

# The Congregator

Monthly Newsletter Of The Congregational Church Of Huntington [www.lichurch.org](http://www.lichurch.org)

*A Progressive Protestant Church*

## Clergy Corner *by Rev. Mark Bigelow, Pastor*

It is often  
said that  
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We are beginning the season of cold and dark. Winter is descending with ever shorter days and falling temperatures. It is no surprise that light is a powerful symbol for winter holidays. We need some light to brighten our lives and to remind us of the hope that is always present. The Advent wreath is one way we prepare for the light of the world that we celebrate at Christmas.

For many in our church winter's cold and dark are inconveniences that require us to bundle up and limits our outdoor activities, but winter is much more serious for some of the neighbors in Huntington. Particularly in this time of economic stress, more and more of our neighbors are going without meals, or, even, losing their homes.

The Outreach Ministry is issuing a challenge to our congregation to brighten this dark time of year for our neighbors in need. We have declared the 2010-11 winter as a "Season of Service." There are dire needs in our community that can only be addressed with hands-on volunteer service to others. As we give gifts to celebrate the gift of Jesus, may we give the gift of ourselves to help neighbors we have not yet met.

During the next few months we challenge all of our members to perform at least one activity of service per month to someone outside of our church. We have several

important ministries that are in real need of volunteers. The **Huntington Interfaith Homeless Initiative (HIHI)** has begun housing the homeless of Huntington and our first turn to work for it is on December 18. We also have our **Peace & Plenty** food program that prepares lunches for children and youth in Huntington. They meet every Monday at 7:00 PM in our Fellowship Hall. You don't need to sign up—just show up. And if books are more your thing, then volunteer to read to children in the **Reading Circle** literacy outreach. There are many places to serve—will you accept the challenge to volunteer once a month?

We are going to ask our members to report to us when they volunteer so that we can keep a running total of the total amount of hours volunteered in the next three months. And at the end of the program, the beginning of Lent, we will honor all those volunteers who participated in our "Season of Service"—hopefully everyone!

It is often said that through giving we receive the most meaningful gift. You have surely felt the satisfaction that comes through giving a nice present to a loved one. Imagine how great it will feel to know you have made a difference in another person's life by just giving a couple hours of your time.

## Worship Opportunities

### December 5: Second Sunday of Advent/Communion

During this Advent Communion Pastor Mark will kick-off the "Winter of Service"—a challenge to us all to volunteer to help others outside of our family and congregation. This is also the Sunday of the church school Advent party—all children will go to the Fellowship Hall during worship to celebrate Advent.

### December 12: Third Sunday of Advent/New Members

As we accept new members into our congregation Pastor Mark will preach on "The Audacity of Hope."

### December 19: The Twelve Gifts of Christmas

A CCH tradition that many of our members look forward to at Christmas is "The Twelve Gifts of Christmas" service of Christmas music and readings. Guaranteed to put everyone in the Christmas spirit.

### December 24: Christmas Eve 5:30 PM Christmas Eve Pageant Service:

During the pageant children of our church school and youth group will enact the Bible stories of Jesus' birth. There will be music from our adult choir, bell choir, and children's choir.

### 10:00 PM Candlelight Communion: The Christmas Eve communion is a quiet

way to complete the Advent season and welcome Christmas.

### December 26: Lessons and Carols

The Sunday after Christmas is a great time in church to share Christmas stories and enjoy the carols of the season.

### UPCOMING: January 23: Congregation Annual Meeting

Thank you for remembering the church in your will.

## Joys and Concerns

We were saddened to learn of the death of **Joseph Gavin** on October 31st. **Dot Gavin**, Joe's wife, was one of our charter members and a dedicated member of our church until they moved to Amherst in 1994. Dot's address is 341 Spencer Drive, Amherst MA 01002. We hold Dot and her family in our prayers.

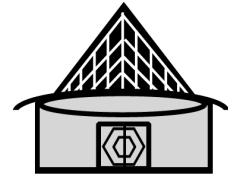
Thank you to all members, in particular the choir, bell choir and Diaconate, for making the Huntington Interfaith Community Worship service such a huge success. We had over 200 people in attendance and all the participants remarked on the gracious hospitality of our congregation.

The Eagle Scout Court of Honor was held for **Rudy Haluza** on Saturday, November 27, 2010, in our church sanctuary. For his Eagle project he designed and built a life jacket drying rack for Camp Alvernia. Congratulations to Rudy on this high honor!

### SAVE THE DATE

## Pastor Mark's Twentieth Anniversary Party

On April 2, 2011 we will be celebrating Pastor Mark's twentieth anniversary at our church with a party at the Northport Yacht Club. This will include dinner, music, some possible roasting, and a modified service auction. Mark your calendars now and tell your church friends.



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Congregational Church of Huntington  
United Church of Christ

A Progressive Protestant Church

30 Washington Drive  
Centerport, NY 11721  
(631) 423-4004

[www.ucchuntington.lichurch.org](http://www.ucchuntington.lichurch.org)  
Church Office e-mail: [cchcpt@optonline.net](mailto:cchcpt@optonline.net)

**Rev. Mark Bigelow**, Pastor  
**Sheri Fallacaro**, Church School Director  
**David Broome**, Music Director  
**Laura Unkel**, Church Secretary

Please forward all comments and correspondence, including material for publication, to:

The Congregator  
Congregational Church of Huntington  
PO Box 134  
Centerport, NY 11721 or  
[mckennabausch@optonline.net](mailto:mckennabausch@optonline.net)

**Do you know that Pastor Mark emails a weekly church update?**

If you would like to be included send him a note at [mbigelow@optonline.net](mailto:mbigelow@optonline.net).

## Christmas Pageant Rehearsal

The Christmas pageant rehearsals will begin following the worship services for all Pilgrim Fellowship members (grades 6-12). If there are additional openings we will extend the roles to younger children. Come to the first rehearsal on December 12 to be assigned a part.

**Rehearsal Schedule**  
**December 12th -**  
**Rehearsal 11:30-12:15**  
**December 19th -**  
**Rehearsal 11:30-12:15**  
**December 24th -**  
**Pageant begins at 5:30**

## Letter from the Trustees:

What a wonderful sight as I turned into the church parking lot on Saturday Nov 13 thinking it must be Sunday. Although I didn't count the cars, there were very few open parking spaces left at 9:00 am. This Fall's church clean up was the best-attended work party I can remember stretching over more than three decades.

Credit for the high turnout goes to our buildings & grounds chair person, **Neila Werner**, who also hosted breakfast and lunch and trustee **Pete Ciccone** for recruiting his Boy Scout troop and Cub Scout pack and their parents. Special thanks to **Don Sheldon** and his assistant for hauling the heavy waste to the landfill, electricians **Fred Engelking** and **Doug Munch**, our carpenter **Paul DeOrsay**, parking lot paver & refrigerator repairman **Brian Ascetta** and to the scores of leaf rakers who worked tirelessly, wielding rakes and hauling heavy tarps full of leaves for hours.

Thank you to landscapers **Craig Mooers**, **Richard Dolle**, **Ellen DeOrsay**, **Rod Lowman**, **Chris**, **Pat** and **Emma Bausch** and the many other church members and their children and grand children.

A warm thank you to deacons **Pete Pedersen**, **Bonnie Dawkins**, **Kristin Harper**, **Jenny Haluza** and **Gail Engelking** for their efforts in our sanctuary and sacristy.

In get togethers like this that happen twice a year our membership acknowledges how much they care for our church and for one another. Although we accomplished many of the tasks on our projects list, our greatest accomplishment remains our commitment to the congregational church experience.

Lastly, thank you to all those who pitched in and helped in the clean up I have not named.

**Peter Lassen**, Chairman, Board of Trustees

## Women's Discussion Group

Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month, rotating amongst the homes of those attending. Refreshments are served during a social hour from 7:00 - 8:00 PM with the program being conducted between the hours of 8:00 and 10:00 PM. All women attending our church are more than welcome to attend any or all of the meetings. Feel free to call **Neila Werner** at 757-7646 if you have any questions.

### Tuesday, December 14th:

Our annual **Christmas Party/Pot-Luck Dinner** will be held again at the beautifully-decorated turn-of-the-century home of former art teacher, **Cheryl Zagorski**. Dinner will begin at 6:00 PM. This is a great opportunity to visit with other women in the church in a relaxed setting. Each person brings an appetizer, main dish, or dessert to share. Cheryl lives at 3 Pebble Hill Drive, Northport. Please give her a call at 757-6494 if you can attend. You don't have to be a participant in our book discussion group in order to attend this event.

### Tuesday, January 11th:

At our January meeting, we will be viewing an episode of the HBO TV series, *The Number One Ladies' Detective Agency*, based on the book of the same name by **Alexander McCall Smith**. This series, a favorite with our Women's Discussion Group, chronicles the adventures of Precious Ramotswe (played by Jill Scott), the cheerful, eminently sensible proprietor of Botswana's first and only female-owned detective agency. Aided by her highly-efficient yet rather peculiar secretary Grace Makutsi (played by Anika Noni Rose), Mama Ramotswe investigates a variety of cases, helping townspeople solve mysteries in their lives, and begins a special friendship with a highly respectable garage owner (played by Lucian Msamati) along the way. During our refreshment hour from 7:00-8:00 PM, Neila will share a slideshow and some adventures from her recent, unorthodox RV and bike travels around the two Irelands and Scotland with her husband Pete Werner. The meeting will be held at **Neila Werner's** home at

4 Dublin Court, East Northport. Please call Neila at 757-7646 if you can attend. Again, you don't need to be a participant in the Women's Discussion Group in order to attend this meeting.

### Tuesday, February 8th:

We will meet at **Nancy Bartow's** house to discuss *The Constant Princess* by **Philippa Gregory**. Set in the rich beauty of Moorish Spain and the glamour of the Tudor court, *The Constant Princess* presents a woman (Katherine of Aragon) whose constancy helps her endure betrayal, poverty, and despair, until the inevitable moment when she steps into the role she has rehearsed all her life: Henry VIII's Queen, Regent, and commander of the English army in their greatest victory against Scotland. After a refreshment hour from 7:00-8:00 PM, this intriguing book will be discussed from 8:00-10:00 PM. Nancy lives at 623 7th Avenue, East Northport. Please give her a call at 757-5263 if you can join us.

## Christmas Star and Bible Study *by Susan Pummill*

Decorating the Christmas Tree with my Mama, Daddy, and sister, Joan, occupied the Sunday evening a couple of weeks before Christmas. Daddy would have already been up to the attic to retrieve the Christmas tree stand, boxes of strung lights, tissue paper wrapped glass balls, carefully saved aluminum foil icicles, along with one or two boxes of new decorations and icicles that Mama had bought from the closeout sale last January. It was an exciting ritual warmed up with Perry Como and Andy Williams 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ 's pinning out their cheer from the HiFi.

First, the lights had to be strung evenly among the branches and plugged into the star up top. Next, the fragile glass balls had to be carefully tied on with thread, evenly again, amongst the needles. Last came those thin strips of foil icicles, one at a time, to shimmer and reflect the light bulbs and that star up high.

That star crowned the tree beautifully when the rest of the house lights were shut off, the shiny icicles reflecting the small electric bulbs and waving lightly with little puffs of moving air. That was the same star that settled over the manger holding Baby Jesus in that little town scene, and the same kind of star that we could admire staring up at the dome of the clear, cold December sky.

After the Christmas Eve service, and

before tucking in to try and listen for Santa Claus, Joan and I would read aloud the Christmas story from our white King James Bibles. We read Luke's version, the part about the manger, the angels, and the great joy. We didn't read the part about Zechariah, Elizabeth, and John. We started with Caesar Augustus' decree, read through the shepherds praise and stopped before Jesus' birth. I don't remember not noticing the star in the Luke version. The star, however, isn't there.

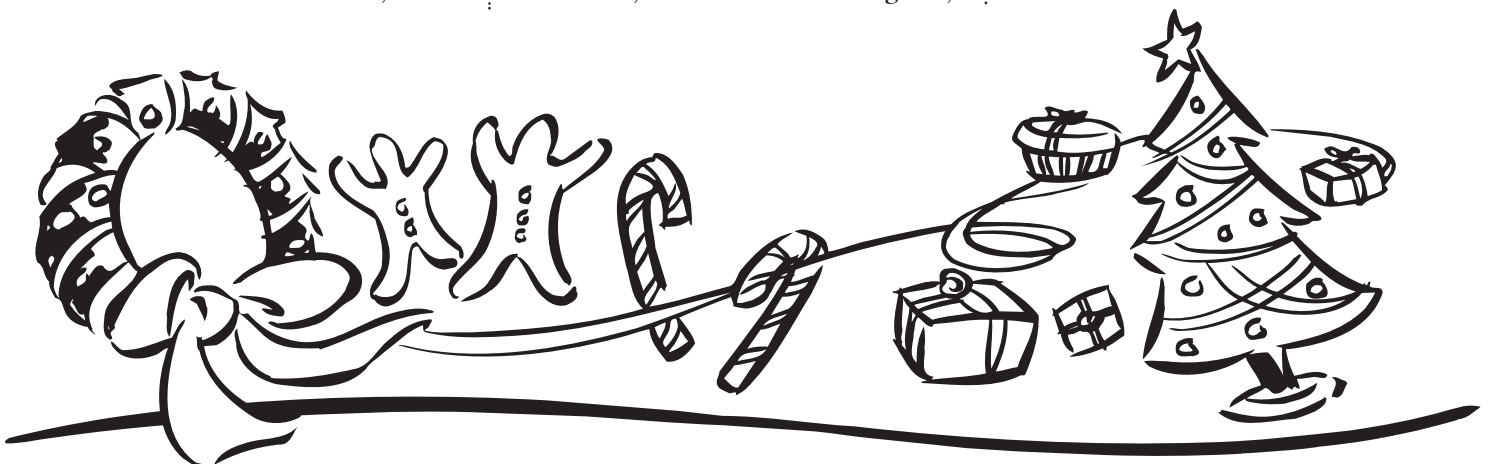
That was a very rich time in my life. A close and loving family. Church every Sunday. A real fir tree with 'heirloom' decorations. King James, Perry Como, Andy Williams, and Santa Claus. Stockings hung, and 'Joy to the World,' 'O Little Town,' and that star, burning in the dark. Rich with music and presents and story and symbol.

I still see that star. Hanging over the stable at 25A and Park in Huntington. Hanging in CCH for our Family Pageant. Atop a creche in a store window or decorating our communion table.

The star has a new meaning for me, now. Studying the Bible, I realize that the star isn't in Luke's story with the shepherds and the manger. The star is in Matthew's story with the Magi and Herod, and no manger. I also learned that Venus, that westward leading star,

shone in the story of Caesar Augustus' family, protecting the Caesars, and lighting up their winter nights. Matthew hung that star up in his story to help Jesus escape Herod, as Moses escaped Pharaoh. And the star is not in Matthew only to light the way, but also to show up Caesar, to make Jesus every bit as royal and holy as Caesar, even more royal and holy. Matthew might just as well ask, "Which star are you going to follow?" But Matthew wouldn't ask that 21st century question. Instead, he tells a first century story, a very rich one.

I've quit reading from King James poetic text. Now I use NRSV, an extra thick one, with explanatory notes. There is so very much to learn from these books written two and three thousand years ago, and in different languages, and to people way different from me. These stories continue to enrich my life. And now I think about that star much differently that I thought about it in the Perry Como days. So many layers of meaning and richer all the time. I'm so lucky that other members of our Bible Study class talk to me and read and talk some more about understanding the star and the manger and the other parts of the stories. And I'll focus on the star this Christmas.



## December 2010 *At-A-Glance*

			1 7:30 PM: Pastor's Book Group	2 6:15 PM: Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM: Choir Rehearsal	3	4
5 8:30 AM: Bible Study 10 AM: Worship with Communion & Church School 4 PM: Advent Party	6 7 PM: Peace & Plenty Lunchmaking 8 PM: Board of Trustees	7 8PM: Church Council	8	9 6:15 PM: Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM: Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM: Diaconate	10	11
12 8:30 AM: Bible Study 10 AM: Worship & Church School New Member Sunday 11:30 AM: Pageant Rehearsal	13 7 PM: Peace & Plenty Lunchmaking 8 PM: Web Team	14 6PM: Women's Discussion Group Holiday Party	15	16 6:15 PM: Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM: Choir Rehearsal	17	18 CCH hosts HIHI
19 8:30 AM: Bible Study 10 AM: Worship & Church School 11:30 AM: Pageant Rehearsal 4 PM: Parsonage Open House	20 7 PM: Peace & Plenty Lunchmaking	21	22	23 6:15 PM: Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM: Choir Rehearsal	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 5:30 PM: Christmas Pageant 10 PM: Candlelight Communion Christmas Eve Worship	25
26 10 AM: Intergenerational Worship	27 Jan. Congregator Deadline	28	29	30 6:15 PM: Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM: Choir Rehearsal	31 NEW YEARS EVE	

## January 2011 *At-A-Glance*

						1
2 10 AM: Intergenerational Worship with Communion 6 PM: Confirmation Class	3 7 PM: Peace & Plenty Lunchmaking 8 PM: Board of Trustees	4 8PM: Church Council	5	6 6:15 PM: Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM: Choir Rehearsal	7	8 8:30 AM: Men's Breakfast
9 8:30 AM: Bible Study 10 AM: Worship & Church School 11:30 AM: New Member Orientation 6 PM: Confirmation Class	10 7 PM: Peace & Plenty Lunchmaking	11 7PM: Women's Discussion Group 7:30 PM: Noah's Ark Board	12 8 PM: Outreach Committee	13 1 PM: Membership Committee 6:15 PM: Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM: Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM: Diaconate	14	15
16 8:30 AM: Bible Study 10 AM: Intergenerational Worship	17 MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY	18 7 PM: Peace & Plenty Lunchmaking	19	20 6:15 PM: Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM: Choir Rehearsal	21 Feb. Congregator Deadline	22 CCH Hosting HIHI
23 8:30 AM: Bible Study 10 AM: Worship & School 11:30 AM: Annual Mtg 6 PM: Confirmation Cl	24 7 PM: Peace & Plenty Lunchmaking	25	26	27 6:15 PM: Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM: Choir Rehearsal	28	29
30 8:30 AM: Bible Study 10 AM: Worship & School 11:30 AM: Outreach Comm. 6 PM: Confirmation Cl	31 7 PM: Peace & Plenty Lunchmaking					

**The Congregational Church Of Huntington  
United Church Of Christ**

30 Washington Drive  
PO Box 134  
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## Advent Party

Our annual Advent party will be held on  
**Sunday, December 5, at 4 PM.**

There will be centerpiece and ornament making, a concert and sing-along with our bell choir, children's choir and adult choir and a Spaghetti Supper fundraiser hosted by the Pilgrim Fellowship Youth Group. This is always a favorite activity for the whole church family, young and old!



## Parsonage Open House

Pastor Mark and Ronnie invite all members and friends of The Congregational Church to a Christmas Open House at the parsonage on Sunday, December 19, from 4-6:00 PM. The address is 66 Little Neck Road, Centerport. No RSVP necessary.

