

# The Lexington United Methodist Church

an inclusive and reconciling United Methodist Congregation

## Newsletter

December 2004

Vol. 52, No. 11



### From the Pastor's Study...

Advent Purple. That was the topic of a recent article written by Nancy Taylor, President of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ. She celebrated the purple color of the Advent Season, noting that during the recent Presidential campaign and post election days, our nation has been reduced to two colors: red and blue. Perhaps it is not coincidental (could it be God-cidental?) that when mixed together, blue and red become purple, the color of the Advent season?

Advent is a time of hope; a time of expectation for the birth of Divine Love in our embittered, embedded and untrusting world. Early Christians believed that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, taught us that through Him we are no longer Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female. Today we understand Jesus' message as one that continues to reveal the truth that we are neither young nor old, abled nor disabled, conservative nor progressive; straight nor gay, Democrat nor Republican, Iraqi nor American. We are ONE with the One who has created us all.

I am not suggesting that in our oneness we become lukewarm Christians, agreeing on every issue. Our freedom encourages us to have differing opinions. But I am suggesting that we find oneness and common ground on our moral values and raise a purple flag that identifies us as Advent people committed to peace-making, economic justice and environmental protection. I was enraged to see the definition of moral values reduced to a debate on the issues of abortion and same sex marriage in recent election days. How can we as Christians allow the secular, political world to misrepresent the meaning of moral values? Are not moral values at the heart of war, poverty, abuse, healthcare, nuclear proliferation and toxic waste? to name only a few contemporary issues.

Surely we can bring red and blue together around our common understanding that Love is the common denominator of all moral values and offer the royal, penitent color of Advent purple to each other and to God's world in this holy season. May the Prince of Peace encourage and inspire us to be bearers and heralds of that Love.

With Advent hope,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rev. Susan".

Rev. Susan J. Morrison



### On the Inside...

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# December Worship 2004



## Sunday of Advent

December 5  
In Sebastian Bach's  
*Christmas Oratorio - Part II*

9:15 Praise Music; 9:30 Worship

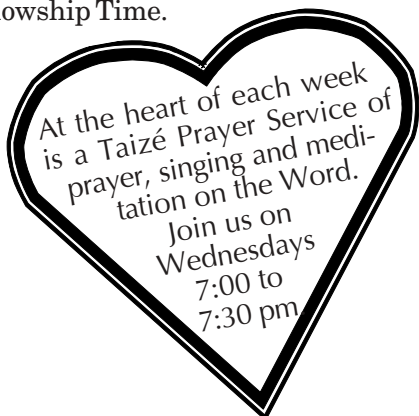
- ❖ The Senior Choir will perform the Second Cantata from J.S. Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* during the morning worship service. The cantata, which will be sung in English, narrates the angel's announcement of Christ's birth to the shepherds. The performance will feature soloists from the LUMC Senior Choir, a 6-piece professional orchestra, and organ accompaniment. Music Director Daniel Roehl, who arranged the work for this reduced instrumentation, will conduct the performance.
- ❖ The Candle of Friendship will be lighted on the Advent wreath and John the Baptist will bring the Word about his friendship with Jesus.
- ❖ There will be an Alternative Christmas Market before and after worship in Martin Hall.
- ❖ This is the first week of the Nicaragua Material Aid collection for our friends in La Borgoña, Nicaragua.

## Third Sunday of Advent

December 12

9:15 Praise Music; 9:30 Worship

- ❖ The Candle of Unselfishness will be lighted on the Advent wreath.
- ❖ Joseph and Mary will tell their story and the scriptures lessons from Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 1:46-56 will inform Rev. Susan's sermon on Unselfishness.
- ❖ This is the second Sunday of our annual Nicaragua Material Aid collection.
- ❖ Our annual Advent letter writing campaign for Amnesty International will be held during our Fellowship Time.



At the heart of each week  
is a Taizé Prayer Service of  
prayer, singing and medi-  
tation on the Word.  
Join us on  
Wednesdays  
7:00 to  
7:30 pm

## Fourth Sunday of

December 19

Roxbury Food Cupboard

9:15 Praise Music; 9:30 Worship

- ❖ The Candle of Love will be lighted on the Advent wreath.
- ❖ This year's Christmas Pageant, *We Three Kings*, will be performed by the children and youth of the congregation. The gifts that the Kings bring the Newborn Christ Child include those of Kindness, Friendship, Unselfishness and Love.
- ❖ Brunch will be served after the pageant and the church family will go Christmas caroling following brunch.

## Christmas Worship

Christmas Eve - December 24

5:30 pm Service

- ❖ The wonder and awe of the Christ Child's birth will be celebrated with scripture and story; carols and candles.

## First Sunday after Christmas

December 26

9:15 Praise Music; 9:30 Worship

- ❖ A medley of Christmas carols will be sung. The Gospel lesson will be read from Matthew 2:13-23 and Rev. Susan's sermon topic will be *Pay Attention to your Dreams*.



## Children's Christmas Pageant

December 19 - 9:30 am

This year's Christmas Pageant, *The Three Kings*, will be held during the worship service on Sunday, December 19. The children and youth will perform a short drama, in which an angel teaches modern-day children about the real meaning of Christmas. The pageant will feature holiday songs sung by the Children's Choir, culminating in the singing of *Silent Night* with the congregation. Brunch will be served immediately following the church service.

# Creating Lexington UMC'S Future

Each month this page will provide updates on the process and progress of *Creating LUMC's Future* ~ Watch for announcements of important all church gatherings!

## Upcoming Events in 2005

- January 10, 7:00 pm: Opening Conversation
- January 23, 2:00 pm: Opening Conversation
- February 17, 7:00 pm: Opening Conversation
- March 4 - 6: *Future Search* Weekend Event

## A Summary of the November 21 All Church Meeting

On Sunday evening November 21, many of us gathered for our second All Church Meeting in the process of *Creating LUMC's Future* that is realistic, relevant, and vital in light of our mission and vision.

We learned that we as a congregation in the New England Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church were designated last year as one of only 87 "vital churches" out of the 600 churches in our Conference.

We heard that the Conference's standards for a "vital church" are:

- ◆ A full time pastor covered by the conference health insurance plan
- ◆ A paid staff
- ◆ Full payment of conference Mission Shares
- ◆ Maintenance of the church building
- ◆ Maintenance of a parsonage
- ◆ Support of church programs.

Given the preliminary stewardship results and the anticipated rental income from the parsonage (July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006) we will be able to meet the above standards in 2005 and move into the coming year with a balanced budget. But as we look to our future, we need to ask: How would we define being a "vital church?" What definition would we draw from the Gospels? What are our core values?

Then the reasons for the **urgency of planning for change** were addressed.

**Membership Remains Static** – Although on the record LUMC's membership has remained about the same in the last five years at around 290, there has

been an invisible loss of members who have moved away and not transferred their membership.

**Worship Attendance has Decreased** – Although the average attendance has remained between 105 – 99 in the past 5 years, actual worship attendance averages between 75 and 90 on a regular Sunday counting the children.

**Parsonage Rental** - Time limited! The \$22,000 that will be available if we rent the parsonage next year will not be available when LUMC receives a pastor who will live in the parsonage.

**Corporation Expenses** – There is a projected increase in expenses to maintain the church building. It is expected that a new roof will be needed in the next 5 - 10 years; a recent organ repair cost \$2,000; windows are being replaced each year

**St. John's Korean** – The church is projecting a compromised budget for 2005; it would be difficult for them to assume unexpected expenses and the burden could fall to LUMC

**Pledges** – Although we celebrate a remarkable Stewardship Campaign for 2005, it needs to be noted that the top 10 pledges represents \$98,500 out of \$182,000 (i.e. 50% of the pledge income) and that 5 of these 10 pledge units are from retired or soon to move households: the top 20 pledges represents \$132,200 out of \$182,000 (i.e. 66% of the pledge income) and 10 of these 20 pledge units are from retired or soon to move households.

Where we go from here occupied the remainder of the evening, noting that in January and February 2005 there will be a series of "Opening conversations:" Monday, January 10 at 7:00 pm; Sunday, January 23 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm; and Thursday, February 17 from 7:00 – 9:00 pm. Hopefully these different dates and varying times will accommodate the schedules of all who wish to participate. At these meetings, anyone may bring a topic for discussion with members joining the topic of their choice, and they are free to move from group to group as they choose.

On the weekend of March 4 – 6, 2005 (with snow date the following weekend), we will engage in our *Future Search*, the pivotal event of the process. It will be a highly structured event which will encompass Friday evening, Saturday morn-

*continued on page 4*

**Are we being faithful to our understanding of the Gospel?**

*continued from page 3*

ing and afternoon, and Sunday afternoon. Future Search is a way of working which makes it possible for different groups of people to agree on a common vision of the future and the steps they will take together to make that vision real.

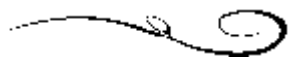
We saw a video of the *Future Search* process working in Santa Cruz County in California after which our consultants, Derek Kotze and Rick Lent, answered questions.

It is vitally important for as many as possible to attend the *Future Search* weekend *which requires a commitment of the entire weekend*. Since our building will not be available, it will be held at New England Deaconess at Rivercrest which is directly off Rte 2 next to Emerson Hospital in Concord, MA. Childcare and carpooling will be provided.

The evening ended with our community gathered in a large circle around the sanctuary with all given an opportunity to share what they are thankful for at LUMC.

The Coordinating Team

*Julie Barnette, Smoki Fraser, Keith Herndon,  
Andrea Laux, Kathy Parks, Janis Roihl,  
Bill Santelmann, Rev. Susan Morrison,  
and Derek Kotze and Rick Lent, consultants*



## **Covenant Groups Lay Theological Foundation for LUMC's Future**

In this season of Advent, when days are shorter, and hope waits for the dawn, this season of waiting for God to come into our lives again and again in new and unexpected ways, we at LUMC wait with a mix of fear and uncertainty and hope for our future.

We have entered a formal process of shaping our future for which we have a planned series of meetings in January and February and a *Future Search* weekend in March. Members of the Coordinating Team are planning those gatherings and hoping for input from everyone who considers LUMC their church home.

At the same time, there are some less formal conversations going on. This was true at our Covenant Groups which met in October as we looked at scars of struggle, personal and communal, and talked about how they might be transformed by hope. During our discussions, a number of possibilities were mentioned more as in brainstorming than in forming a list of possible “solutions.”

The Covenant Group study book, *Scarred by Struggle, Transformed by Hope* by Joan Chittister, centered on the story of Jacob wrestling with a stranger in the night in Genesis 32:24 – 30. As in so

many stories in scripture, when Jacob received a new calling, he also received a new name. One question asked in the Covenant Groups was about renaming LUMC. Since 50% of our members do not live in Lexington, might we be better identified as Metro-West? or might we want to add Progressive or Reconciling to our name? Might people who understand that the United Methodist denomination is becoming more conservative, more easily find us if our name more clearly reflected who we are?

Several examples of United Methodist Churches that have federated with a United Church of Christ were mentioned. This allows one Pastor to have “standing” in both denominations and therefore able to speak and act in ways not allowed currently in the United Methodist Church. People could join the church as members of either denomination. The United Parish of Auburndale (UMC and UCC) is one such example. When they federated, they housed the congregation in the UCC facility and turned the UMC facility into low income housing.

The New England Deaconess Home in Concord is interested in buying properties for new independent living residences and nursing home facilities. Some envisioned transforming our building into a site for elder care, with the Methodist Weekday School remaining on the first floor and LUMC and St. John’s Korean sharing the sanctuary and meeting rooms.

Some thought staying in the building would necessitate a part-time pastor and reduction of staff and programs. Others mentioned merging with another United Methodist church. In the New England Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, we are in the 87 churches in our Conference (out of 600 churches) that are considered “vital” congregations (i.e. we have a full time pastor; maintain a parsonage; pay our Mission Shares in full; and support a staff.) Could we not merge with another congregation in order to remain among the “vital” congregations? What is our definition of a vital congregation?

Others suggested sharing staff with St. John’s Korean UMC. Could we share an organist? Music director? Christian Education director?

New members talked of feeling accepted and the importance of finding a Faith Community open to hard questions.

Our relationship and commitment to the Methodist Weekday School and St. John's came up often.

We can only continue as we are temporarily. Without additional sources of funding, we will have to make hard choices about the use of our financial resources. What percentage of our income are we willing to spend on the building? What does the gospel say about “institutional maintenance?” What would have to happen to stay in our current location?

If we plan now, we can, with prayer and care and God’s wisdom, create a realistic, relevant, and vital future in light of our mission and vision.



## Christmas Holiday Open House at the Kreutzigers'

You are invited to an open house at the Kreutzigers' home on Saturday, December 11 from 2:00- 5:00 pm. Drop by for conversation spiced with goodies and treats to start the holiday season! (14 Tower Road, Lexington, 781-862-1107).

## Reception and Recognition of Members

On Sunday, November 14, we received and recognized Lara Anthony, Elizabeth Chen and Janis Roihl as members of our congregation.

Lara transferred her membership from the United Methodist Church of Auburn, Maine where she had been baptized as an infant and confirmed in the faith as a youth. She has lived in Massachusetts for 12 years. Lara is married to Arthur Anthony and has two sons, Jacob and Lucas. Lucas was recently baptized at LUMC and Jacob attends the Methodist Weekday School.

Elizabeth was formerly a member at The Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church on Tremont St., Boston. She is a single parent to Grace who has also become part of our church family. Originally born in Taiwan, she has lived in Lexington for three years and works for Anik Therapeutics.

Janis joined our faith community by virtue of her baptism, which gives her her Christian identity. Raised in the Episcopal Church, she spent seven years in a Roman Catholic Convent in her 20s. After leaving the Convent, she married Norbert Roihl and has 2 children, Maureen and Dan. Janis and Norbert have been married for 35 years. Janis has been active in a number of denominations and considers herself post-denominational.



Janis Roihl, Elizabeth Chen and Grace, Lara Anthony and Lucas (Jacob is hiding behind Lara) and Rev. Susan

Let your light shine so that LUMC's light will keep shining!



## Stewardship Campaign Results

Thank you to everyone who returned a pledge card for LUMC's 2005 Stewardship Campaign!

As of December 1, 2004, pledges total \$185,658.00 for the 2005 LUMC budget. We received 69 pledges out of a possible 74 pledging units. Of these 69 pledges, 4 were new pledges and 51 showed an increase in giving for 2005 over 2004! The average annual pledge per household in 2005 is \$2771/year which is a \$465.00 increase from the average annual household pledge in 2004. This is even more impressive in light of the fact that we have 5 fewer pledges this year.

Heartfelt thanks are due those who wrote personal letters in the campaign and collected pledge cards including Ken Baker, Ben Beckwith, Dale Brunelle, Mackie Corson, Clint Fawcett, Kurt Gunter, Kathy Parks, Keith Herndon, Dottie Hewitt, Al Landers, Becky Linton, Jay Morrison, Eric Shank, Don Walker and Rev. Susan.

*Clint Fawcett, Stewardship Chair  
Allyson Printz, Financial Secretary*



## Finance Corner

Total 2004 receipts to LUMC through 10/31/04  
\$192,324

Total 2004 expenditures by LUMC through 10/31/04  
\$201,436

Total 2004 expenditures budgeted through 10/31/04  
\$195,932

Final results for this year's two fund raising efforts

Ten Talents: \$1672.75

Yard Sale: \$1531.61

In addition to the money which is always gratefully received, we are also grateful for the chance for show off our arts and letters and gather together in fellowship for a worthy cause. These events are well worth it in many ways. Thanks again to all.

*-Keith Herndon  
Finance Committee Chair*



# Adult Study Opportunities



## Sunday Morning 11<sup>th</sup> Hour

### Adult Study - *Affluenza*

During Advent, the 11<sup>th</sup> Hour Adult Study will focus on Consumerism. Bob Miner will lead a conversation about *Affluenza* and encourage participants to reflect on their consumer habits during this season.

### Sermon Talk Back

Bible study, prayer and fellowship will be shared in the Pastor's Study at the 11<sup>th</sup> Hour. There will be the opportunity to respond to the scriptures and sermon shared that morning in worship. All are welcomed.



## Bibles and Bagels Discusses *God at 2000*

An excellent video series, *God at 2000*, is being viewed by participants in Monday morning's Bible and Bagels Study Group. Internationally known scholars from the worlds of Islam, Judaism and Christianity share their views on video. Discussion follows the viewing of the video. Newcomers are always welcomed! The group will meet on December 6 and then again in the new year.

## Book Club to Read *Sea Glass* by Anita Shreve

Lexington UMC's Book Group will meet on Monday, January 24, 2005 at Smoki Fraser's home at 7:30 pm. Plan to read this interesting selection and join the group for a lively discussion and evening of fellowship.

.....  
: January Newsletter :  
: Articles due :  
: Monday, December 20, :  
: 2004 :  
.....

# 2005 Upper Room Disciplines Available in Advent

The *Upper Room Disciplines* is found in many of our households and used daily by many of us. Scripture, commentary and prayer are contained on each page. The daily Bible readings follow the cycle of lectionary readings; therefore, the texts studied are the same as the readings for the coming Sunday.

Copies of the *2005 Upper Room Disciplines* will be on sale during the December Sundays of Advent in Martin Hall for \$9.00. You are encouraged to pick up a copy for yourself and your household. The book would also make a meaningful Christmas gift for a friend. This daily devotional guide will encourage you into a daily habit of scriptural readings and prayer, for it is in daily practice that our faith becomes relevant and alive.

## 2004 Annual Reports due January 15, 2005

Committee chairpersons and church leaders are asked to submit their 2004 Annual reports to the church office by January 15. The preferred method is to relay Word documents by email (office@lexumc.org). Timely submissions are appreciated!

## Christmas Card Bulletin Board

Our annual Christmas Card Bulletin Board will be in place in Martin Hall during Advent to benefit both the Roxbury Food Cupboard and the Lexington Food Pantry whose mission is to feed the hungry.

Instead of buying and mailing Christmas cards to friends within our congregation, would you again consider sending only one Christmas card to all in our church family?

If so, please attach your Christmas card to the green felt tree on the Bulletin Board in Martin Hall and place the money saved (or check payable to LUMC) in one of the envelopes provided beside the tree. Either place the envelope in the Sunday collection marked "Christmas Card Bulletin Board" or give it to Betty Lehr. Donations will be divided equally between these two organizations.

- Betty Lehr

## REACHING OUT...

### AN EQUAL EXCHANGE THANK YOU

Your Outreach Committee recently received a letter from The Equal Exchange Interfaith Program and we felt it important to share a portion of their message with you. Linda Miner

"Dear Friends:

Thanks to you, the **United Methodist Committee on Relief Coffee Project** just keeps growing! To date, over 1,000 churches, schools, offices, and other Methodist organizations have participated, purchasing 17 tons of fairly traded coffee, tea, and cocoa from Equal Exchange in 2003 alone. Because of your support, thousands of small farmers and their families have access to Fair Trade, earning a just price for their products as well as long-term trading relationships. Equal Exchange continues to grow in 2004. We have relocated our office and warehouse space; and we are adding even more new products, such as **chocolate bars** and **sugar packets!** With more products and participants, the benefits of Fair Trade reach more farming communities each year."

The new address of Equal Exchange is:  
50 United Drive  
West Bridgewater, MA 02379  
Email: [interfaith@equalexchange.com](mailto:interfaith@equalexchange.com)  
Tel: 774-776-7366  
Webstore: <http://store.yahoo.com/equalexchange>

### MARNIE WRITES FROM NICARAGUA

"Well, I have been learning a lot about La Borgoña. Not just the people, but the culture, the language, everything...

As for the delegation in February, they still want you all to stay in their houses. They were actually very excited. It seems like we will have more time this trip to do sight seeing. The graduation is being planned for December, not February.

We should think about some projects for this trip. I still think it would be fun to have a soccer game. (Don, don't think all your shirts have gone to waste. Absalon gave them to all the youth and I see them popping up all over town, even on people I don't even know.) Do you want to go to another Volcano? We can also go to Chocoyero, which is a waterfall inhabited by a species of birds a few kilometers from La Borgoña. Jairo suggested that we paint the fence outside of the school or replace the sign on the roof of the church which is getting kind of bad (but we couldn't really do this together...) Some other things

you might want to do is visit my school and the town, visit a pineapple farm, go to the market, go to a baseball game (they are really fun down here because everyone goes wild and they play on these horrible looking baseball diamonds but no one really cares).

The elections for governor are November 7. They have a neat way of campaigning here. They send trucks down the streets with loud speakers playing music and shouting "vote for us!" Jairo will be working collecting ballots. He has to work from 5 am Sunday morning until 2 am Monday morning and cannot come home during that time. Everyone has been telling me that voting night is crazy, no one goes to sleep and everyone waits in the street to hear the news... we'll see."

### MARGARET HASSAN

"Why in the midst of a war that has left tens of thousands of soldiers, innocents and prisoners dead, maimed, mentally damaged, homeless and without work - as well as my country in shameful disrepute all over the world - why is it Margaret's captivity and death that has left me in a despair I knew in advance that I would feel?"

It isn't a simple thing - that she was a woman, a Westerner, an innocent, or as head of CARE in Iraq, a tireless worker for those in need. Surely all of this is part of it. Yet somewhere in my soul I longed for her protection, for the protection of whatever was truly and valiantly good (however small) in the context of so much evil. While she lived, it was as though hands were cupped around the light of a candle, as though "darkness did not overcome it" (John 1:5).

Somehow statistics, even big numbers, do not affect me as much as the single name, the single face, of one who probably never wanted to appear on TV all over the world, for any reason, but rather simply to continue her work. She looked at suffering every day; she touched it with steadfast goodness; she resisted the menacing darkness all around her, whether Saddam's or that in which we are complicit. She died resisting it. May we never forget her witness, her name, her face, her goodness. For if we do, then we, too, are lost."

Rt. Rev. Carolyn Tanner Irish  
Episcopal Bishop of Utah

For the Outreach Committee by Bill Santelmann

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS



## ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS GODLY PLAY

- December 5 Advent II: Light of Mary and Joseph
- December 12 Advent III: Boy Lost and Found
- December 19 Christmas Pageant (No GP)
- December 26 Advent IV, V, & Christmas

This Advent, the children will prepare for the coming of the Christ child with stories, play, and wondering in *Godly Play*. The Christmas Season is wonderful time to introduce your child to the gift of *Godly Play*. Come join us as we meet weekly with Jesus!

## CHRISTMAS IN INDIA



The Christian Education Committee would like to thank everyone who participated this year in our annual collection for our adopted child in India. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to send two packages, containing over 15 gifts, to Sunitha Yadhiah at the Methodist Girls' Home in India. This is a wonderful expression of LUMC's understanding of the Christmas message and spirit of the Gospel. Praise God!

## CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

This year, the Christmas Pageant is Sunday, December 19, 2004, and will be a presentation of *We Three Kings*, a Christmas play by Robert Allen. Come and support our children as they share with us a very special Christmas message!

**Our rehearsal will be Saturday, December 18, 2004, from 1:00 – 4:00 pm.** Questions? Contact Andrea at [lauxaj@yahoo.com](mailto:lauxaj@yahoo.com).

## Youth News

During Advent, the Youth Sunday School Class will be participating in a Faith In Film Series on the movie *Pay It Forward*. The Youth Sunday School Class meets on Sunday Mornings at 9:30 am in the Library. On Sunday, December 5 and 19, 2004, the youth will be joining the congregation for both the Bach Cantata and the Christmas Pageant.

Thank you to Jay Morrison for teaching the youth during the months of November and December!

## A FAMILY ADVENT

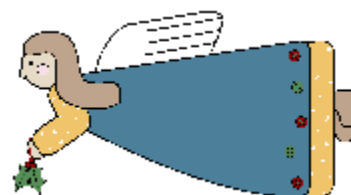
It is so easy during the Advent Season to get caught up in the hustle and bustle and miss the true meaning of preparation and anticipation for the birth of our Savior—

Here are some suggestions to make your Advent Season more meaningful and full of family tradition!

Set aside a day to trim the tree and decorate the house as a family. Get everyone involved with placing ornaments and decorations, and then have a special meal around the tree — eat together on the floor or a coffee table and have festive holiday foods.

Or, make a few batches of Christmas cookies as a family. Let the children help cut out and decorate the cookies, and then share your treats with friends, neighbors, or Advent Pals.

These fun, simple activities can help to gain perspective, get everyone involved, spark conversation, and bring your family closer together this Advent Season. May your family find the true meaning of Christmas and the Gospel message this Holiday Season!



## NQMA News

(Not Quite Middle Aged)

### Faith In Film

This December, the NQMA will be celebrating the Holiday Season by watching and discussing a Christmas classic *Miracle on 34<sup>th</sup> Street*. We will be meeting the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm at the Brown Brunelles' (see Andrea or Ben for directions). Our second meeting of the month will include a Christmas Party! If you have been unable to attend in the past, but are curious what we are all about, this is a great time to come and join us in a relaxed atmosphere of Christmas cheer!

Questions? Contact Andrea at [lauxaj@yahoo.com](mailto:lauxaj@yahoo.com).

## Concerns and Celebrations

Condolences and prayers are with Elaine Santelmann and children (daughter of Bill and Jean Santelmann) on the unexpected death of her husband, Bob White. Notes of sympathy may be sent to Elaine at 227 Hartwell Ave., Littleton, MA, 01460.

### Letters



#### An Early Christmas Gift

Since I tend to get a little emotional when speaking in front of the congregation, I wanted to send a message to the LUMC family via the newsletter.

This has been a wild, rollercoaster time for the Brown Brunelles. We found out we were going to have the blessing of a baby in July (due end of March 2005), lost my mother on August 1st, and I've experienced the difficult ups and downs of a protracted job search.

Over the past 18 months I've had dozens of meetings and interviews, was a finalist for countless jobs, and generally spent many frustrated moments facing an uncertain future.

Thanks to the love and support of my wife Kristina, her limitless faith and powerful spirit, the kindness of many friends, the hope and prayers of our church family, and a great deal of concerted effort, I've finally reached the end of the search.

I have accepted a position with the Microsoft Corporation, starting December 6th. I'm very excited, relieved, and blessed. Patience and faith are truly virtues as this is a significantly better career move than anything else I had uncovered previously.

Not all of you knew of my situation, but to those who did, your support, words of optimism, and hugs along the way meant a lot. Thank you very much and happy holidays! Grace and Peace,

- Dale Brunelle

Dear Susan and LUMC,

Everyone is doing well following Jean's surgery in November. Jean has been resting, Jayna has been happy, and Clint has been working hard both on the job and at home. We had many concerns beforehand - the doctor told us what to expect at each stage, but everything came out better than we'd even dared to hope. The difference, I think, is being surrounded by your prayers. Thank you more than we can say. Love,

Jean Roth, Clint Fawcett and Jayna



Thank you so much for all your well wishes and cards and flowers and general celebration for my 40th birthday! I had a wonderful day!

- Allyson Printz

## The Web Watch



Type these "URL" addresses into your Internet Explorer to see information pertaining to our LUMC theme "Peace With Justice" that you may not see elsewhere. Your comments, suggestions, and web addresses are welcome and solicited. The URLs below will help your year-end charitable contributions achieve what you intend.

<http://www.give.org/>

Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance

"The Alliance reports on nationally soliciting charitable organizations that are the subject of donor inquiries. These reports include an evaluation of the subject charity in relation to the voluntary BBB charity standards.

The BBB Wise Giving Alliance offers guidance to donors on making informed giving decisions through our charity evaluations, various "tips" publications, and publishes the quarterly *Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Guide*."

<http://www.guidestar.org/search/>

"Since 1994, we've focused on facilitating access to information about the operations and finances of nonprofit organizations. Our vision is to create an interactive *marketplace of information* that connects nonprofit organizations, donors, foundations, and businesses. This connection will serve as the backbone of a more effective, efficient, and well-informed nonprofit sector."

<http://www.charitynavigator.org/>

"Charity Navigator, America's premiere independent charity evaluator, works to advance a more efficient and responsive philanthropic marketplace by evaluating the financial health of America's largest charities."

<http://www.charitywatch.org/>

"The American Institute of Philanthropy (AIP) is a nationally prominent charity watchdog service whose purpose is to help donors make informed giving decisions.

This web site will provide you with information about our organization, the charities we rate, and our method of grading charities. Special features will focus on top salaries, top-rated groups, and hot topics in America's most popular causes."

Prepared by Bill Santelmann

## 2004 Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

On Tuesday evening, November 23, citizens of Lexington and surrounding communities gathered together at the Lexington United Methodist Church and St. John's Korean United Methodist Church to give thanks!

This year's annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, sponsored by the Lexington Interfaith Clergy Association highlighted the Hindu, Muslim, Jewish and Christian faith traditions. Each tradition was represented by a member of that faith who gave a witness about gratitude and thanks from their faith perspective. These Thanksgiving reflections included presentations by Narain Bhatia from the Hindu tradition; Susan Tafler, a member at Temple Isaiah, from the Jewish tradition; Tahir Chaudhry, past President of the Islamic Center of Boston in Wayland, from the Muslim tradition; and Bob Ludwig, member at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church, from the Christian tradition. An Interfaith Choir, under the direction of Hyung-Kyu Yi, sang John Rutter's *For the Beauty of the Earth*. Many other houses of worship were represented in the service. An offering was taken to support the work of the Lexington Food Pantry.

A highlight of the service was a reading from the original Thanksgiving Proclamation by Rev. Bill Clark, pastor at First Parish Unitarian Universalist. He concluded his remarks by reading his own Thanksgiving Proclamation for the town of Lexington in 2004. His message included these words:

*The history of an official Thanksgiving Proclamation is as deeply rooted in our American tradition as the holiday itself. Governor Bradford of Massachusetts made the first Thanksgiving Proclamation three years after the Pilgrims settled in Plymouth. In it he wrote; "Inasmuch as the great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest of Indian corn, wheat, peas, beans, squashes and has made the forest to abound with game and the sea with fish and clams, Inasmuch as he has spared us from pestilence and disease and has granted us freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience - I, your magistrate, do proclaim that you do gather on Thursday Nov. 29th, of the year of our Lord, one thousand, six hundred and twenty-three to render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all his blessings."*

*The history of such proclamations continue from Governors to Presidents. All declaring that on this*

*given day we men, women and children gather to offer up gratitude and gratefulness, to that which we call God, for all we have in our lives and in this world.*

*And so on this evening as we gather together in this house of worship, in this town of Lexington in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the birth place of our nations freedom and liberty, we do so to issue our own Lexington Thanksgiving Proclamation.*

*In this year of tension and turmoil, in this year of continued violence and warfare, in this year of hunger, hope and hallowedness, we gather together.*

*We gather to proclaim that may this year be the year that from our place of gratitude and gratefulness the hungry are fed, the homeless are sheltered and the weary receive hope and care.*

*We gather to proclaim that from our place of privilege and possibility we share our thanksgiving blessings with those with less and languishing in despair.*

*And we gather to proclaim that from our prayers of gratitude and thanksgiving, that hope, hope, fills our hearts, minds and souls, hope takes a hold of our hands and keeps a hold of them until justice rolls down like waters and peace like an ever flowing stream.*

*May this be our Lexington Interfaith Thanksgiving Proclamation of 2004. That the hope and possibility of peace will prevail. Amen.*



## Congratulations, Bill!



Bill Phelan was recently awarded the Lifetime Service Award by the Concord Band for over 40 years of participation and service. Written on a plaque presented to him was the commendation: *Bill's quiet dedication and generosity will continue to inspire members for generations.*

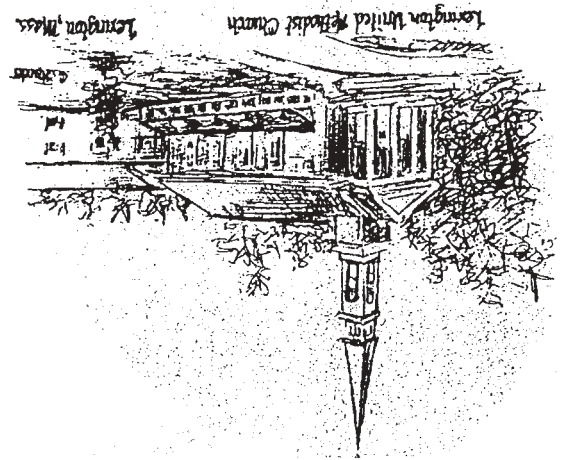
## Hospice Volunteers Needed

Care Alternatives Hospice is seeking individuals or groups to make crafts for our terminally ill patients, or assist to with administrative work such as answering phones, making copies or helping with other office work.

We also are looking for people who would like to provide companionship and support to our patients and their loved ones. For more information on how to help, call Carol Sazama at 508-229-8390.

# December 2004 - Lexington United Methodist Church

| Sunday                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Monday                                                                                                                                 | Tuesday                                                                                                                                                                 | Wednesday                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Thursday                                                                                                                                                                                | Friday                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Saturday                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #e0f7fa;"> <p style="color: red; margin: 0;"><b>Important Dates to Save in Your Calendar</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>January 10, 7:00 pm: Opening Conversation</li> <li>January 23, 2:00 pm: Opening Conversation</li> <li>January 24, 7:30 pm: Book Club</li> </ul> </div>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                         | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">1</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80px; text-align: center;"> <p>7:00 pm<br/>Taizé Prayer<br/>Service</p> </div> <p>7:30 pm<br/>Membership<br/>Cultivation</p>                  | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">2</p>                                                                                                                                 | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">3</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">4</p> <p>9:30 am - noon<br/>Cluster Charge<br/>Conference<br/>(Winchester)</p> <p>2:00 – 5:00 pm<br/>Cantata<br/>Rehearsal</p>                                                                                                  |  |  |
| <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">5</p> <p style="color: red; text-align: center;"><b>Second Sunday of Advent</b></p> <p>8:30 am Senior Choir Rehearsal<br/>9:15 am Praise Music; Nursery Care<br/>9:30 am Worship; <i>Godly Play</i> (N - 4);<br/>10:30 am Fellowship in Martin Hall<br/>10:30 am Children's Choir Rehearsal<br/>11:00 am Adult Study/Sermon Talk Back<br/>12:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal<br/>5:00 pm Cambridge Welcoming Ministries<br/>6:30 pm Senior Choir Christmas Party<br/>(Faheys')</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; background-color: #e0f7fa; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <p style="margin: 0;"><b>Alternative Christmas Market</b><br/>8:15-9:00; 10:30 – 11:00 am</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; background-color: #e0f7fa; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <p style="margin: 0;"><b>Nicaragua Material Aid Collection</b></p> </div> | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">6</p> <p>10:00 am<br/>Bible and<br/>Bagels</p> <p>7:00 pm<br/>Adult Ed.</p>          | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">7</p> <p>10:00<br/>Metro Boston<br/>DCOM</p> <p>7:30 pm<br/>Not Quite<br/>Middle Agers<br/>(Brown<br/>Brunelles')</p> | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">8</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80px; text-align: center;"> <p>7:00 pm<br/>Taizé Prayer<br/>Service</p> </div> <p>7:30 pm<br/>Finance Mtg.</p> <p>8:00 pm<br/>Ad. Council</p> | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">9</p> <p>7:00 pm<br/>Staff Parish<br/>Relations<br/>Committee's<br/>annual<br/>meeting with<br/>District<br/>Super-<br/>intendent</p> | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">10</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">11</p> <p>2:00 – 5:00<br/>Christmas<br/>Open House<br/>at<br/>Kreutzigers'</p>                                                                                                                                                  |  |  |
| <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">12</p> <p style="color: red; text-align: center;"><b>Third Sunday of Advent</b></p> <p>8:30 am Senior Choir Rehearsal<br/>9:15 am Praise Music; Nursery Care<br/>9:30 am Worship; <i>Godly Play</i> (N - 4);<br/>Youth Study (5-8))<br/>10:30 am Fellowship in Martin Hall<br/>10:30 am Children's Choir Rehearsal<br/>11:00 am Adult Study/Sermon Talk Back<br/>5:00 pm Cambridge Welcoming Ministries</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; background-color: #e0f7fa; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <p style="margin: 0;"><b>Nicaragua Material Aid Collection</b></p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; background-color: #e0f7fa; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <p style="margin: 0;"><b>Amnesty International<br/>Letter Writing Campaign</b></p> </div>                                                                                | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">13</p>                                                                               | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">14</p> <p>7:30 pm<br/>Christian Ed.<br/>Meeting</p>                                                                   | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">15</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80px; text-align: center;"> <p>7:00 pm<br/>Taizé Prayer<br/>Service</p> </div>                                                               | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">16</p>                                                                                                                                | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">17</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">18</p> <p>1:00 – 4:00 pm<br/>Pageant<br/>Rehearsal</p>                                                                                                                                                                          |  |  |
| <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">19</p> <p style="color: red; text-align: center;"><b>Fourth Sunday of Advent<br/>Christmas Pageant</b></p> <p>8:30 am Senior Choir Rehearsal<br/>9:00 am Communion served in the library<br/>9:15 am Praise Music; Nursery Care<br/>9:30 am Worship<br/>10:30 am Brunch in Martin Hall and<br/>Christmas Caroling<br/>12:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal<br/>5:00 pm Cambridge Welcoming Ministries</p> <div style="background-color: #c8e6c9; padding: 2px; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <p style="margin: 0;"><b>Roxbury Food Cupboard Collection</b></p> </div>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">20</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>January<br/>Newsletter<br/>Deadline</b></p> | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">21</p> <p>7:30 pm<br/>Not Quite<br/>Middle Agers<br/>(Brown<br/>Brunelles')</p>                                       | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">22</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80px; text-align: center;"> <p>7:00 pm<br/>Taizé Prayer<br/>Service</p> </div>                                                               | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">23</p>                                                                                                                                | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">24</p> <p style="color: red; text-align: center;"><b>Christmas<br/>Eve</b></p> <p>5:30 pm<br/>Christmas Eve<br/>Family Service</p>                                                                                               | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">25</p> <p style="color: red; text-align: center;"><b>Christmas<br/>Day</b></p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">  </div> |  |  |
| <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">26</p> <p style="color: red; text-align: center;"><b>First Sunday after Christmas</b></p> <p>8:30 am Senior Choir Rehearsal<br/>9:15 am Praise Music; Nursery Care<br/>9:30 am Worship; <i>Godly Play</i> (N - 4);<br/>Youth Study (5-8)<br/>10:30 am Fellowship in Martin Hall<br/>11:00 am Adult Study<br/>12:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal<br/>5:00 pm Cambridge Welcoming Ministries</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">27</p>                                                                               | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">28</p>                                                                                                                | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">29</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">30</p>                                                                                                                                | <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">31</p> <p style="color: red; text-align: center;"><b>New Year's<br/>Eve</b></p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">  </div> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |  |  |



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

LEXINGTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
*an inclusive and reconciling congregation*  
2600 Massachusetts Avenue  
Lexington, MA 02421-6718

## Our Sunday Program

- 8:30 am Senior Choir Rehearsal
- 9:15 am Praise Music; Nursery Care
- 9:30 am Worship; *Godly Play* (N - Gr. 4)  
Youth Study (Gr. 5 - 8)
- 10:30 am Fellowship in Martin Hall
- 11:00 am Adult Study
- 12:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal



## December 2004 Newsletter

Rev. Susan J. Morrison, Pastor  
Andrea Laux, Christian Education Director  
Pastoral Intern  
Daniel Roihl, Music Director/Organist  
David Babbidge, Sexton  
Allyson Printz, Office Administrator

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Office Email [office@lexumc.org](mailto:office@lexumc.org)



Johann Sebastian Bach's  
*Christmas Oratorio - Part II*  
December 5

9:15 Praise Music; 9:30 Worship

Christmas Eve Worship  
December 24 - 5:30 pm