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# ❖ The Spirelite ❖

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Volume 84 Issue 01

December 30, 2011

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## JANUARY WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Child care and Sunday School classes up to grade 8 are held concurrently with worship each Sunday at 10AM. Children are welcome to join at any time.

**January 1** New Years Day Intergenerational Worship  
Isaiah 52:7-10, Luke 2:22-40

**January 8** Epiphany Sunday, "Arise, Shine, for your light has come!"  
Isaiah 60:1-6, Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14, Ephesians 3:1-12, Matthew 2:1-12

**January 15** Baptism of Jesus Sunday  
Genesis 1:1-5, Psalm 29, Acts 19:1-7, Mark 1:4-11

**January 22** Jesus calls the first disciples  
Jonah 3:1-5, 10, Psalm 62:5-12, 1 Corinthians 7:29-31, Mark 1:14-20

**January 29** With Authority  
Deuteronomy 18:15-20, Psalm 111, 1 Corinthians 8:1-13, Mark 1: 21-28



## WORDS FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR

Dear First Church family and friends,

As one year ends and another begins, we traditionally think of New Year's resolutions for the coming year. Visions of improvements in 2012 dance in our heads, as we contemplate what new things we might do and what old habits we might let go. But I think we are getting ahead of ourselves to make this list too quickly. It seems to me that before we can do that, we need the perspective of looking back over 2011. What were the highlights for you? Where were there lows? Who did you find to be the most inspiring person of last year in your own life or in

public life? In a word, what did you learn in 2011 about your life in your family, in your faith community, in your experiences at work or school? Where did you experience God's light in your life last year? What were the places in your life that need that loving and compassionate light?

Anthony De Mello, an Indian Jesuit priest, suggests an "Examen" of your spiritual life periodically. The New Year provides an opportunity for such reflection. De Mello suggests looking back over the year or month or week or day and thinking about:

*Things I have loved in life: tasted, touched, looked at, smelled, heard*

*Experiences I have cherished this year*

*Ideas that have brought me liberation*

*Beliefs that I have outgrown*

*Convictions I have lived by  
Insights I have gained in the school of life; insights into God, the world, human nature*

*Risks I have taken*

*Sufferings that have seasoned me*

*Scripture that has lit my Path*

*Things I regret about my life, things that I am proud of*

*People who are enshrined in my heart*

As each of us begins 2012, may we set aside time to prayerfully consider De Mello's questions and look at 2011 through the lens of faith. May we move into 2012 with perspective and joy, transformed by God's love and care!

In faith, Pastor Nancy

## ALL CHURCH DISCUSSIONS IN THE INTERIM TIME

On Sunday January 8, there will be a light lunch directly after church and a discussion led by Pastor Nancy to help us move forward in the interim process as we look back at what our story is as a congregation and how we feel about it. On the Friday January 6<sup>th</sup> email there will be discussion starters for you to look at ahead of the Sunday gathering. There will be copies in the office as well through the week. The Confirmation Class under the leadership of Jan Patten will lead a special lunch and program for children in Room 2 during the adults program. Please sign up for the lunch by phoning the church office or signing up on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall. There will be two other different discussions on February 12 and March 18. Come be part of the process in this interim time of exploration.

## NEW MEMBER CLASSES

This is an exciting time to be part of First Church in Sterling. Our community of faith is a welcoming and nurturing place where Christian values are taught and lived. Several people have expressed interest in becoming new members here, so there will be new member classes on Sunday Feb 5 at 11:30 pm. and Sunday Feb 26 at 4pm.



The New Member Joining Sunday will be in March. Please contact Pastor Nancy if you would like to be part of the classes.

## STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN COMING DOWN TO THE WIRE

By Bob Dumont  
The 2012 Stewardship Campaign has made good progress to date. As of Dec 22, 113 pledges have been received totaling \$190,156.00. However, 60 people have yet to respond and 21 of those are currently pledging. Because there are important decisions to be made about the 2012 Budget at the Annual Meeting which is on Sunday, January 22, 2012, it is extremely important that we have as much information as possible about the income for the year by then. That is why it is critical for those who have not responded yet to do so as soon as possible. The Stewardship Committee thinks we have a good chance of exceeding last year's results, but it will take a significant commitment from those who have yet to decide what they can do in the coming year.

Some folks are reluctant to pledge because they fear that something may happen that will prevent them from living up to their commitment, but they contribute every week that they are in church. The committee would like to encourage those people to consider making a pledge. A pledge is just that and if things do not work out people will understand. From a financial management perspective it is much better to know what might happen than to be the dark.

## FOOTSTEPS TO THE MANGER

By Susan Crimer, Sunday School Director

Thanks to all who helped our Angels, Lo and Behold, find their way back to Heaven! We enjoyed presenting the annual Christmas Pageant and Pot-Luck Supper. Sixty children and young adults, and the First Church family, filled the Sanctuary with Christmas joy, and celebrated with a bountiful dinner. Thanks go to all who contributed time, talents and treasure to guide our Footsteps to the manger this Christmas. Special thanks to our Director, Karen Jolie.



In January, we begin our second Akaloo unit for this year, Discovering the Bible. We will study the structure, history, and lessons in the Bible.

### Heifer challenges to continue

Look for the Heifer challenges to continue, as we raise money to send our friend, Buffalo Bob, to help Heifer Project farmers work more effectively to support their families. We have already raised more than half of

our goal of \$350.00! Thanks to all who have contributed, and to parents and children who have been so faithful in bringing in their Offering each Sunday.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL FELLOWSHIP "JANUARY ACTIVITY" IS SLEDDING

Sunday January 22nd 1-400pm there will be Sledding at the Lindholms. ( Lets hope for Snow ) Activities will be Sledding, Hot chocolate, Cookies and Marshmallows by the fire. Bring your own sled and dress to stay warm.

Coordinators are Jed and Mary Lindholm, Chris Roy and Kevin Moulton. Please let Kevin know if you have any concerns or questions. For more information please call Kevin Moulton at 978 422 3405, e-mail [kmoulton1@verizon.net](mailto:kmoulton1@verizon.net) or call the church office at 978 422 6657.

## CONFIRMATION CLASS NEWS

**Jan. 8, Sunday, 11:15-12:45**

ñ The Confirmation Class and Leader Jan Patten will provide a light lunch and games and crafts for the children of the church in room 2 during the all church lunch and interim time discussion.

**Jan. 26, Thursday, 7 -7:45 p.m.**

ñ Confirmation Class to attend the Deacon's meeting

**Jan 29, Sunday 11:30-12:30**

ñ Meet in Room 2 for discussion about life in the church: sharing our gifts of time, talent, treasure.

## VILLAGE GREEN PRESCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

The Village Green Preschool will hold an Open House for interested parents on Monday evening, January 9, 2012 from 7 - 8 PM. Parents will have an opportunity to see the classroom, meet the teachers and learn about the program. Refreshments will be served.

Registration for September 2012 will be held on Thursday, January 12 and Friday, January 13 at 9:00 AM in Room 2 of the First Church. Registration on January 12 is limited to members of First Church and to siblings of former students. Registration on January 13 is open and all are welcome.

The Preschool offers two and three day programs for three, four and five year olds. Children must be three years of age by December 31, 2012 to register. For more information or to arrange a visit, call the Director, Linda Greene at 978 422-8256 or [978 422-6293](tel:978-422-6293).

## WARM YOUR SOUL! CARIBBEAN DINNER - JAN 21ST

Need a bright spot in the cold, dark days of January? Come join us for the Caribbean dinner to benefit the LaRomana mission group who will be traveling to the Dominican Republic in March. The menu is roasted chicken, rice and beans, salads and fabulous homemade

desserts. There will be family entertainment by VIC and STICKS as well as a silent auction. Tickets can be purchased during coffee hour after church or by contacting Jenn or Mary Colburn at [978-422-8498](tel:978-422-8498), Nancy Miller at [978-422-7948](tel:978-422-7948) or the church office.

You can also help by donating to the silent auction - gift cards, a stay at your vacation home, gourmet meals and artwork are very popular; but any item, large or small, would be greatly appreciated. Contact Nancy Miller or Jenn Colburn to donate. Come join us for a delicious meal and an evening of family fun!

## TURKEY POT PIE SUPPER

Fellowship Board is once again sponsoring the Turkey Pot Pie supper on Saturday, Feb 4 at 6 p.m. Menu will include turkey pot pie, salad and beverages with brownie sundaes for dessert. A 50/50 raffle will round out this fun winter night out! All proceeds benefit the Fellowship Board's annual \$850.00 pledge to the Capital Campaign. Tickets go on sale beginning January 15.



## BAPTIST SOCIETY TRADITIONS AT FIRST CHURCH

By Gereda Burger, Moderator

As you know by now in June, 2011 the Baptist Society at First Church voted to disband. Since that time, we have celebrated this rich history with a Baptist Heritage Sunday and conferring Deacon Emeritus on Rollie Nelson. Since that time the Diaconate and the Church Council have both voted to accept a declaration prepared by the Baptist Society expressing the desire for First Church to preserve some important Baptist traditions. Here is the declaration for your reference.

### A Declaration of Intent to Preserve Baptist Traditions within The First Church in Sterling

Whereas

The First Baptist Church was the second congregation to be formed in Sterling in 1837, contributing to the moral and spiritual strength of this community for 77 years;

And whereas

From 1914 to 1949 this congregation continued its contribution in federation with the Evangelical Congregational Church;

And whereas

This Baptist Society has been a vital part of the First Church in Sterling for 62 years, from its inception in 1949 until the society's formal dissolution in 2011,

Therefore be it resolved

That the First Church in Sterling will continue to maintain contact with the American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts, including but not limited to promoting its camping and conferencing programs, and the Christian Youth Conference at Ocean Park;

And be it resolved

That First Church will maintain and continue to operate the immersion baptismal tank in its chapel, as well as upkeep and regular cleaning and maintenance necessary to that end;

And be it resolved

That the pastoral and lay leadership of First Church will continue to make available baptism by immersion to the adults and youth of the congregation;

And be it resolved

That the Diaconate of the First Church in Sterling, or other bodies charged with upholding religious traditions and concerns, will make every effort to include at least one person representing the Baptist faith, in order to uphold Baptist beliefs and traditions;

And be it resolved

That the Minister of the First Church in Sterling, along with others who may be enlisted to do so, will include teaching of the Christian faith expressed in the New Testament, including the meaning of baptism by immersion.

**Attention:**  
**Women of First Church**  
**(and their friends!)**

*You're Cordially Invited to the  
Annual mid-winter Ladies-only*



# *Fireside Gathering*

**When: Friday evening, February 10<sup>th</sup>**  
**6:30 – 9:00 PM**

**Where: First Church Houghton Room**  
***(Snow date Saturday, February 11th)***

*Enjoy a  
light supper  
and sample some  
delicious desserts.*



*Renew  
old friendships  
and make some  
new ones*

In lieu of an admission charge, we will be having a  
**“Silent Auction”**

Please bring **one item** for bidding-  
old or new, foodstuffs, Christmas gifts you don't need, etc.  
All proceeds will directly benefit the Sunday School  
and Youth Programs at First Church.

Come enjoy an evening of fellowship and fun –  
We look forward to seeing you there!!

Please RSVP by Feb. 6th to:  
Linda Davis at [davisfarmers@comcast.net](mailto:davisfarmers@comcast.net) / (978-563-1773)

**WARRANT FOR ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING**

December 30, 2011

To: Carolyn Kretz, Clerk of the First Church in Sterling

Greetings: You are hereby directed to notify all members qualified to vote that the annual meeting of The First Church in Sterling will be held Sunday, January 22, at 11:05 AM, immediately following worship services, in the Meetinghouse of the First Church to act upon the following articles:

- Article I: To approve the First Church operating budget for the fiscal year January to December 2012.
- Article II: To approve the report of the Nominating Committee.
- Article III: To transact any other business that may legally come before said meeting.

Gereda Burger  
Moderator

Interim Pastor: Rev. Nancy W. Strickland      Minister of Music: Ronna Davis  
 Bookkeeper: Cindy Morrow  
 Office Manager/Editor: Helen Hill  
 Sunday School Director: Susan Crimer  
 Administrative Coordinator: Dianne Dugan  
 Web Site: fsterling.org  
 Email: [sterlingoffice@gmail.com](mailto:sterlingoffice@gmail.com)



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT  
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
 STERLING, MA 01564  
 PERMIT #1

The First Church in Sterling  
 6 Meetinghouse Hill Rd.  
 P.O. Box 40  
 Sterling, MA 01564-0040  
 (978) 422-6657



# January 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1 NO ADULT CHOIR</b> <b>11:00 Church Service</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 6:30 Auction - PH <b>7:00 Fellowship Bd - Rm. 2</b>	<b>4</b> 4:00 Girl Scouts - Rm. 2 6:00 Brownies - PH 6:00 Girl Scouts - Rm. 2 <b>7:00 Building Bd - B2</b> <b>7:00 CYM Board - Chapel</b>	<b>5</b> 1:20 VGPS - Rm. 2 7:00 Boy Scouts - PH <b>7:00 Governance Task Force - Chapel</b> 7:30 Cub Scout Comm Mtg - Rm. 2	<b>6</b> 1:20 VGPS - Rm. 2 <b>6:00 Reiki Sessions - Rm. 2</b> <b>7:00 Adult Choir Rehearsal</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8 9:00 Adult Choir Rehearsal</b> <b>10:00 Church Service and Sunday School</b> <b>11:15 All Church lunch and Session about Interim - PH</b> 7:00 Boy Scout PLC Training - Rm. 2	<b>9</b> 6:30 Cub Scouts - Rm. 2 7:00 Cub Scouts - PH <b>7:00 Outreach Bd - Chapel</b>	<b>10</b> 6:30 Auction - PH 7:00 Sterling Softball - Chapel	<b>11</b> 7:00 Boys Scouts Comm Mtg - B2 <b>7:15 Worship Bd - Rm. 2</b>	<b>12</b> 8:45 VGPS Registration - Rm. 2 10:30 VGPS - Rm. 2 1:20 VGPS - Rm. 2 7:00 Boy Scouts - PH	<b>13</b> :45 VGPS Registration - Rm. 2 10:30 VGPS - Rm. 2 1:20 VGPS - Rm. 2 6:00 Women's Club - HR <b>7:00 Adult Choir Rehearsal</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15 9:00 Adult Choir Rehearsal</b> <b>10:00 Church Service and Sunday School</b> 4:00 La Romana Pill Packing - Rm. 2	<b>16</b> 7:00 PSPP - Rm. 2 	17 6:30 Auction - PH <b>7:00 Governance Task Force - Rm. 2</b> <b>7:00 Knitwits - Mary Higgins House</b>	<b>18</b> 4:00 Girl Scouts - Rm. 2 6:00 Brownies - PH 6:00 Girl Scouts - Rm. 2	<b>19</b> 8:00 Sterling Garden Club - HR 10:30 VGPS - Rm. 2 1:20 VGPS - Rm. 2 7:00 Boy Scouts - PH 7:30 VGPS Advisory Bd - Rm. 2 <b>SPIRELITE DEADLINE</b>	<b>20</b> 10:30 VGPS - Rm. 2 1:20 VGPS - Rm. 2 <b>7:00 Adult Choir Rehearsal</b> 7:00 Cub Scout Pack Mtg - PH	<b>21</b> 6:00 La Romana Caribbean Dinner - PH
<b>22 9:00 Adult Choir Rehearsal</b> <b>10:00 Church Service and Sunday School</b> <b>11:05 Annual Meeting</b> 3:00 Sterling Land Trust Annual Meeting - PH	<b>23</b> 6:30 Cub Scouts - Rm. 2 7:00 Cub Scouts - PH	<b>24</b> 6:30 Auction - PH	<b>25 7:00 Church Council - Chapel</b>	<b>26</b> 10:30 VGPS - Rm. 2 1:20 VGPS - Rm. 2 7:00 Boy Scouts - PH <b>7:30 Diaconate - Chapel</b>	<b>27 9:00 Spirelite Committee - Rm. 2</b> 10:30 VGPS - PH 1:20 VGPS - Rm. 2 <b>7:00 Adult Choir Rehearsal</b>	<b>28</b> 9:00 Snow Ball Dance - PH, Kitchen 9:00 CYC Planning Meeting Rm. 2
<b>29 9:00 Adult Choir Rehearsal</b> <b>10:00 Church Service and Sunday School</b> 7:00 Boy Scout PLC Training - Rm. 2	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 6:30 Auction - PH				

# ANNIVERSARIES AND BIRTHDAYS IN JANUARY

1. David Noyes 2. Shaun Anderson 3. Roland Nelson JANET & BRUCE BAKER 5. Jo-Ann Cummings Brandon Hamilton 6. Ashley Edwards 7. Al Long 8. Deborah Croucher 10. CHARLES & JOAN GOODALE 11. Paul Jones 12. Jamie Gibbs 18. Karen Molnar	19. Amy McCormick Lily Clark 22. Nelson Mather Philip Blake 24. Flo Coughlin 25. MARK & LINDA GREENE Karen Iszlai 26. Mary Colburn 27. Remo Rossi Bob Johnson Anthony Damiano 29. William Gauld Dean Croucher Kim Bourgeois
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## SERVING THE CHURCH IN JANUARY

<b>MEAL GIVER CONTACT</b> – Cheryl Barwise – 422-8391 <b>CAREGIVER CONTACT</b> – Janet Bartlett – 422-6364 - (Rides, visits, etc.) <b>FLOWER CONTACT</b> – Andra Montagna – 422-6945 <b>REIKI CONTACT</b> – Karen Iszlai – 422-8124 <b>PHONE PRAYER CHAIN CONTACT</b> – Gail Pineo – 422-6053 <b>E-MAIL PRAYER CHAIN CONTACT</b> – Cheryl Barwise - 422-8391 - <a href="mailto:theislandway@gmail.com">theislandway@gmail.com</a>	<b>WELCOME TEAM LEADERS</b> <b>Jan. 1<sup>st</sup></b> - Carol Hoffman <b>Jan. 8<sup>th</sup></b> - Toby O'Reilly <b>Jan. 15<sup>th</sup></b> - Robin Harper <b>Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup></b> - Marge Long <b>Jan. 29<sup>th</sup></b> - Cheryl Barwise
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## TRANSITIONS

**Congratulations** to Sean Paradise and Elizabeth Montagna. They were married on Dec. 17 by Pastor Nancy. **Christian Sympathy** goes out to Matt Fedler and family on the death of Eunice Fedler this past month. Also, to the Forkey family on the death of Mark Forkey.

## THANK YOU

First Church IHN Generosity ~ Thank You!

The Interfaith Hospitality Network families are going to have a brighter and merrier holiday season this year. The generosity and giving of our church members is outstanding and deeply appreciated. We are truly a passionate congregation and care deeply about others in need.

Moreover, it takes many hands to make this IHN Secret Santa giving so successful. A special thank you to Ranny Sabourin who coordinated the First Church giving tree this year. Thank you to all who purchased a gift (or two) for the IHN families. Kudos to those folks who volunteered to do last minute shopping or provide donations to 3 new IHN families who entered the IHN program just weeks ago. Your generosity is outstanding and continues to amaze me. Thank You from all the IHN families – It is truly appreciated!

Many thanks to the First Church for the Christmas Greetings, the tasty decorated cookies made by the Confirmation Class, and the lovely white poinsettia, with 3 large blossoms. Charlotte Gildutis

Thank you to Pastor Nancy and Mark Strickland for the delivery and presence of home made soup and crusty rolls just prior to the "October Storm" and our arrival home from John's surgery at the Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. I never realized what a great service and blessing it is to receive a home cooked meal when one is exhausted after managing a hospital routine, sleeping on a cot for three days and all in the face of rushing home so as to make it before the storm. Ronna and John Davis

The Holly Berry Brunch was a hit once again this year with a contribution of \$663.00 to the Interfaith Hospitality Network. The Outreach board would like to thank all who attended and also those who helped make it happen. A special thanks to honorary member/chef, Paul Jones.