



MUSINGS

The beginning of a new year is the time for some light-hearted humor after the busy holiday season. I love to collect little witticisms just for the fun of it and I share some of them here with you. *Paraprosdokians* are figures of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected. Winston Churchill and Yogi Berra were known for such phrases. Here are some of my favorites.

If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.

Where there's a will, I want to be in it.

The last thing I want to do is hurt you. But it's still on my list.

Since light travels faster than sound, some people appear bright until you hear them speak.

Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit; wisdom is knowing not to put it in a fruit salad.

You do not need a parachute to skydive; you only need a parachute to skydive twice.

There are some mushrooms you can enjoy only once in your lifetime.

War does not determine who is right—only who is left.

We never really grow up; we only learn how to act in public.

To be sure of hitting the target, shoot first and call whatever you hit the target.

I'm supposed to respect my elders, but it's getting harder and harder for me to find one now.

If a cow gives milk she need not play the piano.

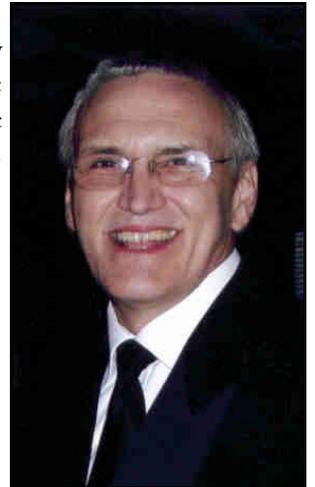
What other people think of you is none of your business.

An appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile, hoping it will eat him last. (WC)

In theory there is no difference between theory and practice. In practice there is. (YB)

If you come to a fork in the road, take it. (YB)

Always go to other people's funerals; otherwise they won't come to yours. (YB)

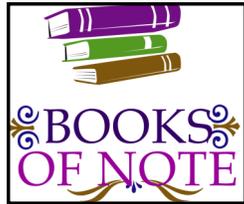


Blessings for a fun-filled, joyous and happy New Year in 2020.

Gary



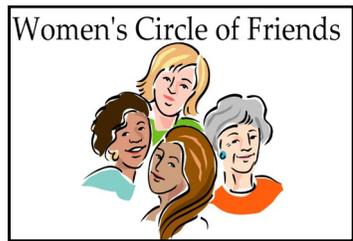
BOOKS OF NOTE



Books of Note is reading *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson. This non-fiction selection has been described as an "epic, beautifully written masterwork, in which Pulitzer Prize-winning author Isabel Wilkerson chronicles one of the great untold stories of American history: the decades-long migration of black citizens who fled the South for northern and western cities, in search of a better life." Please join us on Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at 7:00 pm in the parlor for our discussion. New members are always welcome to attend and participate. We hope to see you there whether you have had a chance to read the book or not.

At our annual meeting, we will introduce all those who have joined the church this past year. If you are interested in joining with our ministry, please contact Gary.

Women's Fellowship



Women's Circle of Friends will ring in the new year with our annual Bunco meeting on Saturday, January 11 at 9:30 am in Friendship Hall. We begin with a shared breakfast followed by Bunco, which is a simple dice game that requires no previous experience! The game allows us to meet other women of the church as we have fun playing.

Please sign up on the NECC Sign Up page or in the church office. Bring a friend and a breakfast treat and join us for a game of Bunco.

Annual Meeting



Please mark your calendar and be sure to attend our NECC Annual Meeting. The date is Sunday, January 26 following the second service. A catered lunch will be served in Friendship Hall followed by our meeting. This event offers New England family members a chance to assess the activities of the past year and understand plans for the coming year.

Report from the Pastoral Search Committee

As we transition to the New Year, the Pastoral Search Committee would like to update the congregation on our progress. The fall months have been focused on creating our church profile, which is a 35+ page document describing our church in detail and outlining what we are looking for in a senior minister. Some of you may be wondering, "Didn't you do that three years ago?" Yes, we did, but the template for this document changed dramatically and our church has undergone several changes during the same timeframe. Thus, we used information gathered through focus groups and questionnaires in 2016 and spent the fall months creating the church profile. At this time, Cabinet has approved the church profile and we are ready to share it with potential applicants.

We are sharing the profile in three ways. First, as a member of the United Church of Christ (UCC), NECC can post our church profile within their database, which is where UCC ministers seeking a position would go to identify job openings. Second, since we know the best candidate may not be actively seeking a position, we will send letters to ministers who we think may have the appropriate skill set and invite them to apply. Finally, we will post an advertisement in the *Christian Century*, which is a magazine with wide readership among religious leaders from mainline protestant churches.

We have been told that NECC is an attractive church with many people likely interested in applying. Thus, it will take time to review materials sent to us, check references, and begin interviewing qualified candidates. We are going to wait patiently to call a new minister only when we are confident that we have found someone who is a good fit for our church. During this time, the Search Committee will not share details about candidates but will keep you informed of where we are in the process. Remember that the Transition Team has been set up to help the church through this process. Thus, feel free to reach out to them at any time with questions or concerns.

Search Committee: Laura Pittman (chair), Jeff Butler, Bart Grometer, Kris Hasty, Nancy Hopp, Brian Kleemann, Dale Myers, Jill Sprau.

Transition Team: Kathi Limoges (chair), Bill Donnell, Judy Lopez, Bob Lundquist, Jim Mamminga, Rose May, Maureen McKane, Laura Pittman, Cheryl Vonhoff, Scott Voris.





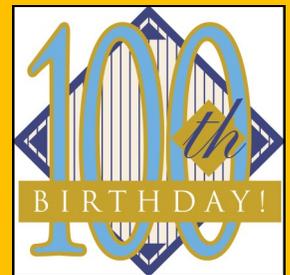
Film Series-
January 10:
The Big Year (2011)
Two bird enthusiasts
try to defeat the
cocky, cutthroat
world record holder
in a year-long
bird-spotting
competition.
With Jack Black,
Steve Martin and
Owen Wilson.
Presenter: John Ruby

MEN'S GROUP BELL RINGING

2019 was another good year for the New England Men's Group Salvation Army Bell Ringers. We had 32 ringers from 5-7 pm on December 10 at 24 different locations. This is the 22nd year we have participated in the Army's Red Kettle drive. Our New England ringers had \$1,090 contributed at our assigned locations during our shift. An additional \$267 was donated at our after ringing dinner. Many thanks to all our bell-ringers, as well as to Jim & Jan Mamminga who opened their home and prepared a delicious BBQ dinner. The Salvation Army is enormously grateful for our part in this annual fundraiser which we intend to continue in 2020.



Are you or anyone you know in our congregation
turning 100+ this year?
If so, please call the church office to let us know!
Thank you!



Barry & Ruth Ann
Cronin
9031 Old Hickory
Circle
Fort Myers, FL. 33912

Christmas Angel Project Update



Thank you one and all for your wonderful response to our holiday Angel Tree project. We delivered 118 packages; this number was divided among three schools. Several of the families had siblings, and these were included in the group of 118 angels. Your generosity of gifts, and your punctuality in bringing in the gifts was very much appreciated. Many children were made happy by your efforts. Thanks again! Also, many thanks to our mission board members that made this project go smoothly, especially Janet Gaff, Lynn Gourley, and Marsha Carter. In addition special thanks to Val Flechtner, Rita Soltis, Mike Imbrogno, and Judy McCann for their 'behind the scenes' assistance. ... *and they will know we are Christians by our love.*

Attention All Board Game Lovers



Save the Date, Saturday, February 8 from 7:00-9:00 pm, for an Adult Game Night Out!

Join us for an evening of fun board game playing with other adults in the church.

This event will not be your average board game playing (Sorry, No Monopoly) - you will enjoy a variety of games that are competitive,

cooperative, silly, skilled based, luck based, and just plain fun to play. Come and learn some new games and make new friends! Games will be provided, non-alcoholic beverages provided. Potluck-style appetizers and BYOB. Prizes will be given out for various goals achieved during the evening. Sign up in the Marketplace on January 19, 26, & February 2.

Reminder:

The newsletter deadline for submitted articles is the 15th of every month. The deadline for the weekly Sunday bulletin is the Monday preceding the affected Sunday. Please have your announcements worded the way that you want them to be and e-mail to shelley@newenglandchurch.org. Thank you!



'Conversations with Gary'

Join us 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:

Tuesday, January 14, Wednesday, January 22,

Thursday, January 30.

These will be the only dates in January.



A hearty thank you to Jan Mamminga for volunteering to be the "poinsettia mom" during the Christmas season, keeping the plants watered during the week so they look great on Sunday.

We appreciate your good work.

January, 2020
Vol. 1

Tiny Tidings

REGISTRATION 2019-2020

JANUARY 5	Introduction to Bells
JANUARY 12	Lost and Found Parables
JANUARY 19	Music Sunday-All Children Sing
JANUARY 20	4th Annual Winter Jump at Sky Zone
JANUARY 26	Lost and Found Parables Annual Meeting After Church

RINGING IN THE NEW YEAR

The first Church School Lesson to kick off 2020 will be led by our very own Cathy Jepson, our Hand Bell Director on Sunday, January 5th. During this lesson, Cathy will lead the PreK-4th grade children through a fun introduction on how to hold the bells and the sound that each make. It is hoped that this early exposure in Church School will encourage interest in our youngest members and possibly promote participation in the years to come. Our Children's Hand Bell group that meets at 9:00 AM prior to church each Sunday. During this time, the children learn how to read music, play the bells, and ultimately, have fun connecting with other church friends. If your child is interested in joining the hand bell group, please see Cathy Jepson for details.



CHURCH SCHOOL WINTER JUMP REMINDER

All church school children, youth, and families are invited to our **4TH ANNUAL WINTER JUMP!** Aren't we all looking for activities to do with our children during the cold winter days? Especially, something that will get our children running and exercising and not cost a fortune. On **MONDAY, JANUARY 20TH**, Martin Luther King Day, when our children are home from school, all church school children, youth, & families (grandparents, too) are invited to Sky Zone Trampoline Park-87 Executive Drive, Aurora, IL. During this time, the children can run, jump, and bounce from 10:00 AM-12:00 PM for only \$10.00 per child. Friends are welcome!! If you are interested in attending, **PLEASE MAKE SURE TO SIGN UP ON THE FORM IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL HALLWAY OR CONTACT AUDRA DARCHÉ.**

POP TAB UPDATE



Did you know that during 2019, our church donated just over 25 pounds of pop tabs to the Ronald McDonald House? The Ronald McDonald House provides a great deal of support to families who have a sick child. Such support could be assistance with housing for the family near the hospital and/or even furnishing a place to rest at the hospital just to name a few. During the last year, several members dropped off pop tabs in the baskets that are located around the church and even in the church school hallway. Now that the holidays are over, please keep in mind that if you are consuming energy drinks, soda pop, or even soup or canned items with a tab, our church could use your tabs. It would be amazing to exceed these 25 pounds for 2020 but we need your help! Keep an eye out for the baskets around church and drop off at any time!



goes out to Ina Heup and Rick Guzman for making our Children's Music program shine during the month of December. The Prek-6th grade children performed for the first time during our Annual Hanging of the Green's service, and once again on Christmas Eve. Both performances were top notch!!

VOLUNTEER TEACHER OPENINGS FOR 2020

THERE ARE VOLUNTEER TEACHER OPENINGS FOR THE SECOND HALF OF THE CHURCH SCHOOL YEAR. As a reminder, volunteers can now go to our church website main page and scroll down to the bottom of the page and find the "sign up station" button and click to find the dates and times that still need to be filled for our church school program. The paper copy will continue to hang in the church school hallway for those who like this method, but the link on NECC's website is also an option for our busy families.

Making ornaments for the tree in the sanctuary.



Decorating the tree during the Hanging of the Greens service.



The Joyful Noise Choir sings during the Hanging of the Greens.



Cookie Walk helpers

Cookie Walk entertainment



The Cookie Walk begins.



The tables are full of yummy cookies.



YOUTH TIDINGS

JANUARY, 2020

108TH EDITION

5TH & 6TH GRADE

The 5th and 6th graders participated in the Hanging of the Greens and they did a fabulous job hanging the garland. During the month of December, the students explored lessons on Advent and Christmas while a friendly game of Pictionary demonstrated their artistic abilities.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

All youth are invited to our 4th annual winter jump! On Monday, January 20th, Martin Luther King Day, when our children are home from school, all youth, & families (grandparents, too) are invited to Sky Zone Trampoline Park-87 Executive Drive, Aurora, IL. During this time, the youth can run, jump, and bounce from 10:00 AM-12:00 PM for only \$10.00 per child. Feel free to bring a friend! If you are interested in attending, please make sure to sign up on the form in the church school hallway or contact Audra Darché.



**SKY ZONE
TRAMPOLINE PARK**

HIGH SCHOOL

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

to all the high school families!! I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas. Thank you to all the high school students and their families that helped to make the cookie walk another successful event! You all were amazing, and the help was so much appreciated.

REMINDER

Sunday, Dec. 29th will be our Church School (Prek-6thgrade) holiday movie celebration in the theater.

***TAKE NOTE: Movie will begin promptly at 10:00 AM, so please drop off your child prior to church in the theater.**

CONFIRMATION

THANK YOU to all the Confirmation students who participated in our “Hanging of the Greens” and “Family Christmas Eve” services. You helped us make the season bright! And special thanks to Monica & Mark Gordon for filling in while Desiree was away.

In the New Year, Confirmation students will be learning about some of the Parables of Jesus and the Sermon on the Mount. **EVERY WEEK WE NEED A SECOND ADULT IN OUR CLASSROOM FOR OUR SAFE CHURCH POLICY. IF YOU ARE WILLING TO SIT IN ON A CLASS** (no preparation or teaching required) contact Desiree Guzman 630-564-1849 desireeguzman@sbcglobal.net.

UP AND COMING YOUTH ACTIVITIES

HIGH SCHOOL MOVIE NIGHT in February (TBA)
TOP GOLF on March 15th

A PACKING WE WILL GO

Our next packaging session at Feed My Starving Children will take place on Friday, January 3rd from 2:30-4:30 PM. All children, youth, and families are invited to participate. If interested, please sign up on the Feed My Starving Children site by clicking “volunteer” and then entering our code: OE5X88 or email Audra Darche at audra@newenglandchurch.org to secure your spot. *Friends are always welcome!*





**“God
Is Still
Speaking”**

**New England Congregational
Church-UCC**
406 W. Galena Blvd. Aurora, IL. 60506
Phone: 630.897.8721
Fax: 630.897.8744
Email: office@newenglandchurch.org
A Caring Church for Thinking People

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

Joys & Concerns

Hospitalized:
Barbara Mitcheltree



Our Staff & Church Officers

Senior Minister: Gary L. McCann
Assistant to the Minister: Martin Forward
Office Administrator: Shelley Lund
Director of Education Ministries: Audra Darché
5th & 6th Grade Education: Kathy Kokkinos
7th & 8th Grade Education: Desiree Guzman
9th–12th Grade Education: Lesley Myers
Children’s Choir Director: Ina Heup
Chancel Choir Director: Mark Plummer
Organist: Marsha Foxgrover
Assistant Organist: Marilyn Parolini
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: Judy Lopez
Treasurer: Andy Sprau
Clerk: Sally Floyd