



THE CONTACT

A Publication of the Village Congregational Church,
Whitinsville, Massachusetts

Robert's Thing for the Contact December 2011

This is the Good News about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God. It began...
(Mark 1:1 NLT)

Here Comes Santa Claus, here comes Santa Claus, right down Santa Claus Lane...
Black Friday Sales are expected to wipe out some gloom for retailers this year.
It's not Black Friday...It's the TEN days of Black Friday.
HAPPY HOLIDAYS to all, no matter your creed.

It has occurred to me more than once over the last several years that Christmas has become more complicated. I have pretty much gotten over the fact that a day to give thanks has become little more than a day to rest and eat so you can shop the next day. I have mostly come to terms with the fact there will be a lawsuit about a nativity scene somewhere. I am seeking help with my aversion to the 24 hours of the "Christmas Story". Looks like it is going to be a good 'holiday' this year.

It has gotten so complicated. History has to be changed to factor into the prevailing mood of those who are in charge. Christmas is the birth of Jesus, that is what the day has always been about and that is all it ever will be about. You can add and subtract all that you wish, but the words of Mark will always stand. This is about good news, not just good news, but THE GOOD NEWS. When you remove Jesus from Christmas, you really have no right to call it Christmas. Perhaps it should be called Santamas or Holidaymas.

I am not saying for a moment that we should be disrespectful to those who hold to different beliefs than us, however, we should not forget our beliefs and what it took from God to bring the opportunity of Christmas to us. It is really quite simple, God saw that a change needed to come- one that humans did not seem able to make. The only way to bring that change was for God to come and tell us things that we could not/ would not see. In the person of Jesus, that is what God did. Christmas is God telling us it was and still is time for a change.

So this year amongst all the sales and the cards and the parties and the dinners and the presents and the...HOLIDAY- give a thought to how simple things were in the beginning, you know the beginning, the good news about Jesus the Messiah.

DECEMBER
2011

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BIBLE REFLECTION

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

REFLECTIONS

FIRST COMING

By Madeleine L'Engle

He did not wait till the world was ready,
till men and nations were at peace.
He came when the Heavens were unsteady,
and prisoners cried out for release.

He did not wait for the perfect time.
He came when the need was deep and great.
He dined with sinners in all their grime,
turned water into wine.

He did not wait till hearts were pure.
In joy he came to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.
To a world like ours, of anguished shame
he came, and his Light would not go out.

He came to a world which did not mesh,
to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.
In the mystery of the Word made Flesh
the Maker of the stars was born.

We cannot wait till the world is sane
to raise our songs with joyful voice,
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,
He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!

Words to ponder.....

Ray and Jan Shoup



VILLAGE BELL RINGERS NEWS



VILLAGE BELL RINGERS TO PARTICIPATE IN HOLIDAY
HANDBELL EXTRAVAGANZA!!

On Friday, Dec. 16th, at 7:30 pm, at the First Baptist Church in Worcester (corner of Salisbury St. & Park Ave.), a glorious musical event will be presented with multiple handbell choirs ringing Christmas music! Massed ringing, community singing with bells, and individual choir ringing will bring your evening alive! The Village Bell Ringers from our own VCC will be performing. Come for a joyous evening to celebrate the Christmas season! (free admission).

Village Bell Ringers will be ringing at the Dec. 11th worship service at Church, and also at the Christmas Eve services.

PEACE OF BREAD

The VCC will be providing a Peace of Bread meal on December 14th. Volunteers are needed to help cook, serve, and clean up for the meal. Please see Mike or Charlie after service.

Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.

~ Elizabeth Andrew



MONTHLY FINANCE UPDATE

As of November 30, 2011

Pledge Goal: \$108,166.00
Pledges Received: \$84,693.00 (78% of Goal)

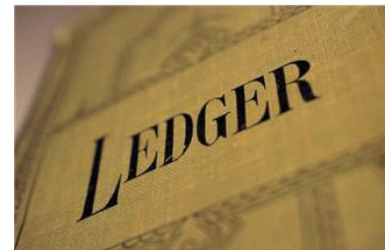
Expense Goal: \$267,598.00
Actual Expenses: \$236,283.00 (88% of Goal)

Capital Campaign:

2011 Goal - \$32,083.00
Actual YTD - \$4,300.00 (13% of 2011 goal)

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

In December, the Village Congregational Church will hold its annual Christmas offering in support of our Christian mission in 2012. We will start collecting the offering on Sunday December 11th and will continue with the offering through the end of December. Your contribution will make a difference in support of spreading the word of Jesus and provide needed services in His name in our community. Thank you for your generosity and continued support of the mission of the Village Congregational Church.



Thank you for your support!



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Dec. 1 Jordan Froment | Dec. 18 Thomas Newhall |
| Dec. 2 Sharon Naughton | Dec. 19 Abigail Deary |
| Dec. 2 Rensforth Yeo | Dec. 19 Kathy Gunness |
| Dec. 8 Benjamin Benton | Dec. 21 Lilly Reding |
| Dec. 10 Agnes Spratt | Dec. 22 Nicholas Adams |
| Dec. 11 Charles Hill | Dec. 22 Ray Adams |
| Dec. 12 Lynn Cone | Dec. 22 William Athanas |
| Dec. 12 Christopher Redding Jr. | Dec. 22 Abigail Cormier |
| Dec. 14 Wendy Berube | Dec. 23 Pat Furber |
| Dec. 16 Daniel Stack | Dec. 24 Melissa Fijol |
| Dec. 17 Raymond Adams | Dec. 27 Al Hoffmeister |
| Dec. 17 Tracy Palmer | Dec. 31 Warren Nordstrom |
| Dec. 17 Jan Shoup | |

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:

Christopher & Jill Redding

PRAYER REQUESTS

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Herb & Mary Andrews, Darcy Cassidy, Kenneth Craik, Caleb Paul Deary, Penny Gustafson, Robert Hebner, Charlie Hill, Billy Hinds, Andrea Jane', Lisa Lebreque, Dale Nicholson, Timothy Pitzen, Samantha Prescott, Ray and Jan Shoup, Agnes Spratt, Bill Sutton, Brian Tetreault, Luke Tibedo, Charlene Wilson, Hany



CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Christmas Eve Services



Family Service

5:30 PM



Candlelight Service

11:00PM

Christmas Morning Service

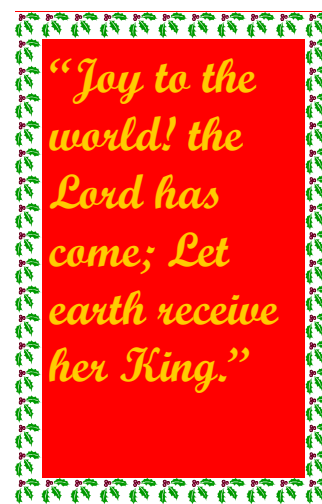
9:00 AM

Christmas Service

POINSETTIA PLANTS

This Christmas we will again be giving members of The Village Congregational Church the opportunity to purchase a poinsettia plant in memory of a loved one. These plants will be used to decorate our Chancel for Christmas starting Sunday, December 18th.

Order forms can be found in the bulletin. Order deadline is December 11th. If you have any questions, please see Marion Bosma.



COMMUNITY NEWS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

THE NORTHBRIDGE COALITION,
IN CONJUNCTION WITH FAMILY CONTINUITY
PROGRAMS, SEEKS VOLUNTEERS TO ASSIST IN
TRANSPORTING YOUTHS TO SELF HELP RECOVERY
GROUPS IN FRAMINGHAM ON THURSDAYS. IT IS
THE PLAN FOR A SIMILAR GROUP TO BE DEVELOPED
HERE IN THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY

Starts 12/1/11
Approx. 3 hours each Thursday for 8 weeks
A travel stipend will be offered

For more information contact:
Craig Maxim
cmaxim@familycontinuity.org
508-234-4181 ext: 5062

OPERATION SUITCASE

Operation Suitcase is an organization that collects donated goods that are in like- new condition or have been gently used and distributes them to people who need them. The store is open on Sundays from 12.00 to 5:00 pm and is located at One Main St., Whitinsville on the third floor of the bell tower. Enter next to the UPS and FedEx pickup boxes. All items are free. Donations that are needed include clothing of all sizes for all ages, linens shoes, books, toys, baby gear, toiletries and small household appliances. For information, contact Megan Riley at OperationSuitcase@yahoo.com.



DECEMBER

2011

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

				1 3:00-8:00 VMS 5:30 Scouts (M&D)		3
4 Second Sunday of Advent PEACE 10:00 Worship & Sunday School 11:15 Children's Choir 3:30-5:30 VMS 6:00 Scouts (M)	5 3:00-5:00 VMS 7:00 A Cappella Choir	6 3:30-8:00 VMS 5:30 Scouts (M) 6:45 Village Bells 7:00 Scouts (D)	7 3:00-6:30 VMS 5:45 Scouts (M) 7:00 Cadettes (D) 7:00 Chancel Choir	8 3:00-8:00 VMS 4:00 Daisy (M) 5:30 Scouts (M&D)	9	10
11 Third Sunday of Advent JOY 10:00 Worship & Sunday School 11:15 Children's Choir 11:15 Church Growth Comm 1:00 Scouts Holiday Party (M&D) 3:30-5:30 VMS	12 3:00-5:00 VMS 4:00 Juniors (D) 7:00 A Cappella Choir	13 3:30-8:00 VMS 5:30 Scouts (M) 6:45 Village Bells 7:00 Scouts (D)	14 3:00-6:30 VMS 5:45 Scouts (M) 7:00 Cadettes (D) 7:00 Chancel Choir	15 3:00-8:00 VMS 5:30 Scouts (M&D)	16	17
18 Fourth Sunday of Advent LOVE 10:00 Worship & Sun. School 11:15 Children's Choir 11:15 Finance Comm 2:00 Quilting Group (M) 3:30-5:30 VMS	19 3:00-5:00 VMS 6:00 Church Meeting Night 7:00 A Cappella Choir 7:00 Church Comm Meeting	20 3:30-8:00 VMS 5:30 Scouts (M) 6:45 Village Bells 7:00 Scouts (D)	21 3:00-6:30 VMS 5:45 Scouts (M) 7:00 Cadettes (D) 7:00 Chancel Choir	22 3:00-8:00 VMS 4:00 Daisy (M) 5:30 Scouts (M&D)	23	24 Christmas Eve He is born. He has come. He is our salvation. 5:30pm Family Service 11:00pm Candle-light Service
25 CHRISTMAS 9:00am Christmas Service 	26 3:00p-5:00 VMS 7:00 A Cappella Choir	27 3:30-8:00 VMS 5:30 Scouts (M) 6:45 Village Bells 7:00 Scouts (D)	28 3:00-6:30 VMS 5:45 Scouts (M) 7:00 Cadettes (D) 7:00 Chancel Choir	29 3:00-8:00 VMS 5:30 Scouts (M&D)	30	31