

The Hilltops

Monthly Newsletter | February 2019

Published by New Beginnings United Methodist Church
serving Pepperell, Townsend, and the surrounding communities.

Editors – Krissy Miner, Brenda Bennett, & Lynne Connors



New Beginnings

United Methodist Church

We are followers of Jesus, who tend God's garden, serving the mind, body and spirit of all God's children.

Pastor - Christopher Jones
Church Secretary – Krissy Miner
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Church Treasurer - Lynne Connors

Church Council:

Chair: Jeff Rice 978-300-5150
Trustees Chair: Rick Oakley 978-821-0830
Lay Leader: Shirley Hult 978-433-6622
SPRC Chair: Christine Silver
Stewardship: Open
Worship Ministry:
 Jean Whitman 978-597-2511
Community Outreach Ministry:
 Open
Spiritual Formation Ministry:
 Brenda Bennett 802-318-7563
Youth Ministry:
 Linda Jones 978-877-1923

Membership Committee: Lynne Connors, Linda Jones, Brenda Bennett, Louise Thorpe, Rick Oakley and Shirley Hult

Nominating Committee: Chris Silver, Rick Oakley, Brenda Bennett, Lynn Grimes

SPRC: Chair – Christine Silver; Committee Members: Margie Wilson, Lynn Grimes, Susan Siart, Barbara Bourdon

Trustees: Chair- Rick Oakley; Treasurer - Marcia Scofield; Secretary - Krissy Miner; Committee Members: Al Higgins, Al Harris, Shirley Hult



What does Paul say may "abound more and more in knowledge and in all judgement?"

(January's question: Who was chosen to replace Judas as the twelfth apostle? Answer: Matthias)



Kyli Schwartz, Feb 11th
Elaine Aho, Feb 15th
Gloria Upham, Feb 16th
Brian Goyette, Jr. Feb 22nd
George Freeman, Feb 25th
David Chapman, Feb 27th

"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."

Corinthian 5:17





Beloved,

It has been my sad privilege over the last few days to be of small help to the Roberts and Johnson family as they grieve the loss of Heidi and John. For those of you who may not know, John's mother Beverly is connected to us through the Pepperell UMC. One of the few heartening aspects of this time has been the way their families and our community has reached out to offer comfort and assistance to one another. The people and clergy of St. John's Parish, the Townsend Congregational church, the First Baptist church, and New Beginnings UMC have all literally opened their doors and hearts without stint in this time of sorrow. Father Jeremy, Mark Brockmeier, and Kevin Patterson have all been supportive and kind. The community outside the churches have also stepped up. Representatives of police, fire, and other first responders will honor the fallen and mourn with us. Others have worked behind the scenes in ways we may never know. Most of all, the Roberts and Johnson families have gathered together in grief, in support, and in love. I am grateful and gladdened by what I am witnessing.

I know that Townsend has been challenged recently with sometimes bitter division surrounding some aspects of public governance. I confess I am ignorant of the particulars of this conflict, but I have heard several people express a hope that this time of grieving as a community will bring us closer and will move our community closer to mending the wounds that remain. I hope this is the case, but the thought puts me in mind of a larger truth spoken by the prophet Jeremiah to a people in captivity. The word of God is: "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope" God's plan is true and real though we do not always see it well in these days.

I have said before that there will be times when we will all walk in the valley of shadow. We live in a broken world, and while God can and does make our crooked roads straight, we still are plagued with people and events that act in ways in opposition to God's plan for humanity. If we

declare ourselves followers of Christ, we are charged with building the Kingdom of God. We do this best by acting in love toward others. Winter is still with us, but we are beginning to turn our minds towards the Lenten season. I pray that we take this time to reach out to those we love and tell them that we love them. I pray that we put down any anger that we hold against another. We are precious, time is fleeting, and the Kingdom calls.

Yours in Christ,

Chris Jones



Debbie Alger; Lily Andreasen; Kathryn Bruen (Louise's sister, stroke); Judy Bureau; Patrick and Collette Burns; Betty Conley; Ralph Cusano (cancer); David Dearborn; Mary Ann DiStefano (The Poehler's dear friend, ovarian cancer); Gale Durno; Philip Durno (cancer); Keith Edmonds (cancer & heart problems); Emma Ermel; Marcus Ermel; Delaney Fallon; Bill and Gail Felton (homebound); Sandy Freeman; Donna Gallagher (brain injury); Andrew Garbino; Shirley Gibson & family; Steven (Ann Goebel's brother, cancer); Merle Grant; Jimmy Harnish (cancer); Kathy Harris; Lucky & Penny Howie; Michele Kelley; Jean Krikorian; Dondi LaRue; Tommy Maciorowski; Joan McCorquodale; Chloe Miner; Herman Miner; Dick & Judie Moore; Bob & Terry Newton; Lance Osborne; Debby Parker; Prayers for the O'Brien & Parker families; Wallace Powers (cancer); Sally Provencher (cancer); Terry Quinn; Bradley Raymond (seizures); Leslie Rice; Gloria Roddy (multiple myeloma); Peter Sheldon; Rita Signoretti (Krissy's mom); Richard Simmons; Al St. Croix (cancer); Louise Thorpe; Patty Thorpe (MS and graves disease); Jimmy Tompkinson; Christine & Roy Walker; Don Waye (cancer); Rev. Joan-Anne Westfall; Emma Whitman; Sheila Wick; Nevaeh Wilder (cancer); Edward (Margie Wilson's brother, cancer); Robert Withee; Bonnie Wozniak; the victims of natural disasters all over the world; all those unemployed.



February Community Supper

Our next Community Supper will be held on Wednesday, February 13th, from 4-6pm. Our January supper was another great success, with a large number of people attending! Judy Bureau was back helping us! Judy's baked beans were served along with baked ham, coleslaw, German potato salad, rolls, many desserts (consisting of homemade pies, Marcia Scofield's great bread pudding, cookies, cakes, brownies, and some Hannaford pastries). Thank you to everyone who gave their time, those who cooked, served, delivered meals, and cleaned up! This is truly a team effort, and we could not do this without your help! Blessings to you all.

God is in the Small Stuff

By: Bruce & Stan

Submitted by Brenda Bennett

Chapter Two

Does God seem distant? Is He detached from you? Maybe that's because you are waiting for God to come to you. If so, then you've got things backwards.

God has given us His Word, His Son, and His Spirit. That is more than we will ever need in order to understand God (and certainly more than we can absorb in a lifetime). But the next step belongs to each of us. It's up to us to read God's Word, to believe in His son, and to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

You see, God is a perfect gentleman. He never forces Himself on anyone. He anxiously desires a deep and meaningful personal relationship with you, but He won't force the issue. It must be voluntary on your part. So, if you want to get to know God better, *you* must approach

Him. When Jesus taught about this principle, He presented the relationship as an invitation: *Look! Here I stand at the door and knock. If you hear me calling and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal as friends.*

Revelation 3:20 NLT

God makes Himself available, but you must respond to His invitation. Take Him at His Word. Go to Him. Open the door of your heart to Him.

You don't have to move to a monastery to know God better. You don't have to learn ancient Hebrew or memorize the names of the twelve disciples in alphabetical order. All it takes is your time and attention—reading, His Word and talking to Him. Start with a few minutes each day and grow from there. You don't have to call to schedule an appointment. He has already extended the invitation, and He's waiting for you to respond.

... In the Small Stuff

- There is a direct relationship between the desire to know God and the struggle that follows.
- Never be ashamed of your faith.
- Feeling good about God does not bring you closer to Him.
- God
- S anger lasts only for a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime.
- You are responsible for the depth of your spiritual understanding. God is responsible for the breadth of your ministry.
- Seek to know God and faith will follow.
- To love God is to obey God.
- Rather than worry about what you don't know about God, concentrate on what you know.
- Love God, not godliness.
- Discover what pleases God, and then make them habits.
- Exposing yourself to God's truth is risky, but it's a risk worth taking.

- The highest learning is to know God and, from that knowledge, to love Him.
- Knowing God takes tremendous effort, but the reward is great.
- Get a concordance and look up the names of God.
- Get a concordance and study the names of Jesus.
- You begin to seek God for who He is when you stop seeking Him for what He can do for you.
- Ask the Lord to teach you His ways.
- Have a passion for God and compassion for people

Portraits, by James J. Metcalf
Submitted by Liz Cataldo

Entirely For You

*O Lord, I want to live this day, entirely for You.
 With everything I think or say,
 and everything I do.
 I want to give the best in me,
 Of heart and soul and mind, and glorify You
 constantly, by being good and kind.
 Because each hour that I live, and all that I
 possess, are priceless presents that You give,
 to bring me happiness.
 You comfort me in every task to win,
 and You are lenient when I ask,
 forgiveness for a sin.
 And so the least I can afford, or undertake to do,
 is just to live this day, O Lord, entirely for You.*

***Central MA District Names New
 Administrative Assistant***

January 07, 2019

The New England Conference and Central Massachusetts District Supt. René Perez are pleased to announce that Rebecca Richards Guzman has joined the staff as administrative assistant for the district. She replaces Barbara Jean Moulton who served the district since 2014.

Richards Guzman, the daughter of a United

Methodist pastor, is no stranger to the Central MA District. She grew up in Pepperell and Townsend, MA, and East Hartford, CT. She began her new role on Dec. 28, 2018.

For the past three years, Richards Guzman served as Director of Programs and Facilities for Andrews United Methodist Church in western North Carolina. Prior to that she taught English in Peru, and served as Parish Administrator in Washington, D.C.

“It is with excitement that I share this news. Rebecca comes with a lot of passion for ministry, as she is a candidate for ministry, and is looking to attend Boston University in the future,” said Rev. Perez. “She sees this job as an opportunity to extend her call to ministry into the Central Massachusetts District and beyond. Rebecca is a well-organized individual who brings her gifts of communication, organizational management, and passion for The United Methodist Church.”



“I enjoy working with people. I am passionate about community engagement, social justice, and missions,” Richards Guzman said. “As a lifelong Methodist, I have a deep love and respect for of the connectional work of the Methodist Church as well as the diversity and challenges of our connectional system.”

Richards Guzman and her three-year-old son William will be living in Manchester, CT, as she transitions to her new home in Central Massachusetts.

The Central MA District office is located at 53 Birchwood Drive, Holden, MA 01520. Office hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Fridays. Reach Richards Guzman at (508) 853-1895 or cma@neumc.org