

**First Congregational-Christian Church
United Church of Christ # New Gloucester, Maine**

Parish Visitor

Save the Dates!

January 3

SETH GLIER at
Village Coffee House
7:30

January 4

Epiphany Service w/
Communion and Love-
feast (see p. 2)

January 11

'15 Budget Workshop
after worship

January 18

250th Anniversary Year
Celebration Worship
with Brunch
(call 926-3260 today for
brunch reservation)

DETAILS INSIDE and at

WWW.NGUCC.ORG

I write this on New Year's Eve. Our big Anniversary Year is looming. Soon we'll be in **Y250**. So, before I step over (sleep through?) that threshold, I want to confess that I've begun to wish we'd called this our 250th Jubilee. More on that later.

Pastoral*e
Rev. Linda K. Gard

Peggy Bendroth, director of the Congregational Library, reminds church anniversary committees that remembrance of the kind we are about to undertake is a spiritual practice. We start with history as a way to discern the most durable, even timeless, qualities and values and truth, which, like it or not, have accrued to us.

For a great many things, of course, we will find it easy to be thankful—the trees they planted, the songs, the buildings, the generosity, the earnestness. Not everything will look pure and good, though. In order for the effort of this anniversary-marking to be at all helpful in the present and future, we will embrace the truth of “texture” in our story. Pretty or not-so, it has somehow made us the congregation we are, worth cherishing, warts and all.

Years ago, I set out (foolishly) to learn German by buying attaching a sticky printed label to every nameable thing in my apartment. Soon I could tell you that a goblet on the table was *das Kelchglas*, but I never could tell you, at least not in German, how my grandfa-

ther sat at a whirling stone wheel beneath a slowly dripping bucket, engraving that *Kelchglas* and many more as a wedding present for his only child.

The spiritual practice of remembering may *involve* reciting the names and the dates found in records and on plaques, but finding and telling the story of the deeper meaning of those things will set the compass and drive our future.

I'm OK with calling this an anniversary, as long as we realize that it's more than marking time. It has power, holy power. That's Jubilee, to me.

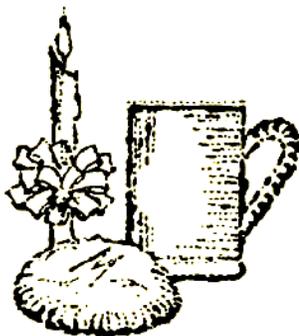
When I say Jubilee, I have some *serious* history in mind. Back in the days of Leviticus, a Jubilee year was one in 50, announced by the blatt of a horn (jubal). It was a holy time-out year; the usual calendar was abandoned and the daily agenda was forgiveness and setting-right. Jubilee came around often enough for God's people to “get right with one another,” forgive, recover, bail out, set free, and otherwise show responsibility for one another in such a way that each person comes through that year as whole as they could be before God.

You know I love history. But I'd love it more if when this year was all over we felt like we'd had Jubilee. So, if I hear even one of you call **Y250** our Jubilee Year, you'll get a high five from me.

WORSHIP AND COFFEE HOUR AT THE SAME TIME! HOW GREAT WOULD THAT BE? FIND OUT THIS WEEK!

AT WORSHIP ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 4 COMMUNION AND MORAVIAN LOVE- FEAST in the VESTRY, 9:30 am

Members of the Poland Community Church and their Pastor Holly Morrison will be our guests for the service. A celebration of Epiphany with the last of the Christmas carols, accompanied with instruments, with a sweet and traditional lovefeast carol led by children. Here's a bit more about the Moravian Lovefeast:



The Moravians who settled in Pennsylvania and North Carolina are part of the oldest protestant denomination, originating in Bohemia (now the Czech Republic) in the 1450s. The Moravian Lovefeast is a service of song at which a simple meal is served to the congregation. This meal, usually a bun and coffee, is an act of fellowship.

The Lovefeast, begun by the Moravians in 1727, is a revival of the Agape Meal of the early Christian church. They are held to celebrate important festival days, to honor guests, to recognize a congregation's milestones, to bid a farewell to neighbors moving away, or to bind the church community into a spiritual unity when this need was felt.

Many modern churches have adapted the Moravian Lovefeast, as we will, but the emphasis is always on strengthening the community's "ties that bind"—and that's what we'll be doing here on January 4th. Avis Ford will be making the traditional Lovefeast buns for us, just a little sweet and citrus-y, and they'll be served with coffee or juice after communion. We'll sing a few carols together and the simple service will morph into Coffee Hour. Won't that be nice?



January Birthdays & Anniversaries (A)

1. Sydney Randall, Jonathan Dawson
3. Sophie Wallace
8. Margaret True Racette
9. Jane Dawson
13. Donna Hahnel
14. Joan Boulier
21. Alan Trask, Mark Terison
24. Jenna Targett
31. Catharine Guiles

THANK YOU EVER SO MUCH

It seems like my birthday comes around more often than annually...but I'm not complaining. And this was an especially nice one! Thank you for helping me celebrate. I really enjoyed a wonderful birthday, with cake and flowers and cards and treats. You are all so kind.



Thanks!

Rev. Linda Gard

New Year's Resolution: Join a Yoga Class

Yoga Stretching 9-10 am Mondays. Start your week with healthy stretching, and learn basic yoga principles and poses. This class guides you through simple, gentle stretches. We start the class in chairs, and work our way to the floor. No prior experience necessary. \$10/class, but your first class is free!

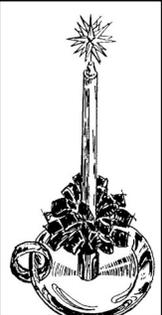
Yoga Practice 6:30-7:30 pm Thursdays. Increase your flexibility, balance, and ability to relax. This class guides you through the various stages of each pose. Appropriate for all. \$10/class; first class free!

Classes are held in the Vestry Community Room. (During extremely cold weather we may opt to meet in the Nursery.)

Kathy Moore, Certified Yoga Instructor

Questions? Contact Kathy: kathysynchronicity@gmail.com

January 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			Dec 31 New Year's Eve 9:30-12 Stickers No Choirs	1 New Year's Day No Yoga	2	3 7:30 Coffee House—Seth Glier
 4 9:30 Worship Communion and Moravian Lovefeast	5 9 Yoga	6 EPIPHANY 6:30 Men's Breakfast 	7 9:30-12 Stickers 7 Sanctuary Choir	8 9:30 Rev. Gard @ State Senate 6:30 Yoga 7:00 Trustees	9 ANNUAL REPORTS DUE IN OFFICE	10 8-9:30 Food Pantry Open
11 9:30 Worship, followed by Budget Presentation	12 9 Yoga	13 6:30 Men's Breakfast	14 9:30-12 Stickers 7 Sanctuary Choir	15 6:30 Yoga	16 Samuel Foxcroft Ordained at the Blockhouse ,1765	17 Celebration Set-up
18 250th CELEBRATION 8:30 Choir 9:30 Celebration Worship Service 11 Brunch	19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day 9 Yoga	20 6:30 Men's Breakfast	21 9:30-12 Stickers 7 Sanctuary Choir	22 6:30 Yoga	23 FEBRUARY PARISH VISITOR DEADLINE	24 8-9:30 Food Pantry Open
25 9:30 Worship	26 9 Yoga	27 6:30 Men's Breakfast	28 9-12 Stickers 7 Sanctuary Choir	29 6:30 Yoga	30	31

FEBRUARY EVENTS:	The Congregation's Annual Meeting — February 1 after worship Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, Game Night — February 17
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Seth Glier is back!



Singer-songwriter, pianist, and guitarist. USA Today has called Glier "a singer with an exquisite tenor, echoing Bruce Springsteen and Billy Joel in the piano pop style...". [Wikipedia](#)

Village Coffee House Saturday, January 3 7:30 pm

Tickets at the door: \$10

This is a great way to enjoy yourself AND welcome neighbors and newcomers to our church. Y'know, these days people usually check out churches by coming to something OTHER than worship the first time. We keep the sanctuary lights on during intermission. Why not show it to someone new?



CALL FOR REPORTS

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on February 1 this year. Reports from church staff, officers, boards, and organizations are due

Friday, January 9.

THE HISTORY CORNER

I went to Boston, finally, thanks to you, to the Congregational Library on Beacon Street, its back windows overlooking Granary burial ground.

I had planned to look at the few Samuel Foxcroft items I could find in the online catalog. I thought, "Two days, and I'll have seen everything they have."

You begin work there with an interview with one of the archivists. This is, essentially, a rare book room, so you have one big reading room, but you don't have access to the shelves/stacks. You request materials on little 3x5 cards, and they retrieve them from the stacks and bring them to you, one at a time.

I told the archivist that I wanted to resolve some questions I had about Samuel Foxcroft's theology, and then to sort out what went on in worship in his day, and if there was time, to read more about Thomas Foxcroft, Samuel's father, Pastor of the First Church in Boston during the Great Awakening (the revival ignited by the preaching of George Whitefield, and spread by the likes of Jonathan Edwards (*Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*)).

As I'm talking, the archivist's eyes are getting bigger and bigger. She started her response with an apology. "Many years ago we rediscovered a big box just marked SERMONS in our archives. We don't know when we got it or from whom, and we just never had time to catalog it. About 10 years ago we had a volunteer make a quick list of what she found in the box, and divided it into archival envelopes. I don't know if we can get that list. The thing is, the box turned out to contain sermons and a lot of other material by Samuel Foxcroft AND Thomas Foxcroft, and we've never had anyone here who knew much about them....we will make this available to you before we catalog it. Maybe you can help us sort out what we have."

After a few hours of general research, I went up to the desk and they handed me the two lists made of the contents of THE BOX: 190 handwritten documents by Thomas Foxcroft, and 250 documents by his son, our Samuel. Before this, only one of Samuel Foxcroft's original sermons was known to have survived.

I hope we'll be able to delve into this archive very soon! I could not be more excited about it. Rev. Gard

CHURCH COOKS

Our Blockhouse Stitchers are often treated to a batch of neighbor Rosalie Bacon's scrumptious **RASPBERRY ALMOND SHORTBREAD THUMBPRINT COOKIES**. When Rosalie brought some to share at Mary Morin's memorial reception, several people asked for the recipe:

Cookie: 1 cup butter, softened
 2/3 c. sugar
 1/2 tsp. almond flavoring
 2 c. flour
 1/2 c. raspberry jam (or other favorite flavor)

Glaze: 1 c. powdered sugar
 2 to 3 tsp. water
 1 1/2 tsp. almond extract

Combine softened butter, sugar and 1/2 t. almond flavoring in bowl. Beat at medium speed, scraping bowl often, until creamy. Add flour; beat at low speed, scraping bowl often, until well mixed. Cover; refrigerate at least 1 hour or until firm.

Heat oven to 350. Shape dough into 1" balls. Place 2 inches apart on ungreased cookie sheets. Push thumb into each one. Fill thumbprint with about 1/4 t. jam.

Bake 14-18 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Let stand 1 minute on cookie sheets; remove to cooling rack. Cool completely. Combine all glaze ingredients in bowl with whisk until smooth. Drizzle over cookies. Makes 40 cookies.

Brenda Bradbury's Salsa Chili

Brenda's chili was a big hit at the Fall Church Workday!

2 # hamburger
 1 large onion
 2 each red & green peppers
 5 cans beans, rinsed (all different kinds)
 1 large jar salsa

1 large can diced tomatoes
 Chili powder to taste

Saute vegetables until soft; brown hamburger. Combine remaining ingredients and simmer one hour or put in crock pot on low until ready to eat.

Yes, it's Winter, but... PILGRIM LODGE has published its Summer 2015 calendar!

Check it out at
www.pilgrimlodge.org.

Emergency Fuel Assistance Fund Advent Appeal

As of December 28, donations of nearly \$1400, much of it in coin boxes, have been received for fuel assistance to neighbors in need. The Missions Board promoted this special offering for the month of December to replenish the Pastoral Emergency Fund. Last winter, ten households in dire circumstances were provided with minimum fuel deliveries of 50 gallons. This winter, while it's nice to see fuel prices go down, the fuel companies are resetting their minimum delivery at 100 gallons, so we'll have to hope the weather is warmer this year, and be thankful that we do have funds available to help in the most dire circumstances. **Thank you, everyone!**

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP NEWS

Letters inviting **PLEDGES FOR 2015** were sent to most Parish Visitor readers in early December. If you've lost yours or did not receive one, you'll find a pledge card and a theme handout (Blessed to be a Blessing) stapled into this issue of the Parish Visitor. Please return pledges to: Treasurer, First Congregational UCC, P.O. Box 114, NG 04260.

OFFERING ENVELOPES for 2015 are available now at the church office. If you'd like yours sent to you, please call 926-3260 or email the office at fccng@securespeed.net. Please note: your envelope number may have changed from 2014's.

The Trustees and Treasurer have been working out the details of a **CHURCH BUDGET for 2015**. The congregation will need to approve its budget at the Annual Meeting, scheduled for Sunday, February 1 (after worship and LONG before the Super Bowl, so, no excuses). Experience has taught us that this goes best with an opportunity for the congregation to consider the numbers beforehand, so... there will be an in-process **budget presentation on Sunday, January 11**, after worship, in which you can help finalize the budget which will be voted on at Annual Meeting.

THE PARISH VISITOR

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United Church of Christ
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New Gloucester, ME 04260

207-926-3260

Email: fccng@securespeed.net

Web: www.ngucc.org

Rev. Linda Gard, Pastor
John Terison, Director of Music
Cindy L. Mahan, Office Administrator
Philip Blake, Sexton

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Celebration Worship And Brunch

Sunday, January 18

9:30 am

We do need to know how many are coming for brunch.

Please call today: 926-3260