



A New Spirit
MARCH 2010

North Kingstown United Methodist Church
450 Boston Neck Road
North Kingstown, Rhode Island 02852
E-mail: church@nkumc.necoxmail.com
Website: <http://nkumcri.com>

Rev. Lorene E Eldredge, Pastor

Soup & Spirit Lenten Lunches

March 3 – North Kingstown Baptist

Speaker: Reverend Betty Rae Taylor
To proclaim release to the captives

March 10- St. Bernard’s Parish Center

Speaker: Reverend Dennis Reardon
To bring recovery of sight to the blind

March 17 - St. Paul’s Episcopal

Rev. Lori Eldredge
To let the oppressed go free

March 24 – Wickford Baptist

Reverend Harry Bronker
To proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor

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***Deadline for April
newsletter is March 18th***

ECUMENICAL COMMUNITY SUNDAY DINNER

The Ecumenical Community Sunday Dinners move to NKUMC beginning March 7th at 1PM. Preparing meals are St. Paul’s (7th), St Bernard’s (14th), North Kingstown Baptist (21st) and NKUMC (28th). Our responsibility is to set up the dining room and have one person present who is familiar with the kitchen and facilities to assist. We will prepare the meal on the 28th.

These meals have previously been hosted by St. Paul’s and Wickford Baptist with all the churches participating in preparing meals for those who are homeless, without adequate heat, or persons simply wanting to share a meal with another person. Each week there have been between 30-70 joining in fellowship. To be involved see Paula Martasian or Jay Hickey, our co-lay leaders.

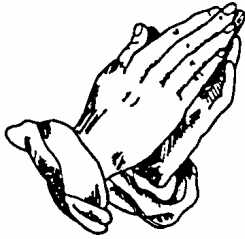
WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2010

LET EVERYTHING THAT HAS BREATH PRAISE GOD

This year's World Day of Prayer services will begin at sunrise on March 5 in the Pacific region and will follow the Earth's orbit, shining its light on the Americas, the Atlantic Ocean, Europe, the coast of West Africa (where Cameroon lies) and the rest of the world.

The women of Cameroon developed this worship service which emphasizes the importance their people place on music and celebration in their praise to God.

Two services sponsored by Church Women United will be held FRIDAY March 5



Noon: Community Baptist Church

Dr. Marcus Wheatland Blvd., Newport

1 PM: Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

383 Old North Rd., Kingston

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

THE HEALING POWER OF STORY

How Story Renews...Restores...and Re-orders

Retreat Leader (Rev.) BARBARA PORIZKY
She believes story invites, influences and
intensifies Spirituality.

40th Annual Retreat of South County Church Women United

SATURDAY APRIL 17
9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

AT THE NEIGHBORHOOD GUILD
325 Columbia St., Peace Dale

COST \$35 Contact: Ms.
Shirley E. Southwick 783-
5460



SUNSET GALA

At

The Dunes Club

175 Boston Neck Road
Narragansett, RI

Friday, June 4, 2010

5:30PM-12 midnight...

5:30PM Reception

7PM Dinner, dancing & more!

Benefiting United Methodist Elder
Care Communities

Tickets \$100.00

Contact UMEC Development Office at 401-
438-4456 ext. 137 for ticket purchase.

We accept cash, check, credit and debit
cards

FROM WHERE I SIT...

a column by the Reverend F. Richard Garland

HOMECOMING AND NEW LIFE

It is a story of two sons and their father. Rich in image and insight, it is a poignant story about homecoming and new life - of unhappy choices, forgiveness, compassion, reconciliation and healing.

It is unfortunate that the story is usually known as "The Parable of the Prodigal Son." In becoming focused on the 'sin' of one 'prodigal' younger brother, plus the stubbornness of an elder brother, it is easy to miss the larger dimensions of why Jesus told the story in the first place. As with all of his parables, this story does not stand alone, but is set in context. Jesus has been teaching about hospitality, of what it means to be a disciple, of the joy of finding that which has been lost.

Take a moment to recall or reread the parable in Luke 15:11-31. Central to the story is the subtle affirmation of unconditional love. Even though the younger son squanders a generous inheritance, the father loves him. Even before the younger son can beg for pardon, the father welcomes him back with love and forgiveness. Even though the younger son deserves less, the father orders a celebration. And even when the older son acts like a twit, the father invites him into the celebration. This is a story about unconditional love that turns religious and social conventions upside down.

At the end Jesus does not tie the story up in a neat little moralism. There is no, "If you do this, you'll get that." There is no moral to the story. What we have is one son who does something foolish and then comes to his senses. And we have another son who follows all the rules and ends up being foolish. And we have a father who invites both sons to a feast and ends it all

by saying: "We had to celebrate because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life, he was lost and has been found." What are we to make of it all?

In an exquisite reflection on the parable, "The Return of the Prodigal Son," Henri Nouwen writes: "Unlike a fairy tale, the parable provides no happy ending. Instead, it leaves us face to face with one of life's hardest spiritual choices: to trust or not to trust in God's all-forgiving love." [p.75] And Nouwen asks of all who would reflect on the parable: "Will they understand the father's joy? Will they let the father embrace them? Will I? Will they be able to step out of their recriminations and share in the celebration? Will I?" [p.114]

If learning to trust or not to trust in God's all-forgiving love is one of life's hardest spiritual choices, then an even harder choice is whether we trust or not trust God enough to offer that unconditional love to others. Homecoming has no lasting meaning if it does not lead to new life.

In his song "Rocky Mountain High," John Denver sings: "He was born in the summer of his 27th year - Comin' home to a place he'd never been before - He left yesterday behind him, you might say he was born again..." There is a subtle and profound wisdom in the lyric. It echoes something that Jesus tried to teach Nicodemus - you don't have to be young to be born from above and see the kingdom of God. [John 3:3] Homecoming is what we experience when we receive compassionate, unconditional love, the kind of love which God offers in Jesus, even though it may be in a place where we have never been before. We are not condemned to our yesterdays. Instead, we are invited to come to that home where we are welcomed with an unconditional love that makes us whole.

There was a man who had two sons. When one of the sons returned after squandering his

inheritance, the father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. "Bring out a robe - the best one - and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive; he was lost and is found!" Let the party begin!

That's where the story ends - with an invitation to a feast. It is a poignant story about homecoming and new life - of unhappy choices, of unconditional love, of forgiveness that comes before repentance, of compassion and reconciliation, of stubborn resistance, and

more. We really don't know how it turns out, except that the father is determined to celebrate. Could it be that this is also a story of our relationship with God? That there is something of our story in this story? That our faith is more about relationships and unconditional love than it is about doctrines and creeds, or order and discipline? While I will leave that for you to ponder, I do know this: no matter what we have done or where we have gone, God welcomes us home with an unconditional love that makes us whole. That is very good news indeed!

Birthdays & Anniversaries

March Birthdays

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Paul Brunelle | 12 Rick Powers |
| Mark Halloran | Brian Walker |
| Amanda Lavornia | 14 Holden Reynolds |
| Bryce Hagerty | 17 Tricia Halloran |
| 5 Mary DerManouelian | 18 Thomas Gardiner |
| Paula Wilberger | 20 Andrew Dunne |
| 6 Adriana DiSilvestro | 22 Sandra Kessel |
| 7 Al Brown | 23 Carly Dallas |
| Tori Brown | 24 Wendy Halstead |
| 9 Michael Dunne | Alexis Howard |
| 10 Jennifer Young | Candy Ohanian |
| 11 Victoria Monahan | 25 Lia Kelvington |
| | 27 Doug Brown |
| | 31 Fiona Halstead |

Anniversaries

- 20 Don and Melody Reynolds
- 21 Seth and Brenda Moyer
- 23 Robert and Joyce Brule

Shopping Cards

Do you have spring projects for the home and yard in mind? Please consider using Home Depot or Lowe's cards from NKUMC for purchases you plan from those stores. Check with Paula Wilberger and Vivian Flade to see about current inventory and place your order.

We maintain a modest inventory of \$25 Home Depot cards, but they also offer \$100 and \$500 cards if your plans are a bit bigger! Lowe's cards come in \$25, \$100, \$500 and \$1,000 denominations.

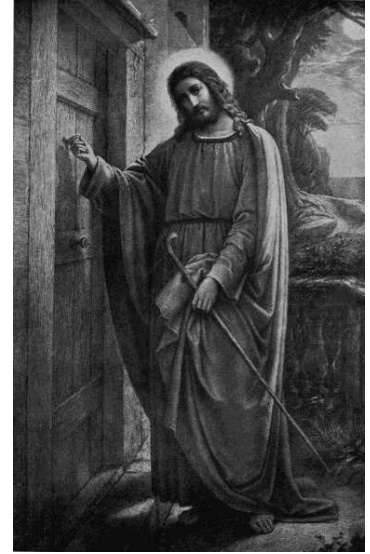
We would really like to see this program grow and help with our church's missions and various programs. Regular and frequent card sales (like grocery and coffee shop cards) are vital to the ongoing health of the program. Thank you to all who faithfully purchase their cards each week or month. If you haven't done so yet, please consider giving it a try.

Grace Notes...

Rev. Lori Eldredge

With the recent rains I have been looking forward to spring. Already I am hearing bird song, missing during the winter months. Although evident when there was snow on the ground, I have not seen the deer or fox. Perhaps they are birthing their young. With the lengthening of days and the brightening of the sun, spring is not far away; and spring will soon give way to summer growth, but not before we have planted seeds and worked the soil.

This planting of seeds is a figurative expression of our faith sharing. We till the soil, plant, and water, yet it is God who provides the increase. We plant seeds by word and example to grow the Kingdom of God. When the Word is cast outward, to new soil, or soil that has laid fallow. As the body of Christ in North Kingstown what new soil are we planting? Where is the soil that has laid fallow? Where is new growth happening in our community? And where is there old growth that might be revitalized?



In January our church membership took on two new ministries to help feed families and individuals falling through the cracks of our human resource system. Without jobs, some without homes, people have responded to the community lunches and to Angel Food Ministries. We doubled our ministry in one month and as the word is spreading it appears it will continue to grow. While in one respect this is a justice issue, helping people to be able to afford food at reasonable prices, it is also a faith sharing opportunity. As people come into the church we have the opportunity to invite them into the life of the church, and into a relationship with Jesus Christ. In March we will host the Sunday Ecumenical Community Dinners, and yes we can speak to people about faith, and yes we can invite them to attend worship!

Henry Ford used to play golf with a friend who was an insurance executive. The friend said one day, "Henry, I heard you bought a million dollar insurance policy. Why didn't you buy it from me?" Ford answered him, "Because you never asked me."

How many opportunities do we let go by because we never ask? We never plant the seed? For years we have been involved in social justice but have not shared our witness to the power of Christ in our lives. To speak of Christ is to offer our faith, to offer hope, and to offer a place in the family of God.



As we are involved in these ministries, and in all the other ministries of the church, prepare by praying for those we will meet. Pray with them, given the opportunity. Be purposeful in inviting them to church. Be positive, too! Have you ever tried to sell anything? When we sold magazines for a school fundraiser we were told to point out articles in the magazines and expect the prospective buyer to respond positively. (Evidently it is a good technique because a caller a week ago used the same strategy.) So, finally, expect a positive response! Be prepared to meet them and introduce them to people with whom they may share common interests.

For many Christ is knocking on the door. In this season of Lent even as we reflect on our own growth as Christians, we are called to extend an invitation to others to join us in this Christian journey. Christ said, "Behold I stand at the door and knock." May we invite Christ again into our hearts, and help open the doors that the world may know Christ.

March Lectionary

Communion is offered each Sunday in Lent at our 8AM service.

March 7 Sunday in Lent / Communion

Texts: Isaiah 55: 1-9; Psalm 63: 1-8; 1 Corinthians 10: 1-13; Luke 13: 1-9

Sermon: Don't Wait, Repent!

March 14 4th Sunday in Lent

Texts: Joshua 5: 9-12; Psalm 32; 2 Corinthians 5: 16-21; Luke 15: 1-3, 11b-32

Sermon Living on the Far Country

March 21 5th Sunday in Lent

Texts: Isaiah 43: 16-21; Psalm 126; Philippians 3: 4b-14; John 12: 1-8

Sermon: Lessons from Suburbia



March 28 Palm and Passion

Texts: Luke 19: 28-40; Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29; Isaiah 50: 4-9a; Psalm 31: 9-16; Philippians 2: 5-11; Luke 22: 14 – 23: 56 Or Luke 23: 1-49

A Service of Lessons and Song

One Great Hour of Sharing

March 14th

LIFE-CHANGING MINISTRY— A RESPONSE TO GOD'S LOVE

Join United Methodists everywhere by participating in this special offering that supports UMCOR's vital work. Your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing lay the foundation for UMCOR to seek justice and mercy for suffering people everywhere.

You can be assured that when catastrophes cause suffering, your church, impelled by Jesus' love and compassion, will be in the lead to ease the pain

Looking Ahead to April

April 1 Maundy Thursday Service 7PM - Richard Dunne, Lay Speaker, Leading in Service

April 2 Ecumenical Good Friday Walk

April 4th Easter

Sunrise Service at the Town Beach 6:15AM

Breakfast in Fellowship Hall 7 AM

Free will offering will be taken for Haiti

Pancakes, coffee, juice, etc.

Sponsored by the Dwane family & friends



Celebrate Christ's Resurrection in worship at 8AM and 10AM

HAITI EARTHQUAKE RECOVERY UPDATE

UMCOR's recovery effort in Haiti is projected to span at least five years, according to a team of UMCOR executives who spent two weeks in the Caribbean nation assessing needs.

Melissa Crutchfield, an UMCOR executive for international disaster relief, refers to the plan as a "living document," one that provides a roadmap of recovery in three phases while also taking into account emerging needs as relief efforts progress.

According to the Haitian government, in addition to the 200,000 people who died in the disaster, at least three million in the country have been impacted directly or indirectly, including 500,000 survivors who are internally displaced.

The Emergency Phase of the UMCOR plan stretches through April and includes the start of the rainy season in March. It addresses the most immediate needs of access to food, clean

water, temporary shelter and emotional and spiritual support.

It will be followed by a medium-term transition phase and a long-term rehabilitation phase, in which structures and infrastructures (homes, schools, medical facilities and churches) will move to more permanent buildings and systems.

Your support will be critical throughout the implementation of the plan. Gifts to Haiti can be made thru your local church. Please indicate Haiti Emergency, UMCOR Advance #418325 on the memo line of your check. One hundred percent of gifts made to this advance will go to help the people of Haiti.

Layettes and health kits are needed, especially as families are displaced and clean swaddling is needed for new births.

From umcor hotline



ANGEL FOOD

MINISTRY

Our Angel Food Ministry Team doubled their orders and distribution in one month. Reaching out to seniors, persons with limited incomes and food stamp users, we helped provide food at 50% of the normal price. As we continue to grow and fill this need in Rhode Island we invite you to become part of the team. Speak to Warren Halstead II, as our UMM take the lead.

Check out Angelfood.net

Paying by cash or check?

Place your orders by March 14th

Ordering online?

Place your order by March 17th

Distribution is March 27 7:30-9AM

Resignation of Administrative Assistant

It's with regret that the Staff/Parish Relation Committee announces the resignation of Cindi Lovejoy as Administrative Assistant, effective February 14, 2010. Since Cindi joined our staff in 1999, she has kept the daily functions of the church running smoothly and has been active in missions.

It is with warmest personal regards that we wish Cindi success in her new endeavors.

Charlie Seekell, SPRC Chair



Save your excess treasures for our spring yard sale to be held late April/early May.

MARCH CALENDAR

	1 6:00 Pot Luck 6:45 Shepherding 7 Bible Study	2 3:30 UMW Book Club 6 PM Bells 7PM Choir 7:20 AA	3 4:45-6:30 GSA 5 Bear Cubs 7 PM Trustees	4 Noon – Ladies Fellowship	5	6
7 8 Communion Worship 10 Worship & Sunday School 1PM Community Dinner	8 9:30 MOMS 6:00 Pot Luck 6:30 Webloes 6:45 BSA Troop 1 6:45 Shepherding 7 Bible Study	9 3:30 UMW Book Club 6 PM Bells 7PM Choir 7:20 AA	10 7PM SPRC	11 Noon – Ladies Fellowship	12	13 8 UMM
14 8 Worship 10 Worship & Sunday School Community Dinner 1PM 5 YOUTH	15 6:00 Pot Luck 6:45 Shepherding 7 Bible Study	16 3:30 UMW Book Club 6 PM Bells 7PM Choir 7:20 AA	17 3:30 MOMS 4:45-6:30 GSA 616 5 Bear Cubs 7PM Administrative Council	18 Noon – Ladies Fellowship	19	20 9:30 UMW 7-9 UMW Adult Fellowship Game Night
21 8 Worship 10 Worship & Sunday School Community Dinner 1PM	22 6:00 Pot Luck 6:45 BSA Troop 1 6:45 Shepherding 7 Bible Study	23 3:30 UMW Book Club 6 PM Bells 7PM Choir 7:20 AA	24	25 Noon – Ladies Fellowship	26	27 7:30-9 Angel Food Distribution
HOLY WEEK						
28 8 Worship 10 Worship & Sunday School 1PM Community Dinner 5 YOUTH	28 6:00 Pot Luck 6:45 Shepherding 7 Bible Study	30 3:30 UMW Book Club 6 PM Bells 7PM Choir 7:20 AA	31	April 1 7PM Maundy Thursday Service	April 2 Ecumenical Good Friday Walk	April 3

Office Hours

Tuesday – Friday 9:00 – 2:00

Please contact us by calling 401-294-9293

Or by email: church@nkumc.necoxmail.com

A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

Dear Pilgrims,

I play golf; not very well but it is one of those things that my children and I like to do together. As a golfer and one who likes the history of the game I have marveled at Tiger Woods and his climb to the top and sadly his rapid fall. I've seen him play about four times at the TPC and my son Steven will squeeze to the front just to see him swing a club or stand over a putt.

Sports radio is full of talk noting that people will forget about all of this once Tiger starts winning again. In the Providence Journal on Saturday one married thirty year old was quoted as saying "All men cheat. It's the nature of the beast. We're wired that way. No one is going to remember what happened as soon as he starts winning again."

On Sunday morning I heard the word: "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil." (Luke 4: 1)

I don't mean to compare Tiger with Jesus, although my guess is in today's culture Tiger may have more name recognition, but after hearing those words I thought about two excerpts from Tiger's press conference.

"I knew my actions were wrong, but I convinced myself that normal rules don't apply. I felt that I had worked hard my entire life and deserved to enjoy all the temptations around me. I stopped living according to my core values. Money and fame made me believe I was entitled. I was wrong and foolish. I don't get to live by different rules. The same boundaries that apply to everyone apply to me."

"I was raised a Buddhist and I actively practiced my faith from childhood until I drifted away in recent years. Buddhism teaches that

craving for things outside ourselves causes an unhappy and pointless search for security, it teaches me to stop following every impulse and practice restraint. Obviously, I lost track of what I was taught."

I have no basis to determine if Tiger's apology was sincere, but my spiritual journey and understanding of scripture tell me that what he said about temptation, entitlement, and the craving for security from those things "outside" are true. That is the journey of Lent, is it not? That "gut check" time when we look deeply into our souls as well as our lifestyles and seek to examine ourselves. What is tempting us? How are we living out our entitlement and privilege? (national and personal) What are the things that are eating us up inside even while we long and devote our lives to achieve it?

I think of Jesus in the wilderness, without food, able to do whatever he wanted to because he could, yet resisted the temptation of privilege and power and practiced restraint. Could it be that Jesus could do this because he was full and led by the Holy Spirit? In other words, it is not that the temptations of food, power, and privilege weren't tempting, but Jesus knew that we too would face similar fates in our spiritual journey's and his example is more than "Just say No", it is stay connected, stay in relationship, be full and led by God.

I don't believe that "all men cheat; that it is the nature of the beast" and while people may forget all about this "when Tiger starts winning" my prayer is that Tiger will not forget and like each one of us, will take the time to daily examine our "inner and outer" lives for congruence, integrity and faithfulness.

I pray the Spirit's leading for you and the church during this time of Lent.

Blessings,

Gary Shaw, RISEM District Superintendent

Dear Partners in Ministry,

◆ WHERE HAVE ALL THE TURKEYS GONE? Four turkeys, ready to be used for a free community dinner at Calvary UMC in Lewiston, Maine, disappeared. Either they flew the coop (a resurrection miracle), or they were stolen. The story made the front page of the local paper...apparently no other big robberies in town that day.

The next day, turkeys at Calvary UMC were on the front page again. This time to tell the story of a nearby restaurant that generously replaced the turkeys, plus cranberry sauce and all the other "fixings"...the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fowl. In addition, the fire department collected \$500 and an anonymous man dropped off a check for \$100 to help. Plus, new people who did not know about the church's community dinner ministry read about it in the paper....and applauded the church's creative Wednesday night meals....and some new folk showed up to share in the feast of love and generosity...."taste and see that the Lord is good!" (Ps. 34:8)....all the time!

◆ WHO IS MISSING? Last fall at the North Perry UMC (in northern Maine) "Rethink Church" charge conference, Superintendent MacHugh asked the small membership (but big vitality) congregation to think about who was missing from the church. Kevin Raye, the Church Council Chairman (and also a Maine state Senator) writes recently that the question "really prompted us to think -- and to act. " In December the members came up with a list of people to contact....including families with kids who might be interested in Sunday School (even though they didn't have one at the time!).

They started to contact people, developed a Facebook page, got news in the local weeklies and in January started their new Sunday School (eight members of the congregation

volunteered as teachers....so they could rotate responsibilities). Some folk who visited their Facebook page started coming, others appeared and "as a result," Kevin writes, "our January attendance has soared, with an average attendance of 35.25 -- almost triple last January's average of 12.5." There are nine kids and two teens in Sunday School, seventeen attended the church council, and the men are now hosting a breakfast for the congregation on the last Sunday of the month (one of the new persons is a chef)....39 showed up for the first one.

Kevin concludes, "It is amazing...the exciting things the Lord is doing in our little (but growing) congregation....In fact, at our council meeting on Jan. 17th, one of the new ladies noted that our congregation is very young and we might want to think about how to attract more 'elderly people.' When was the last time you heard that?!?!"

So.....who is missing from your congregation?.....and what are you going to do about it?

◆ "THESE METHODISTS who love to sing in four-part harmony are the sort of people you can call up when you're in deep distress. If you're dying, they will comfort you. If you are lonely, they'll talk to you. And if you are hungry, they'll give you tuna salad..... By our joining in harmony, we somehow promise that we will not forsake each other." Garrison Keillor

Partners in Ministry, lets keep the turkeys coming, the outreach going, and the harmonies singing!

Grace and Peace,

Pete

Check out what else is happening in our New England Conference by going to neumc.org

UMC and ELCA "Full Communion" Celebration

The United Methodist Church (UMC) and Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) have voted in the past two years to enter into "full communion." Full communion is not a merger, but means that the two churches express a common confession of Christian faith and mutual recognition of Baptism and sharing Holy Communion; agree to mutual recognition of ordained ministers for service in either church; express a common commitment to evangelism, witness and service; engage in common decision-making on critical matters; and mutually lift criticisms that may exist between the churches.

As a celebration of this new relationship, Bishop Margaret Payne (New England Synod, ELCA) and Bishop Peter Weaver (New England Conference, UMC) are hosting a joint worship service on Sunday, April 11, 2010 beginning at 4pm at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Worcester, MA (73 Lancaster St)

EASTER FLOWERS

Would you like to memorialize or honor a loved one by placing a flower on our Easter altar?
Order your flowers below and return the form to the office or by placing it in the offering plate on or before March 20th. Make your checks payable to NKUMC.



	Quantity		Price		Subtotal
Lilies	_____	x	\$12.00	=	_____
Daffodils	_____	x	\$10.50	=	_____
Hyacinths	_____	x	\$10.50	=	_____
Tulips	_____	x	\$10.50	=	_____
			Total		

Given in honor/memory of _____ by _____
 (circle one) (Loved one) (Your name)

In lieu of flowers, you are invited to make a special gift to any of the following funds:
 (Please check appropriate fund)

- Library
 Music
 Campership

Given in honor/memory of _____ by _____
 (circle one) (Loved one) (Your name)