

CHURCH LIFE

JANUARY 2011



Middlebury Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
The Green
1242 Whittemore Rd.
Middlebury CT 06762
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Ken's Korner

The Road Not Taken *Robert Frost*

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

The Sunday School Scoop

December was a very exciting month for the children at MCC! On December 11th, we held our annual Christmas Pageant. It went extremely well this year! It's always so amazing to see many people of different generations work so well together to tell "The Greatest Story Ever Told".

The following Sunday we held our Advent Workshop. In the past, the children have made multiple crafts to take home. This year, we decided to choose one larger craft for each child to make. The older children made wreaths with cranberries, and the younger children made wreaths with peppermints. All of them turned out to be beautiful! The kids had a great time creating them as well.

Both of these projects, in addition to the pageant, would not have been successful without the great help of the Christian Education Committee. Thank you to everyone who helped with our Christmas activities!

We will begin 2012 by learning about the 23rd Psalm in Sunday School. Many of the lessons focus on the great imagery in the Psalm, as well as how it connects with our lives today. I look forward to a great new year with our wonderful students!





Valerie Beard

Music Notes


Have you sung in choir yet?
Give it a try!
Any Sunday at 9 a.m.!

Sunday School Grade Schedule January 2011

Youth News!

	<u>Jan. 8</u> Psalm 23 Week 1	<u>Jan. 15</u> Psalm 23 Week 2	<u>Jan. 22</u> Psalm 23 Week 3	<u>Jan. 29</u> Psalm 23 Week 4
Noah's Ark 	6 th /7 th	4 th /5 th	2 nd /3 rd	K/1 st
Storytelling Tent 	K/1 st	2 nd /3 rd	4 th /5 th	6 th /7 th
Bibleland Theatre 	2 nd /3 rd	K/1 st		4 th /5 th
Mary & Martha's Kitchen 	4 th /5 th	6 th /7 th	K/1 st	2 nd /3 rd
Youth Room			6 th /12 th	

December has been a busy month for the youth group. We are still selling God's Creations wall calendars for \$10 each. These are beautiful calendars with scripture readings and nature photographs. The proceeds will go to offset the cost of our February Spiritual retreat.

The youth group meets every Friday night from 7:00 – 8:30pm in the youth room. The youth have participated in church events in December such as The Hanging of The Greens service, The Christmas Pageant, and Advent workshops. Several youth have volunteered in the nursery during church which is also greatly appreciated. We will also have our youth group Christmas party, and will partake in Christmas caroling. During Christmas vacation the youth will be volunteering for one day at GWIM in the soup kitchen and food bank.

In January we will put on our annual Pasta Dinner on Saturday the 14th from 5:00 – 8:00pm. We have a snow date of January 21st same time. Please come enjoy a beautiful evening of dinner and conversation. Last year's event had rave reviews and we expect this year's dinner to be even better! The proceeds from this event will go towards the youth mission trips as well as the church general fund.

Looking forward to new adventures in 2012!

Mary Brown
Youth Group Coordinator

Beat the Post-Holiday Blues!

Join us for a
Pasta Supper



Sponsored by the MCC Youth Group

Saturday, January 14th

(Snow Date: January 21st)

5:00 – 8:00 pm

Menu will include:

**Pasta with Meatballs,
Salad, Bread
& Dessert**

Cost:

Adults: \$10

Children & Seniors: \$8

Under 5 yrs. old Free

Families: \$30

The Deacons' Bench

January is our last month together with Pastor Ken, who will continue to live in the parsonage for a few months as he continues his search for a new ministry.

Ken came to us after a difficult time of transition, and had the challenge of trying to bring together a congregation that was still seeking its direction. He did this by encouraging open discussion, transparency and Congregational polity – the way the church governs itself.

To the deacons, he brought the realization that we are not just there to serve Communion, but are responsible for the spiritual life of the church. He helped each of us find our unique gifts and role within the congregation.

During worship services, he has given us new perspectives on the power of prayer. We shared summer-long worship services, and began experimenting with new forms of worship including early-morning worship in our outdoor chapel and contemporary services. His sermons are scholarly, personal, amusing, enlightening, innovative, Bible-based, and often extemporaneous – a talent few preachers have.

“P. Kenny,” as the youth group has fondly dubbed him, has established a personal rapport with many of us, and he will be missed. These next few weeks are our opportunity to thank him, wish him well and share our prayers and good wishes in his new ventures.

- Howard Fielding for the Board of Deacons

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

With the New Year, our church will have several new beginnings. We will embark on a search for an Interim Minister. We will see change on the organ bench. What we now, more than ever, need to have is strong commitment by the members so that our changes bring growth. And that growth and can't happen without commitment both of our time and dedication as church members and our *financial* support.

Throughout the autumn I have used the theme of "forecasting." Our church needs to have a sense of where we will be financially for the Trustees develop a budget for 2012. With January upon us, it is budget crunch time.

I am sure that none of us wants to see the programs that have such value for our church and the wider community to be threatened by lack of financial resources. Yes, we do all we can with our own hearts and hands but core funding is needed. We need each and every member and family to be a part of that core funding for us to succeed.

Please – if you have not already made your pledge, make this your #1 resolution for the New Year and send it in *now*. On behalf of our congregation and all of the work that Christ has called us to do, I thank you in advance for your generosity.

In fellowship and hope,

Janine Sullivan-Wiley
Chair of Stewardship Board

STAR TREE 2011

The mission committee would like to thank all who participated in the Star Tree project. Your generosity provided gifts for 100 needy children who receive services from Wellmore in Waterbury. A special thank you goes out to Leslie House who coordinated this event.

BLOOD DRIVE

The mission committee sponsored our second American Red Cross blood drive in 2011 on December 27 from 1:00 to 6:00. Although the final number of acceptable units isn't available at this time, there were 55 registrations which surpassed our number at the February drive. Thanks go out to Teen Mendillo who spent the day registering our donors.

DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?

There is a very large storage cubicle in the church parking lot that is just waiting to be filled with donations for the May 5th Flea Market and Auction. Please call the church if you would like to schedule a pick up. Please remember that no mattresses, large appliances (such as refrigerators, washers, etc.), or non-working electronics will be picked up.

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

Please start picking up cans of soup for our annual Souper Bowl Sunday project! This year's date is Sunday, February 5th. Donations will be made to GWIM and the Middlebury Food Bank.

SAVE THE DATE!

The mission committee is sponsoring a Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, February 19 following the service. The proceeds from this fundraiser will be donated to the church. Please mark your calendars and invite all your friends and family members!

Christmas Pageant 2011



CHURCH RECORDS

CALL TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION



The Annual Meeting of the Middlebury Congregational Church will be held on **January 22, 2012** following worship service. The purpose of the meeting is to elect officers and board members and to vote on the budget for the year 2012. All Board, Officer & Committee reports are due in the Church Office by Jan. 16th at 9:00 am.



Thank you to everyone who has turned in their "labels for education" UPCs. An envelope is hanging on the bulletin board in the Social Room. We have had an impressive amount of points banked by our local Shop Rite and Price Chopper from those of you who have registered your courtesy card on the "labels for education" website. We'll be able to purchase a new drying rack for the art room before year end!

Anyone who has a child turning 3 years old by December 31, 2012 is eligible for priority registration by January 6th. Stop in for a registration form.

Don't forget those odds and ends for craft projects. Our children have great imaginations!

BIRTHS

Charlotte Rae Lukens, daughter of Jeff & Megan Lukens, born December 10th.

WEDDINGS

**Megan LaPorta & Thomas Sherry Jr. on December 30th.*



Weather Related Closings!



For information on Service and Activity Cancellations due to inclement weather, please tune to Channel 8 (ABC). You may also check the Church's website (middleburyucc.org) or call the church office.

The Deadline for February Church Life:

Friday, January 20th @ 9:00 a.m.

If you take pictures during a service or a function please email them to me for the Crier, Church Life, Bulletin Board and/or website.

Thank you! Jeanine
(jbonaventure@middleburyucc.org)