

Sunday Worship In February

Theme:
**Community
 Service**



February 3
Turning it Around
 Rev. Susan
 Marnie Kaufman

February 10
Going Green
 Environmental
 Ministry Team

February 17
Living the Dream
 Rev. Susan
 Mary Lou Hughes

February 24
*Guatemala - What
 Difference can we
 make?*
 Guatemala Task
 Force

A Message from the Senior Minister - Rev. Susan Cartmell

I was so pleased to have you all hear the reports on the proposed Capital Campaign at the Annual Meeting on Sunday.

- Design Report - My gratitude to Kirby Salerno, chair of the Design Team, for his comprehensive explanation of the need for a substantial building project, and his clear explanation of both the reasons for it, and the features of it.
- Fund Raising Report - I am also grateful to Alex Cullen for his work in chairing the Public Phase of the Capital Campaign Fund Drive. He explained the way that the church hopes to fund the building project over the next 5-6 years.
- You will be receiving a letter in the mail this week with more information about the capital campaign.
- You will be invited to a meeting in a home of a church leader where you can see the plans up close, talk to one of the Design Team members, and ask your questions.

For a variety of reasons the Board concluded almost 3 years ago that we should consider having a capital campaign to address long-standing building problems -

1. Energy efficiency, -
2. Handicap access
3. Deferred safety and maintenance issues
4. Improved our architectural connection to the town. (Currently, we are a

backdoor church.)

This plan is more ambitious than the original one because we have a vision that we will become an even more prominent community gathering space. In colonial times and in the 19th century churches filled a civic and religious role in the town, as meeting spaces for all. In the 20th century many different denominations flourished, but as we enter the 21st centuries there is a great shift in our culture. A large number of churches are no longer thriving.

That is not the case for us, because we are in a stronger position than many congregations and have a growing roster of new families. But the churches that are looking ahead will be those that have community space so that they can assume a role in the town that plans and encourages activity all week long. The churches that survive and thrive will be places where people can explore arts, education, and spiritual discussions of every kind. This plan for a new space and new entrances in our building is central to that vision. Seeing our building as a central place of gathering for the community is a part of our openness to all, a central theme in our covenant.

The plan and the enthusiasm I heard on Sunday are all very exciting. Make sure you look for your letter in the mail.

Peace,
 Susan

Sermon Theme for February - Community Service

Every Sunday, all month long, the sermons will feature a story from one of you about how you put your faith into action in service to the community.

Feb. 3 - "Turning it Around" - When we face challenges in our lives we have a choice about how to respond. Marnie Kaufman is a member who was diagnosed with Adenoid Cystic Carcinoma. In the course of her treatments she discovered that it is such a rare form of cancer that there is almost no research on it. So she started a research foundation from her home, and through her fund-raising she has met dozens of people who have this

Music Ministry News by Dr. Bobby DeRegis, Director of Music

As many of you know, we are so fortunate to have a lovely Casavant pipe organ in our Sanctuary. Casavant Frère, Limitée was founded in 1879 in St. Hyacinthe, Quebec. It is one of the largest and most prestigious organ building firms in the world. Our organ was built in 1996. It is an honor for me to play it each week.

Casavant organs have always been part of my life. In my childhood church in upstate New York we had a Casavant that was built in 1950, which was played (and still is today) by Sandra Greco, a wonderful organist. She was so kind to invite me to watch her play when I was very young. Her mastery of the pedals, stops, and keyboards fascinated me, and I knew that I had to study organ. In college I had the great fortune to be able to practice on a very large Casavant, also built in 1950, which was in an inner-city church where the organ was rarely used. I was able to practice at any time, and was doubly fortunate that the church was heated in the winter and air-conditioned in the summer.

I have recently been substituting in a Catholic church, playing for wedding, funerals, and Saturday Masses, as they find a permanent organist. Once again, I am proud to sit at the console of yet another wonderful Casavant organ. This particular instrument is actually two separate organs played from one console on the altar. When this church was built, Casavant was hired to incorporate one of its older instruments with a new one, all playable from a new console. One organ, which dates from 1925, is in the rear gallery and has a dark and fiery tone. The other organ, dating from 1961, is behind bronze grillework behind the altar and has a bright, neo-Baroque quality. The result is a very large instrument with a grand scale, that is very exciting to play. Heavy use and time are taking its toll on this organ, and it will need to be refurbished if it will be playable in the future. Presently, there are some pipes that do not sound and some that continue to sound long after the keys or pedals are released. This makes playing a service very interesting!

I am so glad that the Casavant organ in our church is so well maintained and cherished. My hope is that it will be a lasting legacy for our congregation, and that future generations will be as thrilled by its sound as we are today.

FOCUS

Focus is published monthly. Contributions from members and friends of the Church are invited. Please submit materials by e-mail to office@needhamucc.org.

March issue deadline:
Thursday, February 21.

Rev. Susan Cartmell
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Rev. Heike Werder
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Doris D. Cook,
Volunteer Office Asst.

Rev. Dr. Paul Clayton,
Pastor Emeritus

Healing Service Feb. 7th 7 - 7:30 p.m.



Come if you have had a rough day.

Come if you are looking for work.

Come if you are worried about a friend.

Come if you are praying for a loved one.

Come if you are waiting for medical tests or a procedure.

Come to lay your burdens down.

Come to light a candle.

TRIP OF A LIFETIME

April 22- May 2

Trace the path of the Apostle Paul by visiting the archeological sites for the churches he founded. The trip includes Corinth, Ephesus, Capadocia, Istanbul and several days in Athens.

Scholars from The Society for Biblical Studies will lead this trip. Sites include Acropolis, Parthenon, Areopagus, Library of Hadrian, Issa Bey Mosque, and several Byzantine Churches.



If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, speak to one of our experienced travelers - Susan Cartmell, or Rein Verschoor-Kirss. There is also more information on our website at <http://needhamucc.org/serve/mission-trips>.

Youth Ministry News with Rev. Jamie Green, Youth Minister

NEED A BABYSITTER FOR VALENTINE'S WEEKEND? Youth Group Fundraiser Offers Babysitting on Feb. 9, 4-10pm

Dinner and Snacks included!



The Senior High Youth Group is hosting a Babysitting Night on Sat., Feb. 9 (the Sat. before Valentine's Day). Children age 3 through grade 6 can be dropped off and picked

up any time between 4-10pm at the church for just \$20 for the first child and \$10 for additional children.

All proceeds go to the Senior High Summer Mission Trip, this year to NJ, to help rebuild houses damaged during Hurricane Sandy. Families must pre-register by Feb. 8th.

Dinner, snacks, a movie, and several fun activity stations will be offered. For more information or to register, visit www.needhamucc.org/learn/youth-groups or call the church

office at 781-444-2510.

Sign up to teach Sunday School:

We are looking for more Sunday School volunteers to teach this winter/spring. Sign up here:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0D4FAAAC2BAA8-winterspring>.

Invite a friend to church: During the months of January and February, the bible village kids will learn about how to be a disciple of Jesus. One way is by telling people about God, Jesus and the church. I will be encouraging kids to bring friends to Sunday School and the shepherd group (K-1, 2-3, 4-6) who brings the most friends will get something special!

First Formal Communion: In our church, we



offer a special program for 1st and 2nd graders to learn about communion and then they are invited to participate in their first formal communion. (All children are always welcome to participate in communion, but this is a special occasion for 1st and 2nd graders to learn about and celebrate communion). This year, we will offer a communion workshop for 1st and 2nd graders and their parent(s) on Saturday March 23rd from 10-11:30am. Childcare will be available for children not in 1st and 2nd grade. First Formal Communion will be celebrated on Sunday, April 7th during worship. Please mark your calendar for these special days! (Also, 3rd-5th graders who have not yet participated in a communion workshop and formal communion are welcome to attend!) If possible, please RSVP by emailing revjamie@needhamucc.org

Youth Music News by Jannatha Coffin-Malia, Director of Youth Music

First, I'd like to extend a huge thanks to everyone for so warmly welcoming me into your midst! I've been having a wonderful time working with the youth choirs. We currently have 12 active members of the Joyful Noise Choir, 9 in the Hallelujah Choir, and 8 in Shepherd's Staff. I so appreciate the dedication of all the kids and parents who have been involved. We would happily welcome any other youth who want to get involved. The more the merrier! My goal is for at least one of the youth choirs to perform once a month during church services. This gives the kids an opportunity to be actively working towards performing each week as well as allowing the congregation to see and hear their lovely voices!

Some of our upcoming activities include: Shepherd's Staff singing in church on Feb. 24 and visiting two assisted living facilities that afternoon to perform a selection of songs of their own choosing, and all three youth choirs together with the adult choir singing a dramatic selection on Palm Sunday. Our most exciting upcoming event is the youth musical, *The Prodigal Clown*. Auditions were held on Jan. 27 and the cast list is out! If there are any other students in grades K-6 who didn't get a chance to perform but would like to be involved, please email me at youthmusic@needhamucc.org. We have 20 young people in grades K-6 participating in this production. It's the beloved story of the prodigal son modernized and set in a circus! It features eight upbeat, fun songs, lots of dancing, and fun yet spiritually enriching dialogue. The cast will present a number or two in church on Sun, April 28, and we invite you all to join us on **Sat., May 4 in Fellowship Hall at 4pm** for the performance!



During a recent meeting, Reverend Susan asked us all to think of our intention for the upcoming spring. She mentioned this wonderful yoga practice in last month's FOCUS, and it really resonated with me. My intention is joyfulness. There is nothing more exciting and joyous in my week than arriving at church each Sunday morning and seeing the happy, energetic faces of the children and youth ready to sing. For me, it's not just about teaching them music or making them "perfect" performers (there's no such thing). It's about finding the joy within us all and imparting that to others through fellowship, scripture, prayer, and of course, music!

Annual Meeting Questions by Rev. Susan Cartmell

This week at the Annual Meeting we had a full agenda. We addressed a number of complex issues. I want to make sure that everyone understands what we did.

We voted to call a third minister – The Reverend Jamie Green, Associate Minister for Youth and Children.

What does this mean? We created a new position, title, and full salary package for Jamie.

Do her hours or responsibilities change? No. Jamie has been full time for 18 months and she will continue leading the Sunday School, the youth program and the Center After School program.

Why “call” her? While Jamie has been working full-time, she has not had a pension, or a standard healthcare package. Calling her and creating a standard ministerial position with the title of Associate Minister means she will be able to transfer her standing to the United Church of Christ and carry dual standing with the UCC and the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. This ministerial recognition and financial package was a requirement for joining the UCC. We want her to be official and she does too.

What budget implications does this have? We will need to take a few tenths of a percent more from the interest on our endowment in order to balance our budget for 2013.

Can we afford this? The finance team figures our budgets very conservatively, which is prudent. For many years our endowment was invested and growing at a very good rate- 10-12% each year. In 2008 it lost a substantial sum, like all investments. So the Board examined the amount of interest we were taking. At that time we took as much as 8% from the principle. The Board did not feel that 8% was a sustainable amount to be taking from the principle, given the downward trend in late 2008. So they voted to reduce our dependence on the endowment by one percent each year. We have been successful in weaning ourselves off the endowment, each year, until we used only 5% last year – 2012. However, we project that we will need 5.3% in 2013 to meet our increased budgetary needs with 3 full-time ministers.

Has the endowment grown again since 2008? Yes. Our endowment has regained much of the value which it lost in the stock market dive of 2008. It continues to grow at 10-12% a year. Even though we depend on a percentage of the principle balance, it has re-gained much of the value it lost.

It should come as no surprise that the church’s finances are in better shape than ever because the Church Board has been your stewards in building and enhancing our financial assets. That may not seem like a ministry, but they have been wise in many of these matters so that we can grow our ministry and increase the impact we make in our community.

February Sermon Theme...*Continued from page 1*

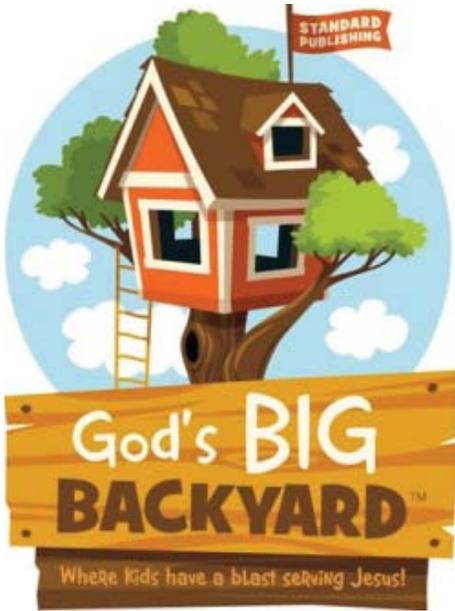
same rare form of cancer. Her work both raises awareness, and brings hope and support to people who would have faced this disease much more alone, without Marnie’s foundation. Marnie will join me to tell her story, and together will we present an example of one of our own members who has been active in community service.

Feb. 10 – “Going Green” - What difference does it make that, as people of faith, we see ourselves as stewards of God’s creation? Several voices from the Environmental Ministry Team will talk about how they learned about our climate changes, how they responded and why.

Feb. 17 – Living the Dream. - When she retired, Mary Lou Hughes decided to continue working in the community. So the first day of her retirement became the next chapter in her life. She started to work as a volunteer at the local hospital as well as the Tippet House, the hospice on South St. Mary Lou refers to this change as “living the dream” because her work has been so fulfilling.

Feb. 24 –

Guatemala – What difference Can We Make? - Representatives of the Guatemala Task Force will speak about why they are passionate about the church’s partnership and how they believe that this connection has expanded our view of community.



April VBS

April 16-19
8:30 am- Noon

Kids are invited to a week of active, adventurous fun at The Congregational Church of Needham's April Vacation Bible School program from Tuesday, April 16 through Friday, April 20, 8:30am-noon. The theme is "God's Backyard: Serving friends, family, neighbors and community" where kids will create crafts, play exciting games, participate in meaningful community service, sing upbeat songs, and enjoy delicious snacks.

Led by the church's Youth Minister, Rev. Jamie Green, kids, ages 3 years old to sixth grade, will learn how they can make a difference in the world by serving others. Each morning, all ages meet together for the Opening Backyard Bash. Then kids split into groups by age and travel to different workshops: art, story, cooking, service and games. At the end of each day, all kids come back together for the Closing Backyard Bash.

The fee is \$20 per day for morning activities at VBS from 8:30-noon. Lunch bunch will be offered from noon-1 for \$5 per day. Additional children in each family will receive a 50% discount. Register by April 1 for a \$20 discount. Scholarships are also available.

Registration forms can be downloaded at <http://needhamucc.org/learn/vbs>

Church Group News and Special Events



School/ Medical Supplies for Guatemala

The February delegation needs supplies for the schools and the health clinic in our sister village, Santa Maria Tzeja. Please drop off your donations on Sunday, Feb. 3 in the collection boxes located in the narthex, the parking lot entrance and near Fellowship Hall. See the list online at <http://www.guatemalapartners.org> for suggestions. Thank you!

Wednesday, Feb. 13, 7:00 pm
February Delegation Send-Off.
Everyone is invited to gather at

Dave and Caryl Johnson's (505 Great Plain Ave.) to send our church's delegation off to Santa Maria Tzeja with your good wishes. Travelers include: Brenda Metzler and Theresa Garrett, co-leaders; Jerry Durbin; Susan McNeice; Kristin Dame; Scott and Joene Pike; and Charlie Arvidson; with interpreters Ali Durbin and Randall Shea. The delegation returns February 25th.

Sunday, March 10th, 11:30 am,
Linden Hall
February Delegation Reportback. The February delegation will share their experience and what is new in the village. More details to follow in the March FOCUS.

Immigration: How Do We Fix a Broken System? Forum and discussion February 28 at the Needham Public Library

Immigration reform is now squarely on the agenda of both political parties as a result of the high participation of Latino voters in the recent national election.

A public forum is planned for February 28 at the Needham Free Public Library, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Please visit http://www.lwv-needham.org/files/2013-02-28_immigration_forum.pdf for more information. The event is free of charge.



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Men's Breakfast, Sunday February 17 "Celebrating Life Amidst Death and Dying"

The Men's Breakfast brings men of all ages and persuasions together once a month before worship in honest and lively discussion touching our faith and our lives in today's complex world. We get together in the Library on the third Sunday of the month and enjoy breakfast fare provided by volunteers. We have always welcomed men of all ages and can always accommodate those with scheduling challenges. Arrive at 8:15 AM for fellowship and breakfast or by 9:00 AM for the discussion.

On February 17, we will discuss the eternal questions of reconciling life and death. Join us!

Contact Keith McClelland (kmmlkm@rcn.com) for more information.

address

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THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF
NEEDHAM
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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Needham, Massachusetts 02492-2202

ADULT PROGRAMMING February & March 2013

FEBRUARY 2013

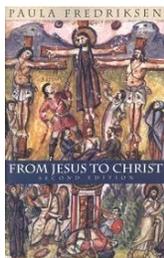
Sunday	Monday	Tues.	Thursday	Sat.
				2
3 *Prayer Made Visible *Faith Circle	4 *Cancer Support Group *From Jesus to Christ	5 Community Dinner	7 *Lunch Healing Service	9 Skiing at Mt Sunapee
10 *Prayer Made Visible * Family Support Group	11 *Cancer Support Group	12	14 Lenten Lunch	16
17 Lenten Bible Study	18	19	21 Lenten Lunch	23 FAITH IN ACTION
24 *Prayer Made Visible * Lenten Bible Study	25 *Cancer Support Group	26	28 Lenten Lunch	

FROM JESUS TO CHRIST

Monday, Feb. 4; 6:30PM Dinner with program starting at 7 p.m.

Dinner, Video Series, and Discussion: From Jesus to Christ.

This video series explores the life of Jesus and the origins of Christianity. Originally shown on PBS, it takes viewers back 2,000 years to the time and place where Jesus once lived and preached. What are some of the key events that occurred after Jesus' death, and who were the men and women whose belief, conviction, and martyrdom created a major movement that transformed the Roman Empire in the space of only 300 years? Rev. Heike Werder will lead the discussion. This is the last one in the series.



Session 1: ICONS (Feb. 3)

Make your own icon and discover a doorway to prayer. Various sizes of boards, glue, images, and paint will be provided. You may bring your own images/picture(s) to use as well.

Session 2: PRAYING IN COLOR (Feb. 10)

This is an active, meditative, and fun way of praying. If you can doodle...draw a line...write a name... you can do this. Markers, colored pencils, paper supplied. NO artistic skills required.

Session 3: PRAYER BEADS (Feb. 24)

Make a prayer bracelet to wear or a short string of beads to carry. The finished product will help remind you to pray during the day. Cord and beads provided.



PRAYER MADE VISIBLE

Sunday, February 3, 10, & 24; 11:30am - 1:00pm

Prayer Made Visible - A Hands On Spiritual Practice Buffet: 3 sessions...3 experiences presented by Rev. Peggy O'Connor

These classes are for the following people:
 Those who fumble with words and/or don't think they can pray.
 Those whose prayers feel inadequate.
 Those whose minds wander when they try to pray.
 Those who say they will pray for others but then forget to do so.
 Those whose prayer life feels like an item on their to-do list.
 Those who are bored with saying the same old prayers.
 Those who want to have a new prayer/spiritual experience.
 Those who want to go a little deeper.

ECHOES FROM THE PAST: THE BIBLE'S (UN-DIVINELY) INSPIRED TEXTS

Sunday, March 3, 10, and 17, 2012, Presented by: Nate Ramsayer, Biblical scholar and archaeologist.

How early did the Israelites begin writing their stories of God? Were the Ten Commandments really the original moral law code of the world? If Noah and his family were the only humans to survive the flood, why do other cultures tell us that it was Utnapishtim, Ziusudra, or Atrahasis and their families? Did God create the world by slaying a sea monster and hacking up and dividing its carcass? If not, then why do the Psalms and Isaiah tell us so? Did God have a wife at one point like the other Canaanite deities?

The Bible was actually quite a latecomer to the literary world. It was preceded by many stories from

MARCH 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tues.	Wed.	Thursday	Fri.	Sat.
					1	2
3 *Faith Circle * Lenten Bible Study * Echoes From the Past	4 *Cancer Support Group	5 Community Dinner	6	7 Lenten Lunch	8	9
10 Lenten Bible Study * Echoes From the Past	11 *Cancer Support Group	12	13	14 * Lenten Lunch * Healing Service	15	16
17 Lenten Bible Study * Echoes From the Past	18 *Cancer Support Group	19	20	21 Lenten Lunch	22	23
24 *Lenten Bible Study * Everyday Bikers Panel	25 *Cancer Support Group	26	27	28	29	30
31 Easter						

great cultures who wrote legends thousands of years before the Bible greats had ever lived. But what's really interesting is that one may find within the pages of the Old Testament traces of myth, narrative, teachings, and law codes from these preexistent societies. Nate Ramsayer will unravel the threads of ancient Near Eastern cultural influence that weave such a vibrant history in the founding documents of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.

EVERYDAY BIKERS PANEL DISCUSSION
FOLLOWED BY A BIKE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP
Sunday, March 24

Why not ride your bike to church that morning? Stay and listen to others who bike to work, for errands, and for fun. Bring your bike, and find out how to properly care for your equipment. Light refreshments provided.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

Sundays 8 to 9 a.m., starting Feb. 17, and consecutive dates are: 2/24, 3/3, 3/10/, 3/17, and 3/24.

We will be reading a devotional booklet together called "Spring Cleaning (for the soul)". Booklets are available for \$ 5.00 per copy.

HEALING SERVICE

Feb. 7, 2013, 7 p.m. in chapel

SPIRITUAL GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Faith in Action Service Day

Feb. 23 Workday at Pilgrim Church in Dorchester
February's sermon theme is "Faith in Action." The Outreach Committee invites you to do just that at the Pilgrim Church in Dorchester by helping with their Community meal program. We will help with meal preparation, serve lunch, eat with the guests, clean up, and do some other tasks like painting, lots of cleaning, and packing food baskets.

This day is organized by the City Mission Society. The participant's fee is \$20.00 which covers the cost of running Boston Urban Outreach opportunities. The number of participants is limited to 30. Sign up early to reserve your spot. The deadline is Sun., Feb. 17.

Faith Circle

If you feel rushed, get overwhelmed by all the demands of life, or want to find a way to create a quiet space in your busy life consider joining a Faith Circle. Each Faith Circle will be led by trained leaders. Each meeting will offer some readings or inspirational excerpts from a variety of modern spiritual writers with sharing time to be followed. Rev. Susan leads a faith circle the first Sunday of the month (Reception Room);

Cancer Support Group

Rev. Susan Cartmell leads this weekly support group on Monday morning, from 9 to 10:15 a.m. (Reception Room).

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Let's go skiing at Mount Sunapee!

Saturday, Feb. 9, 2013

We will meet at 7 a.m. in the church parking lot to carpool to the mountain. We will return to church by about 6 p.m.

Lenten Lunches

Lenten Lunches begin Feb. 14, and consecutive dates are 2/21, 2/28/, 3/7, 3/14/, and 3/21. We meet in the Library

Community Dinners

Feb. 5, and March 5; 6 to 7 p.m., Linden Hall. Join us as we host a monthly community supper for the Baby Basic families. Contact Rev. Heike to find out how you can participate. Sponsored by the Outreach Committee.