

THE NEW COVENANT



News of the Family from The United Presbyterian Church of Whitinsville

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Advent Candle Lighting



January
2021

The United Presbyterian Church of Whitinsville

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Office Hours: 12:30 PM - 4:30 PM Monday * 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM Wednesday *

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM Friday

*The church office is CLOSED on Tuesdays & Thursdays.

MINISTRIES	Jan 3	Jan 10	Jan 17	Jan 24	Jan 31
Worship Leader	L. Walsh	R. Thomas	S. Santoro	C. Matchett	K. Bilodeau
Song Leader	K. Bilodeau	M. Sabourin	K. Bilodeau	M. Sabourin	K. Bilodeau
Ushers	B. Giemza	J. Baker	C. Matchett	L. Joyce	K. Miedema
Sound Board	G. Giemza	G. Giemza	G. Giemza	G. Giemza	M. Thomas
Power Point	J. Tobin	M. Thomas	N. Redden	J. Tobin	R. Thomas

January Birthday Corner

Troy Giezma 1/8
 Kevin Redden 1/11
 Courtney Ritchings 1/11
 Anna Santoro 1/18
 Dave Miedema 1/20
 Linda Skillen 1/20
 Chris Shannon 1/21
 Todd Schelin 1/24
 Palmer Swanson 1/25
 Joanne Zeis 1/30



If the church office doesn't have you/your family's birthday/anniversary information. Please call Alice in the office at 508-234-8220 or email the office at whitinpres@gmail.com so we can include your birthday/anniversary dates in the monthly newsletter.

****Sunday Morning Worship Schedule****

- 8:45 AM - Jr. Church—Zoom
- 9:30 AM - Adult Sunday School—Zoom
- 9:40-10:20 Children's Sunday School & UPCoW Chorus
- 10:30 AM - Morning Worship Service (in person or live on YouTube)
- 12:00 PM - Youth Bible Study - Zoom 1st& 3rd Sundays
- 12-2PM - Musicians' Rehearsal



January 2021; that is the first time I have written the upcoming year's date on anything. We can only wonder what this next year will be like. Most years we look forward to a "good" year in the upcoming twelve months. We did that last year and, to say the least, we were extremely disappointed. Probably our thoughts about the upcoming year are tainted by that experience.

The negative impacts the Corona Virus 2019 (Covid-19) seem impossible to count, although some might suggest that a place to start would be the number of people who have had the virus and the number of deaths resulting from it. We would have to add to those numbers, however, the countless inconveniences, disappointments, missed opportunities, and other kinds of losses we've all sustained. To quote Queen Elizabeth's famous line after another particularly bad year in England, "It was an *annum horribilus*."

BUT there is something to be learned from every experience, regardless of its positive or negative valence. Looking back over the year and the many conversations I've had with people, there are some things we have learned that we will carry into this next year, things that have the potential for making 2021 a better year for us individually and as a church family, part of the body of Christ. Among other things, we have been made aware of what matters in life, and many of the things we thought were "little things" are not really so little.

A welcoming wave is not nearly the same as a welcoming handshake. Elbow bumps don't come close. How grand it will be to extend the right hand of fellowship once again and share the warmth expressed by a handshake.

And oh my! Arms that only enfold me as I face someone else, especially a little child, whose arms enfold only him or her lacks more that words can express. How wonderful it is going to be to wrap arms around someone else and to feel arms wrapped around me once again!

Someone in our church family very wisely said, "Church on couch is not the same as church in pew." AMEN! Imagining you behind the camera lens is not the same as *seeing* you in the pew, either. The feeling will be indescribable when we can once again live out the Psalmist's words, "I was glad when they said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord'" (Psalm 122:1).

A smile painted on a mask is cute, but it is a poor substitute for a *real* smile, even a smile that shows braces or crooked teeth! When this pandemic is over, which we all pray will happen in 2021, I expect to see *real* smiles on everyone I meet. Smiles returning smiles!

But along with all the "little?" things we've missed, I have begun to notice something else that we have learned, something that has been *added* because of the pandemic. There is so very much that is expressed by eyes these days. It is as if in our need to express what cannot be expressed by the parts of our faces that are hidden, we have begun to express it with our eyes. I have seen deep love, heart felt compassion, great relief, and genuine gratitude expressed by eyes in a way I have not seen before. *Maybe* that expression has been there, and I just haven't paid as much attention to it. I suppose that is *possible*, but pastors have an innate tendency to focus on eyes and what they communicate. A psychology professor I once had commented that "eyes are the window to the soul." Maybe I've just not noticed it before, but I doubt it.

The feelings we have are the same as they were before the pandemic. The things we enjoy are the same, and so are the basic needs and wants. For the most part, we've all found ways to acquire the *things* we need and want. If we come through this pandemic knowing that there is something much more important to us than those *things*, then we come through the pandemic much healthier than we were before.

There is one more positive impact of the pandemic that is likely the most important. This pandemic has increased our prayer lifwUPCe immeasurably. We have asked each other to pray with and for us. We have prayed for ourselves and others. And I suspect we have all spent more time looking for spiritual help from the Bible than is our custom during normal times. Perhaps some of us have found the benefit of daily meditation time.

We have all needed help far beyond what the medical profession can give, indeed more than science can give. We have needed the wisdom, strength, courage, and trust that come only from God. When our minds are on high alert and anticipating danger from unknown or unseen sources, our spirits need to carry us. Our spirits do that because the Spirit of God lives there.

Come what may, God is here. If we have been reminded of that fact in a way that makes us know we can do all things in Christ who strengthens us, then we come through this pandemic much healthier spiritually than we were before.

What will 2021 be like? A year like all years, filled with more blessings from God than we can count, regardless of life's temporary circumstances. Happy New Year, Everyone!



UPCoW Chorus sang during the worship service December 13th.



Deacons Gay McCrea, Debbie Baker & Brandy Giemza prepare Christmas baskets for our Shut ins



Gloria Rauth Enjoyed her Christmas basket from the Deacons!

Deacons' Corner

It is so hard to believe that we are in another new year!

With the days coming and going with the scourge of this Corona Virus Pandemic, it is hard in many ways to think of celebrating, especially when every day seems the same, with very little change at all. But as we look into the future for year 2021, there is hope on the horizon as a vaccine is now being administered. This is a great thing to celebrate as we look forward to an opportunity of new hope not just for ourselves, but for everyone on this earth. We can also share our thankfulness to God for inspiring the doctors and specialists who have made such a thing possible.

January is normally the month that we decide to make new resolutions. We are fortunate in seeing the opportunity of hope that is facing us now, as several medical professionals are attempting to battle this virus. But as we think about our resolutions for our church, how many have made a true resolution towards the growth of our ministry? Granted, it is hard when we have to consider the barriers we face in this Pandemic, but prayer can be a powerful thing as we look forward to how we want our church to grow. We have already been able to reach out to others with our technical crew who have extended our ministry through online services. We can spread the word about this advantage to others not just in our community but also to friends and family outside of the state. How awesome that sounds! Then there are our musicians who have made a resolution to share their talents through singing or playing an instrument...and we have even enjoyed the blending sounds from a bagpipe player! Music is a big benefit towards lifting the soul, and the church has an active group of individuals doing so by bringing people together on a weekly basis for Peace of Music.

The Deacons continue to also carry out their resolutions to minister to anyone in need, such as shut-in individuals, senior citizens, college kids, military individuals, and anyone else who can use our services for any need that they may have. As Deacons, we know how much others just need the contact and support of their friends and family within the church. Likewise, our PNC committee is striving to work together in finding a new pastor for our church, and we need to support their efforts for finding the right candidate for our church. Please keep them in your prayers as we continue to wait for the right person to fill this important role of our church. We are very much appreciative of Dr. Rev. DeHoff for her support of the church and stepping in during the time that she has spent with us. She will be greatly missed once we find our new pastor, but she has helped us to find the vision we need to continue. As a final thought, let us remember that there is a light that shines upon us as we continue to work hard in our resolutions for 2021. *HAPPY NEW YEAR!*

Pastor Nominating Committee Update

The Pastor Nominating Committee continues to review PIFs-Personal Information Forms (resumes) of pastor candidates. Due to the confidential nature of the process, not much information can be shared with the congregation until a finalist has been chosen by the committee. Please respect the need for the committee's confidentiality.

Mark Thomas, chair

Coming Next Month:

February 7

Fuel Fund Offering

February 10

Our Turn for PoB!

January Book Club

"Without a Trace" (Rock Harbor Series Book 1)

by Colleen Coble

Women's Book Club via Zoom
Jan. 15th

Joys & Concerns



We need to keep Harriet and Bob Platt in our prayers for improved health, They have had one of the worst years I've ever known anyone to have, so also prayers for strength and encouragement. Also, Harriet asks prayers for their daughter, Patty, and Patty's husband to recover from COVID.

Gay McCrea asks prayers for peace while she awaits diagnostic tests on Dec. 29.

Gaye Shannon is thankful that her daughter, Corine, continues to experience only mild COVID symptoms.

We keep our missionaries in our prayers as they, too, have suffered the loss of family and friends due to COVID. Joel asks that we hold those who are mourning during this Christmas time in our prayers.

Anna Santoro asks prayers for herself and Anthony as they will receive the COVID vaccine this week. Pray that they do not have any side effects. Anna also asks prayers for the prison population where she works, as there are now at least 63 cases of COVID there.

We ask prayers for Addison Austin, who tested positive for COVID on Wed. She continues to have very mild symptoms. We pray for her recovery and that the rest of her family will not contract COVID from her.

Please pray for Henry Baker. His stage 4 pancreatic cancer might be treated with chemo, if his diabetes and diverticulitis can be brought under control.

Liz also asks prayers for those who suffer from prostate cancer and have decisions to make about the best form of treatment. We pray that God will use whatever form is best for each individual for healing.

Tanya Morin asks prayers for the Morin, Raper and Oakley families who suffered sudden losses this week.

Praise Chris, Rena and Katie Matchett have survived COVID in fine shape and are out of quarantine. Thanks be to God!! His daughter-in-law, Samantha, continues to struggle with it, however, and is to be tested tomorrow for pneumonia. So we need to continue praying for her.

Tanya Morin has a prayer of thanks that her GI procedure went well and she recovered well.

Gaye Shannon asks prayers for her mother, who just turned 87. She has pneumonia.

We keep Jim Remillard in our prayers. In addition to back pain due to spinal stenosis he has begun to have pain in his shoulders and arms that restricts mobility.

Harriet Platt asked prayers for the family of Betty Miller who passed away Nov. 25.

Katrina Bilodeau asks prayers for her sister, Sabrina, and her young son, Landon, as he is having some severe behavioral issues due to life circumstances that are exacerbated by the pandemic.

Katrina also asks prayers for Harry Pearson, who was admitted to the hospital this week with a severe case of pneumonia and an abscess in his lungs. He is back home, but very weak.

Brandy Giemza asks prayers for the adult son of her friend Carol, as he was diagnosed with covid last week.

We pray for the Nardone family, as they try to put life back together after a devastating house fire last Sun.

Diane Copp left us to be with our Lord November 24th. Please keep her two sons, her daughter, and their families in your prayers.

We keep Mark Thomas and his family in our prayers for peace and comfort and they mourn the passing of Mark's dad.

Carol Pilibosian asks prayers for Anne McLeod, who is feeling lonely and not eating as much as she should while Carol recuperates from knee replacement surgery.

Remember The Homebound and Those in Hospitals, Rehab Centers and Nursing Homes:

Gloria Rauth - Whitney Place, 85 Beaumont Dr., Rm 11, Northbridge, MA 01534

Ruth Hoekstra - Linwood Apartments No. 105, 670 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville, MA 01588

Jim Remillard - 20 Fair Street, Uxbridge, MA 01569

Nancy Freiswyk - Beaumont Rehabi and Skilled Nursing Center, Beaumont Dr., Room 222, Northbridge, MA 01534

Anne MacLeod - Cottonmill Apartments #202, 17 Douglas Rd, Whitinsville, MA 01588

Making Your Requests for Prayer Known

(1) You may use our Email prayer chain (upcwprayerchain@googlegroups.com) to share your prayer request. (2) Call (508-234-8220) or Email (whitinpres@gmail.com) your request to the church office.

January 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 New Year's Day	2
3 8:45 Jr. Church (Zoom) 9:30 Adult Sunday School (Zoom) 10:30 Worship Service 12:00 Youth Bible Study(Zoom)	4 7:00 PM Session Prayer Meeting	5 7:00 PM Worship Committee	6 5:00 Peace of Bread	7	8	9
10 8:45 Jr. Church (Zoom) 9:30 Adult Sunday School (Zoom) 9:40 Children's SS/UPCOW Chorus 10:30 Worship Service	11 Trustee Meeting 7 PM Endowment Committee Mtg 7 PM	12 Officer Training 7 PM	13 5:00 Peace of Bread 7:00 CGN Meeting	14	15 6:30 PM Women's Book Club Newsletter Deadline	16 10 AM Undecorating the church
17 8:45 Jr. Church (Zoom) 9:30 Adult Sunday School (Zoom) 9:40 Children's SS/UPCOW Chorus 10:30 Worship Service 12:00 Youth Bible Study (Zoom)	18 7:00 PM Session	19	20 5:00 Peace of Bread	21	22	23
24 8:45 Jr. Church (Zoom) 9:30 Adult Sunday School (Zoom) 9:40 Children's SS/UPCOW Chorus 10:30 Worship Service	25 6:30 PM Deacons	26	27 5:00 Peace of Bread	28	29	30



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News of the Church Family from the
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LATER

Later

after the angels,
after the stable,
after the Child,
they went back . . .
as we always must,
back to the world that doesn't understand
our talk of angels and stars
and especially not the Child.

We go back complaining that it doesn't last.

They went back singing praises to God!

We do have to go back,

But we can still sing the alleluias!

“In Search of Our Kneeling Places” comes from
Anne Weems (1987) *Kneeling In Bethlehem*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. Pg. 86