

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2010

Family Worship Service—10:30 a.m.

Sermon: The Rev. Richard A. Weisenbach,
D. Min.

Family Ties

Scripture: Luke 2:39-52

Calendar for Sunday, December 26, 2010

9:00 am Adult Bible Study (library)
10:30 am Sanctuary Worship Service
(infant and toddler care provided)
11:30 am Fellowship Hour (vestry)
12 n Jr. Choir Rehearsal

Memorial Flowers

The flowers will be given in loving memory of
Harriett Given by here husband and family.

Minister's Reception Line Volunteer: Kathryn
Millheim. **Fellowship Hour Hosts:** Arthur and
Carol Callan. **Ushers:** James Fosnock, Thomas
Martin, Heather Hulse, Dexter Wheeler, Eric
Atwater, Leith Jones, and Philip Gindi (captain).

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT
CHURCH HERALD**

Thursday, December 30, 2010
(will cover dates of
January 9 – 22, 2011)

SUNDAY, JANUARY 2, 2011

**Worship Services – 9:00 & 10:30 am
with Holy Communion**

Sermon: The Rev. Richard A. Weisenbach,
D. Min.

Dead and Alive

Scripture: Romans 6:1-14

Calendar for Sunday, January 2, 2011

9:00 am Adult Bible Study (library)
9:00 am Chapel Service
10:30 am Sanctuary Worship Service
(infant and toddler care provided)
10:30 am Church School (Pre-K – Grade 7)
10:30 am Confirmation Class
11:30 am Fellowship Hour
12 n Jr. Choir Rehearsal

Memorial Flowers

The flowers will be given in loving memory of
Jim and Peggy Parsons, and Wallace, Mabel, and
Donald Ryan by Ken and Eileen Parsons.

Minister's Reception Line Volunteer: Alwyn
Van Cor. **Diaconate Members Serving
Communion:** Barbara Flynn, Jo Lynn Foster,
Julie Hart, Alan Ward, Christopher Hurren, and
David Whitehead.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

	Chapel	Sanctuary	Total
Sunday, December 5	32	136	168
Sunday, December 12	25	165	190
Church School			
Sunday, December 5	53		
Sunday, December 12	55		



Thank you's...

Much thanks to so many for making the Living Nativity a positive outreach. Thanks to Phil Gindi, Earl Sheaff, & Ben Parish for building the manger, Barbara Flynn for the advertisement, Jean and Linda Sabatula and all their helpers that baked and set up the vestry, Doug Jackson for his set up of the sound, Rich Testa for the lighting system, Don Hodgkins for the accompaniment, Tom Rosa for directing, and all those who acted out the story including the Stevenson family, Black Family, Fox family, Kirby family, Jim Fosnock, Bonnie Mullen and Pete. Thanks to Pastor Rich and Abram for guiding us thru the story. Forgive me if I forgot to acknowledge your participation. This year was our largest audience ever, with cars pulling over in the street to watch! To God Be the Glory!

Merry Christmas, *Trefina Fox*

I want to thank First Parish Congregational Church and Linda D'Agostino who brought me the pretty flowers from today's service. We had a nice conversation.

Thank you, *Warren Reeves*

My heartfelt thanks to your Board of Diaconate for remembering me on my 90th birthday. The basket of flowers are beautiful and the arrangement lovely. Your thoughtfulness and kindness meant so much to me. To Linda Byam, thank you for the birthday card from the Diaconate. Warmest wishes to all of you for a Merry Christmas.

Thank you, again, sincerely, *Dorothy Green*

And:

Thank you for the beautiful bouquet of red and white carnations brought to me last Sunday for my birthday. Your thoughtfulness is much appreciated. Also, thanks to Linda D'Agostino for delivering them and visiting with me.

Sincerely, *Dorothy Green*

Sunday, Linda D'Agostino came with a lovely bouquet of red and white carnations and greens. Thank you Linda and First Parish. The bouquet makes me think of Christmas. I found the beautiful blessing accompanying the flowers. What a lovely addition, along with Pastor Weisenbach's message. Please accept my appreciation.

Ada Towle

On behalf of The Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps, Tom Rosa would like to thank all who attended the benefit concert on November 7 in support of the agency's Winter Wish Project. \$527.00 was raised and all the proceeds were used to purchase the holiday gifts for the children in the 17 programs across the state.

A special thanks to Pastor Rich, Linda Hunzelman, Steve Gates, Al Ward, Ish Laboy, John Arena, and the Covell family for their help and support!

Tom Rosa

BIBLES FOR JAMAICA

One of our church members, Austin Kennedy, is serving the Lord in Jamaica. He has written our Outreach Committee about a need for Bibles. Our committee wants to send him 100 copies. We will need about \$200. Sixty dollars has been received so far. Do you want to be part of this project? Please write your check to First Parish Congregational Church and add "Jamaica Bibles" in the memo.

Thank you,
Your Outreach Committee, Rod Illanes,
Chairman

AMERICAN RED CROSS EXTENDS THEIR APPRECIATION

The efforts of First Parish Congregational Church have always been greatly appreciated, and their support of the community blood program will go a long way toward replenishing blood supplies and ultimately saving lives. In addition, we very much appreciate your efforts during this crucial time. You may be interested to know that 59 donors presented, and 56 units were collected at your drive.

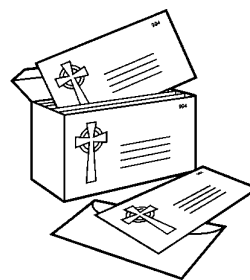
Again, thank you for your contribution and ongoing support of this important community program.

Kerry Enright
Account Executive

A THANK YOU FROM THE PARSONAGE

Pat and I wish to thank all who took the time to drop by the parsonage last Sunday afternoon/evening. We very much enjoyed your love and support. We are so grateful for the lovely home the church has provided for us and want to share it with all of you. A special thank you to those who contributed to the table or left a gift behind.

Pastor Rich and Pat



PLEDGE ENVELOPE BOXES ARE READY

Pledge envelope boxes are available on a table in the vestry. If you have already made a pledge for 2011, please remember to pick them up after church services or during the week when the office is open. They are listed alphabetically for your convenience. If you have not yet filled in a pledge card, these are available on the Williams Table at the rear of the sanctuary.

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

On Friday, December 10, the Youth Group went out for our second annual Christmas Caroling event. This year we were joined by a handful of adult and junior choir members. In all, we stopped at 6 houses and sang our hearts out. Thanks to the hosts for the various cookies, brownies, drinks and candy. We'd like to visit more houses next year, so please let us know if you'd like to be added to the list! If so, contact Abram at 781-245-1644, ext. 3.

-Tim Callaghan

There is no Youth Group on Friday, December 24 (Christmas Eve) and December 31 (New Year's Eve). We resume in the new year with Youth Group from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Friday, January 7, 2011.

A NEW YEAR'S DESIRE

Grant that I may bring no tear to any eye,
When this New Year in time shall end.
Let it be said I've played the friend,
Have lived and loved and labored here,
And made of it a happy year.

-Edgar A. Guest

ANNUAL REPORTS

If you are a chairman of a board or committee and are submitting a report to be included in the Annual Report, please submit it to the church office by Tuesday, January 18. This will allow the report to be ready for distribution on Sunday, January 23, so that members may read it over before the annual meeting on Sunday, January 30. Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation. It is very much appreciated.

Linda Hunzelman

SNOWSTORM POLICY

If there is a snowstorm on a Saturday, the 9 am service will be canceled. The 10:30 am service will usually be conducted. **In the event of a severe snowstorm, it may be necessary to cancel it. Cancellation of the 10:30 service will be announced on WBZ Storm Center (TV Channel 4 in Boston; 1030 on the AM radio dial).**

The notices are listed 5 minutes and 35 minutes after the hour on the radio and after 5 am on Channel 4. You may also check their websites: WBZ1030.com or WBZ4.com We will also change the outgoing message on the office telephone to inform callers of the cancellation.

MEMBERSHIP SEMINAR

Pastor Weisenbach will be conducting a membership class on Saturday, February 19, 2011. The session includes: discussion, history, tour of our building, a video, and lunch is provided by our Diaconate. Candidates will come before the Diaconate after worship on Sunday, February 20, and will be welcomed officially on Sunday, February 27. Please contact the pastor or the church office if you are interested.

Dear Pastor Weisenbach,

I wanted to say "Thank You" for inviting me on the trip to Bay St. Louis, Mississippi and how proud I felt to be among your very capable and welcoming parishioners.

What a wonderful group of people! I only wish I lived closer so I could join your parish. It was heartening to see how far Bay St. Louis has come since my trip four years ago! I know you have sponsored many groups in the years since the hurricane and the combined effort of many has surely made the difference.

I so admire Steve [Gates] and Linell [Nester] for their efforts in raising the money for the trip and all the organization it took to get nine people safely there and home!

My sincere thanks and Merry Christmas,

Melissa Rowe

FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee is now actively recruiting members for all committees. We strive to elect qualified individuals to fill the vacancies and seek to involve new members, young adults, and veteran church members.

It is a privilege to serve our Lord by serving on a church committee, working together for the good of First Parish Congregational Church. If you are interested in learning more about these committees or serving on any particular committee, please leave a note in our mailbox in the vestry or contact committee members as indicated below.

Remember that "God does not intend for his people to be sitting in the stands. He wants them down in the arena."

Nominating Committee Members

Joanne Peavey
Nancy Sleger
Linda D'Agostino

Scott Mitchell
Richard Bardet
Joan Toler

THE CHURCH HERALD
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December 17, 2010

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Time Value

GIVE THE GIFT OF COMMITMENT

God has given so much to each and every one of us, a King, the babe in the manger, Jesus, the Christ. As we stand before Him, you are invited to take the steps needed to be among those that promise to pledge. A financial pledge takes faith, trust and a grateful heart. We presently have 83 pledge commitments and we are more than half way to our budgeted pledge goal for 2011. We can go beyond our previous year's pledge promises of 145 and make 2010 – 2011 a year that will reflect the hearts of more of our brothers and sisters, committed to give. What a gift to lay before the King.

*Peace, joy and love,
Ruth Ross for Stewardship*

A pledge commitment is a beautiful way to see the Lord working in your finances. Pledge cards with an envelope addressed to Eleanor Elliot, our Collector, can be found on the Williams Table in the rear of the sanctuary. Once you have made your commitment, please return your pledge card in the offering plate or you can mail it directly to Eleanor. Your box of envelopes for the coming year will be in the rear of the vestry. Watch for them and then, please be sure to pick them up.

I must confess that as Christmas approaches I discover two conflicting moods growing within my mind and heart. One is a mood of joy and gratitude as I reflect on God's wonderful gift of salvation offered in Jesus Christ. The other is of sadness and frustration as I observe the world around me missing the point; either out of ignorance, or selfish greed. I would suspect that I'm not alone—most of you probably share my mix of moods.

Don't get me wrong, I enjoy the secular festivities and it is a nice change to observe the media drawing attention to the various and serious human needs surrounding us. I guess what concerns me, what burdens my heart, is not what the world does but rather what the world leaves out.

I suppose I have no reason to expect the world to understand the real meaning of Christmas; not that the real meaning hasn't been taught for thousands of years! But even here the truth gets twisted. The real meaning of Christmas is **not** giving, being nice to your neighbor, and helping others. Nothing is wrong with this, of course, but the exercise of civic virtue is not the real meaning of Christmas. Charles Dickens didn't tell the whole story! Scrooge could have sent as many turkeys as he wished to the Cratchit home and still have had no knowledge of the one whose first expectation is not that we give to others, but that we receive him into our lives. The possibility of receiving Jesus Christ as one's savior and Lord is the real meaning of Christmas!

And how is that celebrated? Let me suggest three ways. **Be amazed and ponder**, that the God of the universe would take human flesh in order to communicate lovingly to unloving people. That is unbelievable, yet the Bible boldly declares that this impossible occurrence occurred. I urge you to be amazed by this, don't be embarrassed because you can't figure it out, just be willing to believe and receive God's heavenly gift. God came into the world for you.

Worship and Praise, that's what the shepherds did and the wise men too, and Mary and Joseph. We worship when we tell God in words and songs that we are grateful for the love, the power, the mercy, the wisdom that Christmas displays. Are you grateful to God? Then worship and praise!

Spread the Word. After we "ponder anew what the Almighty can do," after we lift our voices in praise to God, then it is time to spread the word to others.

Be prepared to proclaim the real meaning of Christmas; to receive God's gift of love and forgiveness and to welcome Jesus Christ into our hearts and lives. What a Christmas present!

Pastor Rich

2010 STEWARDSHIP GOALS

PLEDGE AND PLATE COMBINED

DECEMBER'S GOAL **\$310,000**

*You will find a babe wrapped in cloths and lying in
a manger. Luke 2:12*

O come let us adore Him.

NOVEMBER'S YTD **\$284,170.00**

OUR GIFTS **\$279,997.10**

BEHIND BY **- \$4,172.90**

May we step it up...

OCTOBER'S GOAL **\$258,333.33**

OUR GIFTS OFFERED **\$254,599.68**

SEPTEMBER'S GOAL **\$232,500.00**

OUR GIFTS OFFERED **\$224,150.90**

AUGUST YTD GOAL **\$206,670.00**

OUR GIFTS OFFERED **\$197,827.48**

JULY'S YTD GOAL **\$180,833.31**

OUR GIFTS OFFERED **\$171,638.71**

JUNE'S YTD GOAL **\$155,000.00**

OUR GIFTS OFFERED **\$150,189.74**

MAY'S YTD GOAL **\$129,170.00**

OUR GIFTS OFFERED **\$126,218.32**

APRIL'S YTD GOAL **\$103,332.32**

OUR GIFTS OFFERED **\$ 99,036.65**

MARCH'S YTD GOAL **\$ 77,500.00**

OUR GIFTS OFFERED **\$ 76,775.51**

OUR GIFTS OFFERED **\$ 52,351.84**

FEBRUARY'S YTD GOAL **\$ 51,670.00**

OUR GIFTS OFFERED **\$ 29,955.42**

JANUARY'S GOAL **\$ 25,833.33**