



The GoodNewsletter

First Baptist Church, Littleton

“Journeying to God’s Sacred Beat”

November 2011

The seasons of **gratitude and giving** are at our doorstep. How might art guide you in worship and in your living during these seasons? **Betsy Steele-Halstead** at the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship shares that the role of the arts in the church is to/for:

Adorn

To beautify, to stimulate, to show hospitality

Educate

To teach, to communicate, to narrate the story of God’s actions

Meditation

A devotional, to guide, to be an offering or prayer

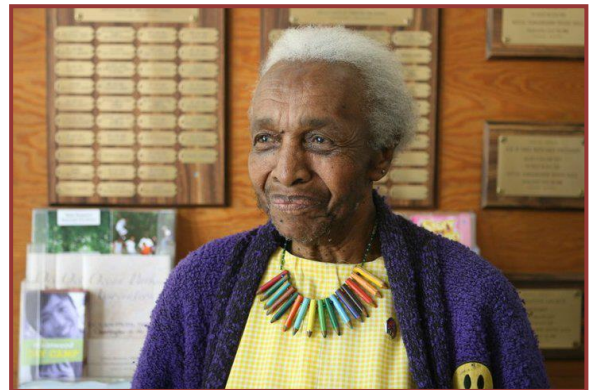
Transform

To heal, to evoke hope, to be pastoral

Motivation

To challenge, to envision the kingdom

Preaching here on Sunday, November 27
Rev. Veronica Lanier at 10:00AM



Covered Table, 1916

Anton Faistauer, 1887-1930

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Ronny is a true gem and friend of many of us here at the church. She graduated from Gordon College in 1954, worked as a missionary in Denver, Chicago, Sacramento and at an all Chinese community in California for five years. She attended Andover Newton and was ordained in 1970. She worked for the American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts as its Minister of Christian Education, has taken multiple bus trips across the country and worked as a chaplain at Children’s Hospital. She “retired” in 1988 - but not really! She is 93 years young and is pastor at the First Baptist Church of Lynn. **Please come to hear this wonderful woman of faith on the Sunday following Thanksgiving!**



Occupy Sesame Street?

As we speak the Occupy Movement has spread to include not only Wall Street but Boston, Columbus, London and Sesame Street! Sesame Street? I thought surely that must be a parody of the Occupy Movement, but when I followed some of its online threads and articles I wasn't so sure. I read a manifesto by Cookie Monster – or someone claiming to be Cookie Monster – and decided that the Sesame Street Occupy Movement was also a movement of discontent.

There is in the air an overwhelming sense of discontent and its roots and reasons are very hard to define. I think that is why people are having such a hard time defining or explaining what the Occupy Movement is all about or even what is at the root of the Tea Party movement. There is discontent, fear and angst about life and about death. Are we all “walking wounded” as someone suggested? Are we seeking something that sheds light on what we are feeling and afraid of? Aren't we all looking for a solution, a sense of relief and a sense of hope?

We continue to hear about the demise of institutions that have been the bedrock of our life and community. Local, state and federal governments are huge bureaucratic systems that are bending under the enormous weight of financial overload. We can see right through the rhetoric and know that those systems are no longer working and will not be sustainable. We understand that there are no easy or quick answers. Few of us believe the media soundbites that are aimed at us in an attempt to trick us emotionally and mentally. There are no easy answers. School systems are laying off teachers left and right, while other teachers decide to leave as administration, parents and taxpayers spread the blame around. Churches are steadily losing people and they too are historical systems that cannot bear their financial weight or meet the never ending set of expectations; for every one hundred people there are a hundred and one expectations.

The business world is unreliable and unstable while both the music business and the publishing world are changing at record speed. Record stores, book stores, newspapers and magazines have closed shop while the digital revelation grows as fast as processor speeds seem to accelerate. Every night the news brings stories of yet another business suddenly shutting its doors, which initiates a cycle of shock and fear for another group of people, which results in more unemployment, monetary and health fears. Politicians fight amongst each other showing little wisdom, common sense or vision. Everything seems hopeless as we hear of yet another friend, a friend of a friend or a loved one within our circle who has been diagnosed with cancer or depression or an anxiety disorder. We are the walking wounded.

So what are we to do during times like these? Don't give up. On those overwhelming days and in those overwhelming moments of anxiety seek out comfort and hope. Turn off the television and the politicians. Don't let that spin *occupy* your mind. Turn to someone or to a place that you trust. Surround yourself with a circle of friends, whether it is a spiritual community, a music community with music that heals or motivates, or a cause that you care deeply about. Spending time in the midst of unrest - will make you restless. That is what it means to *occupy* - *to dwell with*. Occupy your time by cheering on a baseball game of children who are in wheelchairs or who are running the bases with their walkers and their buddies. Seek community and offer to do something to make a difference. Dwell in hope. It works. Simplify. Let go of things. Breathe deeply and let music or prayer or silence reach into the deepest parts of your soul and dwell with those. Let the steady heartbeat of God, your Higher Power or a love supreme dwell within you. Be courageous and live hopefully.

Occupy hope. It works!

Blessings,
Pastor Deb



In October we lost two members of our congregation. We celebrated the spirited life of **Victoria Axtman** and will be doing the same for **Barbara Hill** on Saturday November 5. Thank you for the ministry of presence and care to their families during this time.

At the same time we received word from **the family of Frank Couper** that he had left the church a \$50,000 bequest. Frank is the nephew of Vinnie Couper who was a long time member of the church and resident of Littleton. Frank would show up on Sundays either in the balcony with Jack and Bobby Holmer, or show up to sing with the choir and even once with the bell choir. We are grateful for this gift that is to be used for general purposes. **This is a good time to remind you to remember the church in your will and estate planning.** I know some of you that have done so and the larger church family is grateful. We know that there are many, many wonderful causes and organizations vying for people's money and we do pray for this community of faith to remain strong and vital for many years to come.

New Christmas decorations are needed! Our tree is a little ragged so let's spruce up the church for Advent together. If you are out shopping and see some nice Christmas ornaments or decorations that we could use - please consider buying them for the church. The decorations should be simple and ones that would make our Christmas decorations bright and full of light. Thank you!

I am looking for Teddy Bears! The 7pm Christmas Eve service will have a Teddy Bear theme and I am looking for Teddy Bear items and *one* very large stuffed Teddy Bear!



Sunday, November 6

Reminder! Don't forget to Fall Back on Sunday, November 6 at 2am. Or

you may want to move your clocks back one hour after you get home from the Ham & Bean supper on Saturday night!

Discover Your Gifts! And learn how to use them. Please join John Court & Pastor Debbie as we emphasize our Spiritual gifts in worship, in study and in practice the week of November 13.

Sunday, November 13 4:00PM
Bible Study Cottage Meeting at the home of Pastor Debbie.

Wednesday, November 16 7:00PM
Bible Study Cottage meeting at church.
Please *sign up* for one of the Bible Study cottage meetings on the Kiosk.

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Electronics and Appliance Recycle Day
November 12, 9:00AM - 2:00 PM

First Baptist Church on Littleton Common

Electronics such as: Monitors, computers, stereos, scanners, copiers are \$5 each. Appliances such as: Dishwashers, dryers, stoves, microwaves, AC, exercise equipment, lawn mowers, small engine items, snow blowers, etc.....\$10 each.

TV<19..\$10 TV>19..\$15 Console/Wood TV.. \$20
Car Batteries.. NO Fee.

Also, bring your Old/New bicycle and it will be reused again.

Questions: contact Dennis Wood 508-277-7513
denwaynewood@yahoo.com



**Saturday
November 19, 2011**

The Fair is one of Four Major events that we have dubbed the Fab Four. It's almost here!

Here is how you can help:

- Volunteer for a few hours that day.
- Stop by and buy something
- Tell your family and friends

For the Silent Auction organized by Pastor Deb you could:

- Donate or solicit something from your favorite merchant.
- Re-gift something nice.
- The possibilities for the silent auction are endless. Think about what you have to offer and it would be helpful if you could get them to Pastor Deb before 11/10.

Santa Claus is coming to our Fair from 12 to 1:30PM!
Spread the word and bring the kids!

Baked Good needed - items to eat and holiday items for gifts!

- Cookies ~ lots of cookies!
- Breads – can be in Holiday bake pans
- Pies, Cakes
- Homemade candies
- Holiday cookies in cookie tins
- Baked Beans
- Caramel Apples

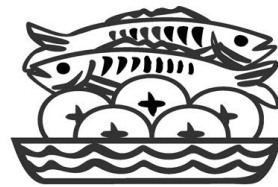
Speak to Anne Lee Ellis or Pastor Deb if you would like to help.

Upcoming

Sunday, November 27 No Sunday School Worship at 10AM with Rev. Veronica Lanier. It is the first Sunday in Advent.

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Help out with First Baptist's turn at the Neighborhood Supper at the Congregational Church. We start setting up and preparing the meal at 3:00pm and clean up usually ends by 7:00pm.



Loaves & Fishes
Homeless Survival Services
Since 1983

Note this unique Challenge using the number "1." We are joining with the Congregational Church in Littleton and the United Church of Christ to collect *One Million* items of healthy food for local food pantries.

MISSION: 1 11.1.11 - 11.11.11 (the dates)

We are all one United Church on a Mission for 11 days to feed the hungry.

We will join together as part of a nationwide effort to fill food pantries, along with the Congregational Church of Littleton, which is conducting a special food drive for Loaves & Fishes Pantry. Keep the dates in mind and bring in items for the food basket.

<http://www.ucc.org/mission1/>

On **Thanksgiving Sunday, November 20** we have the opportunity to donate towards ministry in two different places:

1. **The Thanksgiving offering to the church**
2. **A Thanksgiving gift to Loaves and Fishes**
 - a) Please make this check out *to Loaves and Fishes* & put in the designated offering basket on November 20.
 - b) Or you may donate these needed items for Loaves and Fishes at our Sunday march forward offering:
 - ✓ Turkey or Canned Ham
 - ✓ Stuffing Mix and Gravy
 - ✓ Cranberry Sauce
 - ✓ Instant Potatoes
 - ✓ Canned Vegetables (Corn, Carrots, Green Bean)
 - ✓ Assorted Pickles
 - ✓ Black/Green Olives
 - ✓ Cake Mix and Frosting
 - ✓ Pie Crust Shells
 - ✓ Canned Filling: Apple, Blueberry, Cherry, Pumpkin
 - ✓ And bags – paper is preferred but plastic helps too.

Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service

Sunday Evening, November 20, 7:00pm at the Congregational Church of Littleton. All are invited to this service of Thanksgiving sponsored by the Littleton Council of Churches.



Merrimack Valley Baptist Women and Guests

Monday, November 28, 7:30pm: that's the date and time; the location is First United Baptist Church in Lowell. Always a meaningful gathering of our sisters across the Valley from Littleton to Newburyport, this year's program promises to be outstanding as it will feature gifted chalk artist Jenn Rutledge. There will be the traditional mitten tree to decorate with warm items and the ingathering of small soaps and shampoos, all for distribution by the Salvation Army.

Littleton First Baptist women are cordially invited to come and bring friends. Directions will be available. The group's project for this year will support improvements to Going Lodge at Grotonwood. This inspiring launch into Advent will include devotions by Judy Durant of Portland Street Baptist Church in Haverhill and a Carolsing. A time of fellowship and refreshment concludes the evening.

C. Webster



Christmas Flowers



It is time to order your Christmas Poinsettias. The cost this year is **\$14/plant.**

Please give orders and payment to one of the Chancel Team Members

~
Lynda Fisher, Dawn Gravlin, Marge Payne,
Harriet DiLuzio or Carol Huebner.

Orders may be mailed to: Carol Huebner, 17
Sherwood Drive, Westford, MA 01886

Checks should be made payable to
"Deacons Fund"

The order deadline is December 11th.

Quantity _____

Your Name: _____

Phone: _____

Please include the words of recognition you would like to use in the bulletin

In memory of (or use your own words)

___Leave___ Pick Up___



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

