

Congregational Connection



Pastor's Column *Angels Among Us*

"Do not be afraid." - The Angels

As we enter Advents, our theme for the month will be on the angels of the Advent and Christmas story.

Angels are the symbols of messages that we need to hear—that we need to wake up to. Rhonda Britten, in her book, *Fearless Living* writes: "Fear is the gatekeeper of your comfort zone." How are we called to move past our fear—past our comfort zones—in order to offer more hope, more peace, more joy, more love and more life?

The angels of the Christmas story are decidedly not of the Hallmark version. Angels in the scriptures, to the contrary, seemed to elicit anything but cute reactions. There was a reason why angels always said, "Do not be afraid." They were a wake-up call and came with life-altering messages. They announce the prophetic message, "don't be afraid" as you set out to fulfill what God is calling you to do and be in this complicated, unjust world.

The angels that appear in the story of Jesus' birth would have been very comfortable in our world of tweets and hashtags. Their messages were often short and to the point—their favorite line being #DoNotBeAfraid. So as we look at the stories of these winged messengers to Zechariah, Mary, Joseph and the Shepherds and their reactions to them, we will contemplate what messages we can offer that will counteract a culture of fear and bring #morehope, #morepeace, #morejoy, and #morelove to the world.

Here are the themes for our journey ahead.

Make Ready a People: #morehope 12/3/17

Luke 1: 5-25, 57-80

Nothing is Impossible: #morepeace 12/10/17

Luke 1: 26-56

Do Not Be Afraid: #morejoy 12/17/17

Matthew 1: 18-25

This Will Be a Sign: #morelove 12/24/17

Luke 2: 1-20

Get up and Go: #morelife 12/31/17

May Advent and Christmas be blessed for you and may your ways be a blessing for those in our world of need of the gospel news and justice and the newborn love of Christ.



From the Desk of the Deacons

The holidays have arrived!! We hope everyone had an enjoyable Thanksgiving Day and was able to spend time over a delicious turkey dinner catching up with family. Now it's time to start preparing for the celebration of the birth of our savior, Jesus Christ.

The Deacons have met to make plans for the month of December where a special message is delivered every Sunday as a new candle is lit on the Advent wreath representing hope, love, joy and peace during this special season.

Starting on Sunday, November 26th, Nancy Haley will be taking orders for Poinsettias. Please see her any Sunday from 11/26 through 12/17 to place your order. The plants will be delivered on Saturday, December 23rd and will decorate our Sanctuary for the Christmas celebration.

On Sunday, December 3rd, the Weymouth Mayor's office has asked Pastor Gretchen to do the Blessing at the Town's Christmas Tree Lighting to be held at the Town Hall at 5:00 pm.

As some of you know, a survey was sent out to canvas members about changing the time of the Christmas Eve Service. Pastor Gretchen also reached out to clergy across the country to get their thoughts on the best time to have a Christmas Eve service to accommodate the most people. The majority of responses was 5:00 pm or earlier.

With Christmas Eve falling on a Sunday this year, the Deacons talked about many different scenarios for the day including holding a morning service and evening service, having an afternoon service, or having our usual service at 7:30 pm. The final decision was to have our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 5:00 pm to allow time for members and visitors to be able to attend a church service, and also be able to spend an evening with family and get small children into bed at their normal time.

On Sunday, December 31st, there will be a Carol Sing conducted by Victor. Everyone can enjoy a morning of listening and singing along to holiday classics.

December is a busy month with a lot happening in our lives. We look forward to seeing you during the upcoming Sundays when we take time to celebrate the anticipation of the birth of the Christ child. Hope, Love, Joy and Peace to all.



From the Trustees

The church has had a large, underground fuel tank for many years. It is located underneath the back-yard play area used by South

Shore Stars. We had a no heat call from our prime tenant and our supplier Fawcett Energy came over to fix it. They discovered that there was no oil flowing from the underground tank to the boiler located in the annex basement. They tried several times to blow the blockage out of the line with CO2 cartridges to no avail. Fortunately, this happened during one of our recent warm spells, so heat was not a dire concern. The forecast was calling for cold weather soon however, so a solution was imperative. Digging up the tank would have required a massive effort and would have been quite expensive. The solution was to install two additional 275-gallon tanks in the tank room adjacent to the boiler on the other end of the building and run a new oil line to connect the annex boiler to this new supply point. This was accomplished in one day and the new work has been totally successful. The cost for all this was \$6,500 and is a perfect demonstration of the totally unexpected events which can impact our budget at any point in the year.

The window work continues at our contractor's shop in Hampden. The selling of our stock to fund the bulk of the project turned to be more time consuming than we had expected. In addition, the shop itself received several more contracts than it would have normally expected and thus their work was slower than usual. This is still a work in progress, but they will return in shape for another 110 years of providing inspiration and beauty for us all.

Your Trustees

Bob Criswell, Curtis Ellett, Norm Fulton, John Holman, Tom Kosonen, Kathy Mosher, Tom Ritchie



Notes from the Music Director

HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA DEC. 2 AT 7:30 P.M. --- As of early November, the Southeastern Philharmonic Orchestra had no Weymouth venue for its annual Christmas pops concert.

Our church came to the rescue and invited the orchestra to use our beautiful sanctuary/concert hall. Thank you, Trustees, and thank you, Music Committee.

Please come and invite a friend to this spectacular way to usher in the holiday season, with lots of favorites including "Sleigh Ride" and "Winter Wonderland" plus our very own Herring Run Festival Chorus singing the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's "Messiah."

Orchestra members are baking all sorts of desserts for the pay-what-you-can refreshments. Admission is only \$15 for adults, \$10 for seniors 62 and older and students with ID, and children 10 and younger are FREE. You'd be hard pressed to find such high-quality entertainment in Boston at even three times the price.

SPECIAL MUSIC FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS - Your Senior Choir and Christmas Kids' Choir are hard at work preparing special music for our Advent and Christmas services, including the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 5 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 24. NOTE THE NEW, EARLIER TIME

Once again, we are working on bringing in some special guest musicians for the Christmas Eve service, including special visitors from the Southeastern Philharmonic Orchestra and a special guest soloist.

A LITTLE CHRISTMAS IN JACKSON SQUARE XIX--- Our 19th annual Epiphany celebration is shaping up to be another banner day in the life of our church. In addition to great music by our Senior Choir, we plan to welcome back the members of the Southeastern Philharmonic Orchestra, who have graciously donated their time and talents as we take up our annual collection for the Weymouth Food Pantry.

Among those also signed up to participate: the choirs of Immaculate Conception Parish and local troubadour Jim Melody, who will offer his profoundly beautiful "Christmas in Boston."

Be sure to mark your calendar now: Sunday, Jan. 7, at 3 p.m. Doors will open at 2:15, so be sure to come early. We frequently fill the sanctuary and also use the chapel for seating.

Be sure to "like" us and "friend" us on Facebook:

www.musicatsanctuaryhall.org

Victor DeRubeis, Director of Music

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Church School News

We seem to have just passed our busiest month. What more could be added to 30 days? The eager children collected, donated, filled, blessed and delivered 20 boxes for Operation Christmas Child. Then stayed after church one Sunday to make chocolate dipped pretzels for the Bake Table at the Christmas Fair and then they even volunteered to help at the Fair. You say that's enough, oh no, we then drove to Quincy to the Interfaith Social Service food pantry to pack 125 Thanksgiving meals on a Sunday afternoon. On the first and third Sunday's our Youth class volunteers in the Nursery, assisting with all of our little ones by reading our stories, helping with lessons and being a caring presence for the children.

Advent begins Sunday December 3rd and we have put together an Advent take home kit for each child. It will enable families to celebrate the season where we long for our Savior to be born.

Prayer Pals will be revealed on 12/3. The children and adults will find out who has been praying for them all year long.

Christmas Pageant December 17th Our church school children will present their annual Christmas Pageant during the worship service on December 17th. It will be narrated by our Youth Class with all of the younger children acting out the story of Jesus' birth. We hope that you will come and share this very special moment together with the children and may we all find the true Spirit of Christ in our worship together. The Church School is inviting families to bring their Nativity scenes to church on pageant Sunday to be displayed in the windows of the Sanctuary. There are 12 windows available so I ask that you contact me and I will assign a window. During the service we will Bless them with the children. Kerry's email: mortforthill@comcast.net, or text at 781-248-5651 Church School Supt., Kerry Mortland Seek Joy!



Stewardship

On Saturday, November 18th Santa's helpers were working hard at the 2017 Christmas Fair. The Church was bustling with vendors and members selling crafts, children visiting Santa and people buying baked goods and taking chances on raffles and silent auction items. It was a fulfilling day of holiday celebration with our family, friends and guests who came through the doors to shop, eat, and watch the South Shore Dance Academy performance and the Dance-sport Boston performance by AnnMarie & John Paul.

It takes months of preparation and a full team effort to make this happen every year. The Stewardship Committee is very thankful to everyone on our Church team. It is so heartwarming to see our Church family laughing and working together!

The total raised is \$4,350.00!!! Well done! The Holiday Gift Basket of food items and gift certificate was won by Kerry Mortland and she donated it to a Family in Need.

The Stewardship Committee appreciates all the help it received to make this day so prosperous and successful. Bless you all for your dedication and commitment.

Also, please remember to turn in your 2018 pledge cards. Journey to Generosity, The Way of Jesus is our theme all through the year of 2018. When you make a committed pledge to the Church, it is helpful to the Trustees who have the task of completing the Church budget. And your commitment helps the Church to do God's work in many other ways throughout the year, in the community and around the world. If you need a pledge card, please ask anyone on the Stewardship Committee, look on line, in your email too. Thank you so much.

Thank you again to our Church Family. We wish you all a very Blessed Holiday Season.
The Stewardship Committee
Tara Haley, Cheryl McMillan, Kerry Mortland, Martha Webber and Colleen Whitham



Mission and Outreach

This year the Mission and Outreach mitten and hat tree is in our chapel. We are asking for new winter hats, gloves, and mittens for the Weymouth Youth Center to be given to youths in Weymouth who are in need. As always, thank you for your generosity!

-Mary Crawford, Judy Beth Matusiewicz, Sue Bose, Paula Fulton, Karyl Lew, Linda Santacroce



Soup/Sandwich/Scripture

Soup and Scripture will meet Tuesday, January 16, 2018. The reading is Psalm 139: 1-18.



GILLETTE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We have several opportunities to serve concessions and raise \$\$\$ for our Stained Glass Window Restoration Fund.

Please contact Donna #781-767-8162 if you can work any of these events.

12/24	Sun	Pats v. Buffalo Bills
12/31	Sun	Pats v. NY Jets



Poinsettias

The holidays are approaching quickly. Why not brighten up your Christmas holiday by ordering a beautiful poinsettia for you or your loved one's home?

Starting on Sunday, November 26, 2017, you may begin to place your Christmas flower orders during coffee hour each Sunday (December 3, December 10, and December 17, 2017). The final cutoff date for ordering poinsettias is December 17, 2017. The poinsettias come in red, white, or pink and are reasonably priced at \$9.50. Our friends at Hartstone Flower and Garden Center are keeping the price the same as last year and does not charge us for delivery. You may pay in cash and/or write a check payable to Hartstone Flower and Garden Center, Inc. Any questions, please do not hesitate to contact at home (781) 812-0737.

The flowers will be delivered December 23, 2017 to be set up for our Christmas Eve Service on December 24th at 5:00 p.m.



Upcoming Pastoral and Preacher Coverage

December 3rd - Pastor Gretchen - Communion - First Sunday in Advent
December 10th - Rev. Donna Villeumier - Second Sunday in Advent
December 17th - Pastor Gretchen - Third Sunday in Advent & Christmas pageant
December 24th - Pastor Gretchen - Fourth Sunday in Advent - Christmas Eve Service
December 31st - Pastor Gretchen



Birthdays

Paul DeRubeis	December 1
Karen Andrews	December 2
Sara Thurber	December 5
Leo Eliasson	December 9
Emma DeRubeis	December 12
Sarah DeRubeis	December 12
Mariana Gramz	December 20
Shirley Horton	December 22
Ray Matusiewicz	December 25



Chickie
Kelly
Lynn Tenney
Michael B.
Cindy H.
Michael F.
Bette
Michael R.
Harold H.
Janice
Esther
Ritchie
Lydia Fulton
Dick Ward
Ben
Shirley
Kelly Cassier

Leo
Servicemen & women
First Responders
Tom Arthur
Cheryl Thornton
Angela
Wendy
Chris & Dick
Dave
Curtis
Brenda M.
Karyl and Kim Lew
Jim B.
George Morgan
Anita & Mark
Daniel's birthday
Harold & Joy M.



Notes from the Office

Please have your January newsletter submissions to me by December 20th. Thank you!
-Sara