



A New Spirit

January 2012

North Kingstown United Methodist Church
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Rev. Lorene E. Eldredge, Pastor

Grace Notes

Pastor Lori

We are in the midst of the Christmas Season, and a new year has almost begun. Soon it will be Epiphany when the light of Christ shines its brightest! Yet, except for a sojourn into Egypt with his parents, this is the last word on Jesus until we meet him again in the temple. Many of us have already taken down the lights and packed away all the decorations. It's important that we don't pack everything away. We want to keep visible the power of the Christmas message, "God is with us." This has been the message of every age since the beginning of time and the creation of humanity. As Jesus was placed in a manger at Bethlehem, the food trough for the animals, let Him feed our souls that we may proclaim, "God is with us!" As the star shone upon Him, may we keep the light of Christ shining!

In the New Year we are given the opportunity to proclaim God's good news of great joy in Jesus Christ. We will have opportunities to join in worship, study and fellowship. Our priorities will be to continue the visioning process and the conversion of heat from oil to gas. There may be other ideas for ministry that will arise in the visioning, but, if we are to proclaim the good news, then we need to continue to grow spiritually. Nothing is more important to our souls, and nothing is more important than our souls! We believe that God is with us *all the time* so let's listen to God and witness to God acting in our lives. God may be present in music, in a book that speaks to us, in a giant snow sculpture on the front lawn (if we ever get snow). It may be in a painting by Rembrandt. God is with us and may be found when we are willing to look for the Divine in the tiniest of creatures or in the vastness of space. This evening I could not help but look up at the beautiful night sky. The stars were like crystals sparking in the sunshine. "The stars are pin holes in the curtain of heaven." [from the movie "Saving Sarah Cain".] It is our glimpse of heaven, a glimpse of the One in whom we place our hope.

In this season of winter, let us be open to seeing God in new ways. And then let's not be afraid to give God the credit! It is a choice we are given to make. Will you let your light shine for Christ or will you hide it "under a basket." When we stand before our maker we will not be asked if we were politically correct, we will be asked, "Does God know you by your speech and by your deeds? Do you have Christ in your heart?"

CONFIRMATION 2012

On January 15th Pastor Lori will begin the 2012 Confirmation class. This class has been separated from the Sunday School Curriculum. If you have a child interested in being confirmed, who is in grade 7 or older, please plan to attend this meeting and bring your family calendar. Along with classes exploring our faith and the workings of the United Methodist Church there will be a weekend retreat at Camp Aldersgate (TBD) with youth from other churches and an all day Saturday session at the church. Confirmation will be held on May 27th, Pentecost Sunday.

January Calendar

1 9:30 Communion Happy New Year!	2 6:45 Scouts 6:45 Shepherding 7:00 Bible Study 7:00 NK Photo Guild	3 10 Staff 6:00 Bells 7:00 Choir 7:00 AA	4 9:45 Study 4:45 Scouts 5:00 Scouts 7:00 Trustees	5 12 Ladies Fellowship 6:00 NK Land Conservancy 6:30 Scouts	6 7:00 Scouts	7 10:00 – 2:00 Visioning
8 8:00 Communion 9:15 Adult SS 10 Worship 10:15 Sunday School 11:15 Nursery Care Mtg. 5:00 Youth Group	9 6:30 Scouts 6:45 Scouts 6:45 Shepherding 7:00 Bible Study	10 10:00 Staff Meeting 6:00 Bells 7:00 Choir 7:00 AA	11 9:45 Study 6:30 Scouts 7:00 SPRC	12 12:00 Ladies Fellowship 6:30 Scouts 7:00 Finance	13 6:00 Taste and Sing	14 8:00 Men's Breakfast
15 Human Relations Day 8:00 Communion 9:15 Adult SS 10:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School Confirmation Mtg.	16 6:45 Shepherding 7:00 Bible Study 7:00 NK Photo Guild	17 10:00 Staff Meeting 6:00 Bells 7:00 Choir 7:00 AA	18 9:45 Study 4:45 Scouts 5:00 Scouts 7:00 SPRC	19 12:00 Ladies Fellowship 6:30 Scouts	20 Newsletter Deadline- All events for February	21 9:30 UMW
22 8:00 Communion 9:15 Adult SS 9:15 Worship Design 10:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School 11:15 Spiritual Formation Mtg. 5:00 Youth Group	23 6:30 Scouts 6:45 Scouts 6:45 Shepherding 7:00 Bible Study	24 10:00 Staff Meeting 6:00 Bells 7:00 Choir 7:00 AA	25 9:45 Study 6:30 Scouts	26 12:00 Ladies Fellowship	27	28 9:00 NK Genealogical Society
29 8:00 Communion 9:15 Adult SS 10:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School	30 6:45 Scouts 6:45 Shepherding 7:00 Bible Study	31 10 Staff Meeting 6:00 Bells 7:00 Choir 7:00 AA 7:00 Scout Leaders				

From our Advent Studies:

In our Advent studies we read the words of Mary's response to God as she sang. She lifted up the poor and those treated harshly. Jesus' ministry echoed her response of social justice. Not a lot is known about Joseph. Not one word is recorded in scripture that he spoke. What we can know about Joseph we learn from Jesus' teachings and by the way he treated people – with patience, mercy, and compassion. Did he learn these from Joseph?

The Carpenter by Mark DerManouelian

Joseph was simply a hard working soul,
from when he was young, until he grew old.

Committed to Mary and God above
his life demonstrated mercy and love.

Quiet Joseph was not one for a word.
His legacy was in raising our Lord.



JANUARY LECTIONARY

January 1, 2012 9:30AM Service with Communion

Texts: Isaiah 61: 10 - 62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4: 4-7; Luke 2: 22-40
Singing our Favorite Songs of the season

January 8 We return to two services at 8:00 & 10:00AM

Text: Isaiah 60: 1-6; Matthew 2: 1-12; Mark 1: 4-11; Acts 19: 1-7
Message: "Life Changing Waters"

January 15

Texts: 1 Samuel 3: 1-10; Psalm 139: 1-6, 13-18; 1 Corinthians 6: 12-20; John 1: 43-51
Lay Speaker, Paula Martasian, preaching

JANUARY 22

Texts: Jonah 3: 1-5, 10; Psalm 62: 5-12; 1 Corinthians 7: 29-31; Mark 1: 14-20
Lay Speaker, Cibby Gardiner, preaching

JANUARY 29

Texts: Deuteronomy 18: 15-20; Psalm 111; 1 Corinthians 8: 1-13; Mark 1: 14-20
Message "The Spirit World"

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

If worship or church activities are cancelled or postponed due to hazardous weather conditions, we will make every effort to notify you by through the Rhode Island Broadcasters channels, email, facebook, and a few by telephone. In all cases we expect everyone to use their common sense regarding travel conditions.

Please, be safe!

SPIRITUAL FORMATION FAMILY EVENTS in 2012

Beginning in January we have several Spiritual Formation Events planned.

Our first includes an opportunity to learn new songs of the faith, some included in the old hymnal! Paul Mancini will be here to lead us in singing on Friday, January 13th. We will begin with a potluck at 6PM.

On March 4th at 4PM we will host concert pianist Jim Hendricks. Based in Chicago, Jim is well known as a Christian artist in the mid-west. He will be with us in worship at 10AM and then in concert in the afternoon.

The concert will be open to our community and our district. Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

PREPARING FOR LENT...

In December the Administrative Council voted to suspend business meetings during Lent, giving opportunity to those who serve on church boards to participate in Lenten Studies. A study is being planned apart from the Monday evening or Wednesday morning studies, with each week being an independent opportunity to learn about our faith. More details will be available in the February newsletter.

Our North Kingstown Ecumenical Clergy are planning for the Soup & Spirit Luncheons that are held annually during Lent during the noon hour. Our focus this year will be on Sacred Hymns of Lent and will begin at NKUMC on February 29th. Ash Wednesday is on February 22.

Thank You from the Community...

We have received many notes of thanks for the generosity of the congregation.

- A note from the Domestic Violence Center in Wakefield thanked us for the \$650.00 worth of gift cards we send for them to give to women, wives and mothers, to use this holiday season.
- A note was also received from Dorcas Kamanda thanking us for our gift of \$279.50 to CITA. \$192.50 will be used for WAP and \$88 will go to the support of the Nar Sarah Clinic.
- Three car loads of toys and clothing were taken to Project Outreach. They were very thankful to receive them along with the numerous gift cards and shoes, boots, and sneakers!
- We helped three families from our own congregation who verbally expressed their thanks as gifts were picked up or delivered. Your support makes a great difference in their lives!
- We delivered a box of food on Christmas Eve to a young woman with no food. Praise be to God we were able to help.
- One gentleman in our congregation gave a young father a Bible we had in the library so that the father could tell his child about Jesus.
- People attending Christmas meal were very appreciative of those who served and of the gifts received.



**From our home to yours...
From our hearts to yours...
Merry Christmas!**

Zoe and Steve Brooks

"From the fullness of His grace we have all received one blessing after another." John 1:16 NIV

THANK YOU...

I want to thank everyone in the congregation for their generosity at Christmas and on my birthday. Thank you for the wonderful notes, your wishes for good health, your cards, gifts, and your love.

Pastor Lori

Dear Friends,

Thank you so very much for your generous Christmas gift. It was a wonderful surprise and greatly appreciated. It's my pleasure, indeed, to work with you.

Blessings,
Cindy

I'd like to thank the congregation for their generosity during this Christmas season and for their continued support throughout the year.

Paul

January Birthdays	
2	Grace Dallas Nick Dewhurst Claudia Galgoczy Susan Peters Justin Evans
3	Travis Price
4	Christina Sperry
7	Diane Gledhill Elaine Roffo
8	Richard Dunne Zandra Matthews
9	Nancy Mason
10	Aiden Horan Rodney Olson
12	Joni Lynch
13	Christine Washburn
14	Mark Moffett
16	Sandra Horan
20	Frances Wood
21	Julia DeMarco Chet Thomas
22	Rachel Brown
24	Kaitlyn Horan Kyle Horan
25	Steven Cihat Jay Sperry
26	Jim Moon
27	Rev. F. Richard Garland Mark Zaccaria
29	John Dearlove Betty Grady Carolyn MacGregor Bess Rhodin Herbert Stevens
30	Jon Eaton Bryan Kamerzel
31	Sarah Beatty Gerald Williamson

FROM WHERE I SIT Reverend F. Richard Garland

LIGHT TO LIVE BY

It was during that cold, dark time of winter, mid way between Christmas and Lent. We were going to a clergy gathering for an evening of fellowship. As we neared Tom and Joan’s parsonage home, we were surprised to see candles in each of the windows. In the dark winter night, with snow on the ground, it was magical! “It’s beautiful!” I said to Tom as we entered their home, “But Christmas was over a month ago.” Ever the teacher, Tom said simply, “They’re Epiphany Candles, Dick. They symbolize the Light of the World.”

Of course!

Epiphany, when we acknowledge it, is a uniquely Christian celebration. In many ways Christmas has been captured by commercial interests, the ultimate opportunity for marketing and consumption excesses. One has to dig deep behind it all to see the Christ for whom Christmas is named. But Epiphany? It’s different! It’s about magi following a heavenly light to find the Light of the World!

In his book, **“Christmas Is Not Your Birthday,”** Mike Slaughter, seeks to help people to “reclaim the broader missional meaning of Jesus’ birth and experience a Christmas season with more peace and joy than any toy or gadget could ever bring.” He observes that the journey of the Magi involved a considerable amount of energy and expense, and, that when they arrived, they offered Jesus treasures that would have been worthy only of a king and show the marks of true commitment. Listen to what Slaughter sees in the visit of the Magi, and note how good a model for our own life what they did would be.

First: Of the scripture, ‘They bowed down and worshiped him.’ Slaughter says “When we acknowledge Jesus as Lord, we humbly submit to his authority. We acknowledge that he must have the defining rights in our lifestyles, values and money. Remember, the worst kind of fool is the person who believes that God exists, but lives as if God’s directives are not to be taken seriously.”

Second: Of the scripture, ‘They open their treasures,’ he says “The resources of heaven do not fall from the sky; they are released through God’s people. God creates miracles through the resources that you and I hold in our hands. Miracles occur when we release our treasures to Jesus; hands for the purpose of multiplying God’s redemptive word in the world.”

Third: Of the scripture. ‘They returned to their country by a different road,’ he says, “Belief is simple, but changing course - or repenting and changing our life attitudes and practices - is often a hard commitment to make. When we acknowledge Jesus as Lord, however, we make that commitment to walk in new life directions - to travel by a different road. The biblical word for this kind of change in direction is repentance.”

What we have seen in Christmas is the birth of the Light of the world. And as the Gospel of John reminds us: “What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.” “He was the true light that enlightens everyone coming into the world.” [John 1: 4, 5, 9] Epiphany is a reminder that, in Immanuel, we have a light to live by - the Word made flesh - a lamp to our feet - a light to our path.

At Epiphany the Magi have offered to us an invitation to a new way of journeying on our walk of faith: faithful worship of God in our midst; generous sharing of the treasure we have received from God; the choice of a new life direction in discipleship with Christ. In Christ we have a Light to live by, and like the beautiful Epiphany Candles on a dark, cold winter night, it shows the way to a welcome place where people can be together with glad and joyful hearts.

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Return Service Requested