfort that God offers as we visit her and thousands like her. I join with all seafarers and the staff here at NESM in thanking you for your great help through your thoughts, prayers and contribution.

Yours sincerely,
Rev. Stephen Cushing
Executive Director and Senior Chaplain
New England Seafarers Mission



Dear Friends,

I want to thank you for your continuing support of Pilgrim Pines. I want to thank you on behalf of the thousands of guests that visit Pilgrim Pines each year. Your gift allows for a space an opportunity for God to work in their lives. I specifically want to thank you for your gift of \$700.00. May God bless it and use it for His glory.

I had a parent of a first time camper call me the day after his son returned home. We had had several conversations prior to the camp session. On this specific call, the father was overjoyed with his son's experience. "My son has been home for 3 hours and talks of camp as the best week of his life." What struck me as significant was that this family does not have any church involvement. Here was a parent who allowed his son to be impacted by God at Camp Squanto and was overjoyed at his experience. May God's spirit continue to work in the lives of this family.

Thanks for you support of the ministry of Pilgrim Pines.

Blessings,
David Cairns
Executive Director

January 2012



204 Center Street
North Easton, MA 02356

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 NEW YEAR'S DAY 10:30 Worship	2 4:00 Jr. Troop (FS) 5:00 Basketball (Gym) 7:00 Knitting (FS) 7:00 Boy Scouts	3 9 Gym reserved 2:30-7:15 Kirstie (Chapel) 6:30 Soccer (Gym) 7:30 Ministry Meetings	4 4:00 Bear Scouts (Jr. Church, Gym) 5:00 Soccer (Gym) 7:00 Small Group Bible Study	5 9 Gym reserved 5:00 Practice (Gym) 7:30 Choir	6 10 Gym reserved 10:30 Ladies Bible Study (FS) 12:45 Birthday Buddies 4:00 Daisy Troop (gym)	7
8 9:15 Ch. Ed. 10:30 Worship 4:30 Jr Youth Group 6:00 Sr Youth Group	9 4:30 Brownie Trip (Jr) 4:30 Brownie Trip (FS) 5:00 Basketball (Gym) 7:00 Stephen Ministry 7:00 Knitting (FS) 7:00 Boy Scouts	10 9 Gym reserved 2:30-7:15 Kirstie (Chapel) 4:00 Cub Scouts (gym) 6:30 Soccer (Gym) 7:00 Council 7:30 Soccer (gym)	11 6:00 Cub Scouts (Jr. Church, Gym) 7:00 Small Group Bible Study	12 9 Gym reserved 10 Gym reserved 5:00 Practice (Gym) 6:30 Garden Club (FS)	13 10 Gym reserved 10:30 Ladies Bible Study (FS) 4:00 Girl Scouts #80542 (Jr) 6:30 Basketball (Gym)	14
15 8:30 Breakfast 9:15 Ch. Ed. 10:30 Worship 4:30 Jr Youth Group 6:00 Sr Youth Group	16 4:00 Jr. Troop (FS) 5:00 Basketball (Gym) 7:00 Knitting (FS) 7:00 Boy Scouts	17 9 Gym reserved 2:30-7:15 Kirstie (Chapel) Noon Friendship Club 6:30 Soccer (Gym) 7:30 Soccer (gym)	18 3:45 Music Makers 4:00 Bear Scouts (Jr. Church, Gym) 5:00 Soccer (Gym) 7:00 Small Group Bible Study	19 9 Gym reserved 5:00 Practice (Gym) 7:30 CCC Book Club	20 10 Gym reserved 10:30 Ladies Bible Study (FS) 4:00 Daisy Troop (gym) 6:30 Basketball (Gym) 8 Pinewood Derby	21 2-6 Cub Scouts #76 Pinewood Derby (gym) 6:00 Progressive Dinner
22 8:30 Breakfast 9:15 Ch. Ed. 10:30 Worship 2:00 Piano Recital (Sanctuary) 4:30 Jr Youth Group 6:00 Sr Youth Group	23 4:30 Brownie Trip (Jr) 4:30 Brownie Trip (FS) 5:00 Basketball (Gym) 7:00 Stephen Ministry 7:00 Knitting (FS) 7:00 Boy Scouts	24 9 Gym reserved 2:30-7:15 Kirstie (Chapel) 4:00 Cub Scouts (gym) 6:30 Soccer (Gym) 7:30 Soccer (gym)	25 3:45 Music Makers 6:00 Cub Scouts (Jr. Church, Gym) 7:00 Small Group Bible Study	26 9 Gym reserved 5:00 Practice (Gym)	27 10 Gym reserved 10:30 Ladies Bible Study (FS) 6:30 Basketball (Gym)	28 AM St. Paul's Kitchen Lunch setup (gym)
29CCC ANNUAL MEETING 8:30 Breakfast 9:15 Ch. Ed. 10:30 Worship 4:30 Jr Youth Group 6:00 Sr Youth Group	30 5:00 Basketball (Gym) 7:00 Boy Scouts 7:00 Knitting (FS)	31 9 Gym reserved 2:30-7:15 Kirstie (Chapel) 6:30 Soccer (Gym) 7:30 Soccer (gym)				



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**JANUARY
TIDINGS!**

CCC AT A GLANCE

Sunday Morning

8:30 -9:15

Breakfast

9:15- 10:15

Opening Celebration &
Sunday School

10:30

Worship Service

Pastor:

Rev. Johnny Agurkis

Staff:

Nancy Hall

Office Manager

Kirstie Wheeler

Director of Music Ministries

David Cudmore

Church Custodian

www.ecovchurch.org

508.238.6423

Covenant Congregational Church Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 29, 2012
Following morning worship

All members and friends are requested to attend
our annual business and budget meeting.

Every member has a vote and a voice—
so please attend!

Child Care will be provided during the meeting.

See the announcement inside for further information.

