



MUSINGS

As we celebrate our 162nd Annual Meeting at New England Church, we do so with gratitude for the significant ministry we have in the Aurora community. It has been a year of joy for many good things as well as a year of loss and transition.

We celebrated the 70th anniversary of our Preschool ministry this past year, but as society changes, so do the church's programs. The New England Nursery School, as it was known when it began in 1948, was an innovative kindergarten readiness program. Over the years it had grown to be a top-notch preschool for thousands of children, drawing the admiration and appreciation of parents and grandparents as well as the children. Some of those who attended in earlier years enrolled their own children and grandchildren in the program in later years. But all good things must come to an end, and so we had to make the difficult decision to close the school in May due to low enrollment.

But with the closing of this ministry we embarked upon another significant outreach program with World Relief, serving the immigrant and refugee community of Aurora. Our church is located in the largest concentration of immigrant population in Aurora, so the location is perfect for the program they offer. And the preschool space has allowed them to expand their program. It has been a "win-win" situation for the church and World Relief. Their English as a Second Language program, and childcare for students of that program, helps integrate people into a new culture and a new language. We are pleased to be able to share our space with them.

We were saddened beyond our ability to express when Joe Dunham died this spring. Joe had been a part of the congregation and an Assistant Minister for 25+ years and was beloved by all who knew him. It was a significant loss for me, both personally and professionally, for Joe was always at the ready to step in when I needed help or wanted to be away. We are grateful that Martin Forward has been willing and able to assist in similar ways, both in preaching and pastoral work.

When Marilyn Parolini and Arlene Thurow were unable to continue as our organists we were fortunate to have Marsha Foxgrover join our staff as organist, with Marilyn continuing to serve as Assistant, and as pianist at the 8:30 service and accompanist for the Joyful Noise youth choir.

At the same time that Andrea James resigned as director of the children's choir, Ina Heup was willing and able to take up the mantle of leadership, stepping back into the role she had held until her short-lived retirement. When our Minister of Music Jon Warfel resigned in November, Ina resumed her leadership on a temporary basis through Christmas, and Mark Plummer assumed the role as Chancel Choir Director in the new year. We have been blessed, indeed, to have had such wonderful music leadership and equally exciting leadership with our current musicians.

This is also the year that I have decided it is time to retire. I have been blessed beyond my deserving to share in the ministry of this church for the past 34 years, and while I will miss my "work" here more than my mind can comprehend at this point, it is time for someone younger with new ideas to assume leadership, and for me to spend more time with my kids and grandsons. I will work closely with the Transition Team and the Search Committee to make the transition as smooth as possible, trusting that God will inspire the yet unknown Senior Minister to assume the role as we have seen leaders coming to us when the need has arisen.

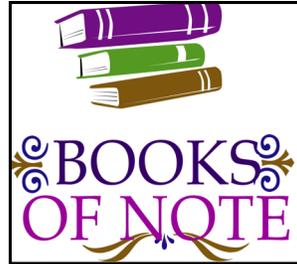
Let us all give thanks for the years we've had together and in prayer for the future for the good of the New England Church family and the larger Aurora community we continue to serve.



Gary



BOOKS OF NOTE



Books of Note is reading *From the Corner of the Oval*, by Beck Dory-Stein described as "a memoir written by a woman who applied for a job as a stenographer via Craig's List" while unbeknownst to her, it was for a position in the Obama White House. Please join us on Tuesday, February 18 at 7:00 pm in the parlor for our discussion. New participants are always welcome to attend to join in the fun and fellowship of this lively group. We hope to see you there, whether you have had a chance to read the book or not!

Film Series

February 14: *Pygmalion* (1938)

A phonetics and diction expert makes a bet that he can teach a cockney flower girl to speak proper English and pass as a lady in high society. With Leslie Howard and Wendy Hiller. Story later made into musical "My Fair Lady." Presenter: Brian Kleemann



Board Game Night-Saturday, February 8 from 7:00-9:00 pm in Friendship Hall. Join in a fun night of Board Games with other adults in church. You will enjoy a variety of games that are competitive, cooperative, silly, skilled based, luck based, and just plain fun to play. Games will be provided. BYOB and bring an appetizer to share. Beverages and desserts provided. Fun prizes will be given out! \$5 per person. Sign up in the Marketplace February 2.

BOY SCOUT SUNDAY



Boy Scout Troop 3 will be hosting a pancake breakfast on Scout Sunday, February 16, in Friendship hall from 8:30 am until 12 noon. There will also be a bake sale and raffles for quilts and a signed sports related jersey. Ticket prices are \$8 per person, \$24 for a family.

There will be a service in Johnson Chapel on Wednesday, February 26 at 7:00 pm. Please join us.



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

"Love is in the air", so join us for our shared breakfast on Saturday, February 8 at 9:30 am. We have been invited to Jan Mamminga's house (1636 W Downer Pl) for a heart celebration. Women's Circle of Friends invites all women to join us as we eat and talk together. Be sure to come to Jan's rather than the church and also RSVP by signing up on the NECC website or in the church office. "Love has no limits"!



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.



Volunteer to work at the Aurora Area Interfaith Food Pantry -NECC sends volunteers to work in the warehouse and/or to restock shelves every 2nd and 3rd Monday of the month from 3:00-4:00 pm.

The location is 110 Jericho Road, Aurora.

Thank you!



'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 3, Tuesday, February 11, Wednesday, February 19, Thursday, February 27.

Mardi Gras Sunday

Mardi Gras Sunday on February 23 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 on Sunday, February 23, after the 10:00 am service. Please join us for some delicious treats and our famous liquid chocolate fountains.

We are looking for people to sign up to bring sweet treats; you can sign up in the Marketplace during the month of February.





Occasionally people receive emails and texts from an unknown source posing as me. There have been requests for gift cards, to give me a call, or that I need help with a project. **DO NOT RESPOND TO THESE.** Usually the return address is a hint; if it is not from gary@newenglandchurch.org, it isn't from me. And if it is from this email, and something seems strange, do not reply. Send me a new email at this address or call me to check it out.

Thank you,
Gary

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS

Unfortunately there is always litter around the church grounds. Can you volunteer to pick it up? Get some exercise and fresh air alone or bring a group with you.

It's best done close to the weekend to have the grounds looking their best for Sunday services, but any day is fine.

Volunteer via the Signup Station feature on the church website for the week you can help.

Bring a bag for trash and one for 'recycles' that you can then deposit in the large containers inside the corral at the west end of the parking lot. Thank you!

Questions: Contact Jan Mamminga at jrmamminga@yahoo.com



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!

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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, 2020
Vol. 2

Tiny Tidings

CHURCH SCHOOL CALENDAR

- FEBRUARY 2** Women of the Bible
Bells Lesson- 3rd & 4th
- FEBRUARY 9** Women of the Bible Cont.
Bells Lesson-3rd & 4th
*Children sing in church
- FEBRUARY 16** Music Sunday (All Children Sing with Mrs. Heup)
*3rd & 4th Play bells in church
- FEBRUARY -23** Mardi Gras Sunday (No Church School)



WE DID IT AGAIN

Over winter break on January 3rd, 28 children and youth, along with their families participated in another NECC Feed My Starving Children packing day. On this given day, our group along with others at this session, packaged 212 boxes. Did you know that this equals to feeding 125 children for an entire year? Thank you to all of you who came out and helped make a difference.



STARTING THE YEAR OFF RIGHT



Thank you again to Cathy Canfield-Jepson and Katie Jepson for leading the first church school lesson of 2020. Cathy Jepson, our hand bell director led the PreK-6th graders through a fun interactive lesson on the hand bells and everyone had a great time. **REMEMBER, OUR CHURCH HAS AN AMAZING CHILDREN'S HAND BELL GROUP THAT MEETS EACH SUNDAY FROM 9:00-9:45 AM.** If your child is interested in participating in the children's hand bell group, please contact Cathy Canfield-Jepson.

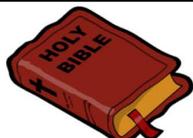
More pictures on picture page.

RINGING IN THE NEW YEAR

Beginning on Feb. 2nd-Feb. 9th, our 3rd & 4th graders will participate in a special 2 week lesson on the handbells that will take place during church school time. Throughout these 2 sessions, our handbell director, Cathy Canfield-Jepson will guide the children on how to properly hold and ring a handbell, identify the notes on the bells, and also teach them a song to play. Then on February 16th, the 3rd & 4th graders will perform the song they learned during the 10:00 AM service. Make sure to mark these dates in your calendar to ensure your child can participate.



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 8th. 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 Feb.23rd. Please keep an eye out for a letter coming home soon with all the details.

Singing with Gary on Christmas Eve



Ukelele band

Every Child Christmas Pageant



Learning to play bells

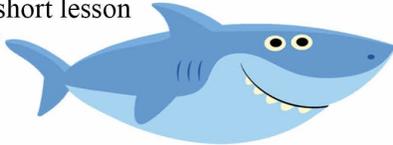
YOUTH TIDINGS

FEBRUARY, 2020

109TH EDITION

5TH & 6TH GRADE

Music was in the air this past January! Mrs. Jepson led the 5th & 6th graders in a special lesson with the bells. The students learned and played a couple of songs during this short lesson and “Baby Shark” was a hit by all!



Back in the classroom the students learned about the history of New England Church. The students explored and discovered various items around the church that are important pieces of our history.

HIGH SCHOOL



This month our group outing will be a movie. The event will take place at Lesley Myers’s house immediately following church from 11:30-2pm on February 23. Kids will make their own pizzas for lunch (other options can be available if they do not eat pizza, just let Lesley know) and then they will settle down to watch a movie of their choice. If you are able to join in the fun, please RSVP to Lesley Myers at Lesley.myers@mchsi.com or you may call or text to 773-255-1010. Hope to can join us!

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

Be on the lookout for the 5th and 6th graders in the narthex after the 10:00 AM service on February 16th. The 5th and 6th graders will be hosting a Valentine’s Day themed coffee fellowship. They look forward to serving and meeting the congregation. Please stop by to grab a treat and say hello.

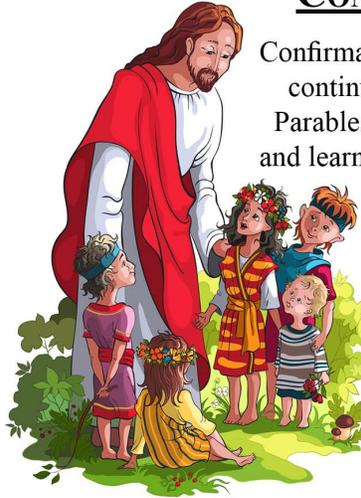
COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

Join us!



CONFIRMATION

Confirmation Students will continue to study the Parables of Jesus in February and learn how those famous stories have been used to challenge, teach, and inspire people for over two thousand years.



CONFIRMATION & HIGH SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS 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 and high school youth group.

HELPERS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO TEACH, JUST TO PARTICIPATE AND ENJOY.

If you are interested in assisting in confirmation, please contact Desiree Guzman at desireeguzman@sbcglobal.net or the high school youth leader Lesley Myers at Lesley.myers@mchsi.com.



UP AND COMING

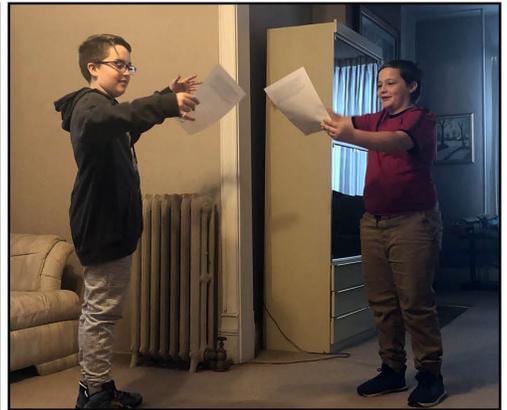
TOP GOLF OUTING

FOR 5TH-12TH GRADERS
IN MARCH

High School youth celebrate Christmas at La Quinta de los Reyes



Confirmation class Christmas Party



Confirmation Class act out the parables



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Joys & Concerns

Visit us on the web
at
www.newenglandchurch.org

Hospitalized:
Martin Forward, Sally Funk

Deaths:
We offer our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of
Judy Vargas.



OUR STAFF & CHURCH OFFICERS

New England Congregational
Church-UCC
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Email: office@newenglandchurch.org
A Caring Church for Thinking People

*“God
Is Still
Speaking”*



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