



MUSINGS

In a conversation with John McKee last week, I was reminded again of the importance of mindful living. John told me he has “Be Mindful” signs at strategic locations at home and in his car to remind him to pay attention, as it relates to issues of safety on the road and in the house.

Indeed, it is an important mindset: BE MINDFUL! As I get older, I am more intentional and mindful of the way I drive and the way I approach activities, being ever more careful to pay attention to my surroundings and keep my thoughts on what I’m doing.

On a different level, it is life-giving to be mindful about everything we do. Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh would ask this kind of question: do you drive just to get to your destination, with your mind racing with a million things you have to get done; or do you drive mindfully, intentionally, appreciating the warm car you’re in, and the landscape outside, the birds, and the people you pass? There’s a difference that, if we observe it, can make life more enjoyable and slow it down a bit.

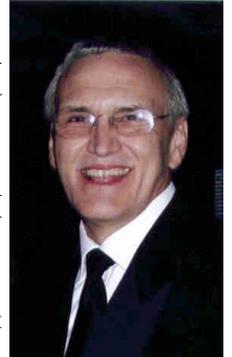
Poet Billy Collins captures the Zen ideal of mindfulness in his poem “Shoveling Snow with the Buddha.” Here it is in part:

But here we are, working our way down the driveway,
one shovelful at a time.
We toss the light powder into the clear air.
We feel the cold mist on our faces.
And with every heave we disappear
and become lost to each other
in these sudden clouds of our own making,
these fountain-bursts of snow.

This is so much better than a sermon in church,
I say out loud, but Buddha keeps on shoveling.
This is the true religion, the religion of snow,
and sunlight and winter geese barking in the sky,
I say, but he is too busy to hear me.

He has thrown himself into shoveling snow
as if it were the purpose of existence,
as if the sign of a perfect life were a clear driveway
you could back the car down easily
and drive off into the vanities of the world
with a broken heater fan and a song on the radio.

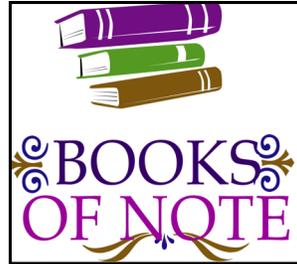
Mindful living is the antidote to violence, condescension, and exclusion. I invite you to the daily task of being mindful, of being thankful, of living in the moment with gratitude for all that we have and all that we are. This makes for a better world and reveals our better selves.



Gary



BOOKS OF NOTE



Books of Note is reading *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*, a non-fiction selection by American journalist, David Grann. This book investigates a series of murders of wealthy Osage people that took place in Osage County, Oklahoma, in the early 1920s after big oil deposits were discovered beneath their land." Please join us on

Tuesday, February 19 at 7:00 pm in the parlor, for lively discussion and fellowship. Please feel free to join us, this month or any time, whether you have read the book or not, as new participants are always welcome to attend. We hope to see you there!

Film Series

FEBRUARY 8: The Breadwinner (2017)

In 2001, Afghanistan is under the control of the Taliban. When her father is captured, a determined young girl disguises herself as a boy in order to provide for her family. This was Oscar-nominated for Best Animated Film.
Presenter: Maureen McKane



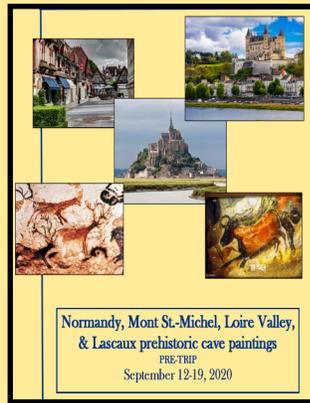
As a mobile extension of our Donate link on our NECC website, the GIVEPLUS+ app is free and available to download at the Google play store or the iPhone app store. GIVEPLUS+ is an easy way to set up automatic or one-time donations to the church. It's easy to use and can be readily available on any of your devices. Check it out today!

BOY SCOUT SUNDAY



Boy Scout Troop 3 will be hosting a pancake breakfast on Boy Scout Sunday, February 24, in Friendship Hall from 8:30 am until noon. Tickets will be available on Sundays.

A trip to the Normandy Beaches, Mont St.-Michel, the Loire Valley, and the Lascaux prehistoric cave paintings is scheduled for Sept 12-19, 2020. Brochures detailing the itinerary are available in the literature rack or by calling the office. While this trip is planned as a pre-trip to the France cruise September 18-26, 2020, it can also be booked as a separate trip without going on the cruise. Call Gary if you have questions.



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Love is in the air! Women's Circle of Friends is pleased to present Jim & Ina Heup with their musical program, Songs of Love, on Saturday, February 9 in Friendship Hall. Following our potluck breakfast at 9:30 am we will enjoy Jim & Ina's program. All women of the church are invited and we encourage you to bring a friend! Please sign up online on the NECC website or in the church office.



'CONVERSATIONS WITH GARY'



Join Gary at Ballydoyle Irish Pub in downtown Aurora for conversations on the subjects you wish to discuss. Everyone buys their own food and drink.
LUNCHTIME at 11:30 am: Monday, February 4, Tuesday, February 12, Wednesday, February 20, Thursday, February 28.

There are quite a few items in the Lost and Found box across from the office.
If any of these items belong to you, please take them.



Mardi Gras Sunday

Mardi Gras Sunday on March 3 this year is a tradition at New England Church not to be missed.

Once again the *Mad Monks of Melody* will be here with their Dixieland music.
We hope you'll join us!



CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL

The Annual Chocolate Festival will be held in Friendship Hall after second service on Mardi Gras Sunday, March 3.





We ask that all able-bodied people PARK AS FAR AWAY FROM THE BUILDING AS YOU CAN, leaving the closer parking places for those who have more difficulty walking. We've noticed that those who get here early take up the close parking places even though they are able to walk the distance. Thanks for being attentive to this parking request.

EARLY PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION FOR NECC FAMILIES

February is Early Bird Preschool Registration for NECC families!

Registration forms are available outside the Church School doors.

You may turn in forms, meet the Director, and visit the preschool on Sunday, February 24 after the 10:00 am service.



Sync Our Church Directory to Your Mobile Device

Now you can sync our church directory directly to your Apple, Android or Kindle Fire device with a FREE app!

Search for other members, and then email, call or text – right from the directory app.



It's Easy!

1. Go to your device's App Store.
2. Search for Instant Church Directory.
3. Enter your email as it's listed in our church directory.
4. Follow the directions on screen to complete the login process.



February, 2019
Vol. 2

Tiny Tidings

CHURCH SCHOOL CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 3	God's Love
FEBRUARY 10	PreK-2nd Sing & 3rd-4th Bells *3rd-6th Grade Sing in Church
FEBRUARY 17	1st & 2nd Prayer & 3rd- 4th Bells
FEBRUARY 24	PreK-4th Sing (Musical Practice)

PACKING AWAY

Over winter break on December 28th, several church school families, along with members of our congregation participated in a Feed My Starving Children packing day. On this given day, our group of 26 people from NECC packaged more than 30 boxes of food and while combining this with the other members who joined this packaging session, we packed a total of 213 boxes. This equals to feeding 126 children for an entire year.



DID YOU KNOW?



While our group from NECC was at Feed My Starving Children on December 28th, a check for \$454,500 was also provided directly to this amazing organization. This donation was solely from the offerings collected weekly from our church school and youth classes during 2018. Did you know that this amount donated will feed 5 children every day for an entire year? Thank you to all of our families for making this possible.

WINTER JUMP SUCCESS

On January 21st, when many were home from school in honor of Martin Luther King Day, several children, youth and families from NECC participated in our third annual winter jump activity at Sky Zone in Aurora. The children and youth bounced on the trampolines while some explored the Sky Slam (basketball), Warrior Course, and even the Foam Zone. It was a fun time for all and it will certainly be put on the calendar as a traditional event for next year.



BIBLE SUNDAY COMING UP



All 3RD GRADERS (plus any student 4th grade or older who did not previously receive a Bible) will be receiving Bibles during the 10 a.m. worship service on Sunday, March 10th. To ensure we have the correct name to have written on the Bible, please email Audra Darche the exact spelling of your child's name by March 1st. Please keep an eye out for a letter coming home soon with all the details.

THANK YOU

Thank you again to Cathy Canfield-Jepson for leading the first Church School lesson of 2019 on January 6th. **Remember, our church has an amazing children's hand bell group that meets from 9:00-9:45 AM each Sunday morning.**



Christmas Eve



The children's choir sang a song.



Gary played Christmas songs as the children sang.



The Every Child Christmas Pageant

Cathy Canfield-Jepson began the new year by teaching a lesson on how to play the handbells.



YOUTH TIDINGS

FEBRUARY, 2019

98TH EDITION

5TH & 6TH GRADE

The 5th and 6th graders are back in the swing of things. During the month of January, the students spent a lot of time with Mrs. James learning music for the end of the year performance. **IF YOUR CHILD/CHILDREN ARE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THE MUSICAL COMING UP IN MAY**, please encourage your child to attend our upcoming rehearsals with Mrs. James.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

This month, the 5th and 6th graders will be hosting a Valentine's Day themed coffee fellowship on February 10th after the 10:00 AM service. We are asking for participation from as many 5th & 6th graders as possible to ensure we have plenty of treats to serve our congregation. In addition, we are asking our 5th & 6th graders to assist in serving these treats. Make sure to mark this date on your calendar and keep any eye out for the treat sign up.



HIGH SCHOOL



February



March

Happy February! Hope you all had a wonderful New Year's celebration with family and/or friends. Now that the winter holidays are over, it's time to focus on the year ahead. Currently, we are in the planning stages of securing a movie afternoon in the month of February and a bowling party for March. As always, we will continue to have our weekly meetings at Chestnut House immediately after church.

CONFIRMATION HELPERS NEEDED

Just a reminder: every week in order to comply with our church's safety policy **we need a second adult present in every classroom, including confirmation.** Helpers are not required to teach, just to participate and enjoy. If you are interested in experiencing a week of confirmation class alongside our students, please contact Desiree Guzman desireeguzman@sbcglobal.net 630-564-1849.



UP & COMING IN CONFIRMATION



In January our theme for confirmation was "A Heart for Justice." Students reflected on the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Biblical prophets who inspired him.

The Golden Rule:
*Treat others the way
You want to be treated.*

In February our theme is "A Loving Heart." Students will reflect on the Golden Rule as used across a variety of cultures and faith traditions, and on the Bible's teachings about the power of words to hurt or heal.

KEEP AN EYE OUT



Keep an eye out for details about our upcoming Hoover Forest Preserve lock-in/service day in April!

December 28th Feed My Starving Children packing day.
 26 children/ youth, along with additional members from our church participated in a short but impactful two hours of service.

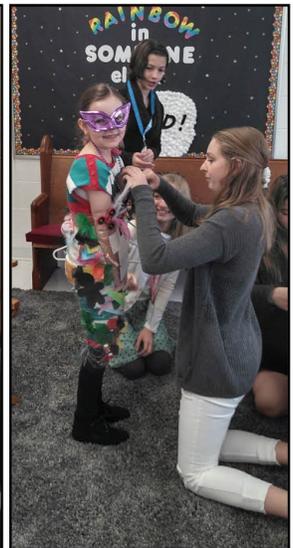


5th & 6th

learn about God while playing games.



They played pictionary using words that pertain to Christmas.



The crazy game was a lesson on promises. God's promises always stick. Sometimes we make promises and do not follow through with those promises.

**“God
Is Still
Speaking”**



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Email: office@newenglandchurch.org
A Caring Church for Thinking People

**Visit us on the web
at
www.newenglandchurch.org**

Joys & Concerns

Hospitalized:
Steve Svendsen

Deaths:
We offer our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of
Tom Weisner.



OUR STAFF & CHURCH OFFICERS

Senior Minister: Gary L. McCann
Assistant to the Minister: Martin Forward
Office Administrator: Shelley Lund
Preschool Director: Jacquie May
Director of Education Ministries: Audra Darché
5th & 6th Grade Education: Kathy Kokkinos
7th & 8th Grade Education: Desiree Guzman
9th–12th Grade Education: Lesley Myers
Chancel Choir Director: Jon Warfel
Children’s Choir Director: AnDréa James
Organists/Pianists: Marilyn Parolini, Arlene Thurow
Handbell Director: Cathy Canfield-Jepson
Director of Community Life: Kimberly Adams
Wedding Coordinator: Nancy Richmond
Nursery Care: Jenni Moses, Hannah Watkins
Custodian: John Hett
Building Maintenance: Todd Jones

Moderator: Brian Kleemann
Moderator-elect: Judy Lopez
Treasurer: Andy Sprau
Clerk: Sally Floyd