



KEEPING *Current*

With The Union Church in Waban

APRIL 2013

FROM THE PASTOR

There is a card that I have had on the mirror of my dresser for years. I don't even know where it came from to be honest, but for years, maybe even a decade or more it has been there. Printed in large, green, bold letters is the word JOY. Entangled all around and through the word – JOY-- are vines, flowers and bunches of grapes ready to burst, all rendered in a golden shimmering relief. It is lovely.

JOY, it proclaims to me day after day, each morning when I awake.

Though it is lovely, and though I am happy to have it adorning my mirror, I must confess that days, weeks and months can go by without me even really seeing it let alone hearing its proclamation. Familiarity breeds, if not contempt, at least indifference.

We have just come through Holy Week, the capstone to that great walk with Jesus that opened to us back on that first Sunday in December when we celebrated the beginning of Advent with the Hanging of the Greens. But even though it has been a rich and

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

wonder-filled walk from Christmas to Easter, even though the trumpet of Easter may still resound in the sanctuary, and the sweet smell of lilies may linger still, I wonder, have we really taken it in or have we simply moved on with the scroll of the calendar?

I wonder has the JOY that is to be at the heart of our faith become something so familiar that we no longer really feel it? Has Easter's JOY become a platitude that we now so easily overlook?

Is this story just that-- a story that we tell each year in church about something that happened long ago; a story disconnected from our living now? I fear it can be unless we really take the time each day to ask how is it that this story of love made manifest in the person of Jesus who touched and healed and made whole so many lives, who the powers and principalities of the day could not tolerate, who was brutally killed as a peace offering to an empire, whose body was washed in tears by the women who refused to be moved, whose living presence sparked and sparks "unspeakable joy"

from all who live on the far side of the empty tomb – how is *that* story *our* story?

To live in JOY is, I believe, to live a countercultural life, gospel-informed, Jesus-led life. Living in JOY does not mean we live in denial. It does not mean that we turn from the hurt in the world and pretend it does not exist. Nor does it mean that our lives will be free from pain or suffering. After all we just came through Holy Week, for God's sake!

What it does mean is that as real as the brokenness, hurt and suffering of this world is; as mean as violence and hatred is; as hard as living can be sometimes, even most of the time, God is. God's love is so tenacious that the worst of humanity cannot unhinge the best that is God. And that should and does bring JOY! If only we take the time to see and step into it each day.

May Easter's JOY be ours year-round
– Stacy

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COMMUNICATING WITH THE UNION CHURCH

Keeping Current is the monthly newsletter covering the activities within and surrounding The Union Church in Waban. **Submissions are due on the 20th of each month.** The preferred method of submission is via email to the Church Office. All articles should include the author's name and phone number and should be submitted in their entirety.

Items for the church's Sunday Bulletin may also be submitted in the same fashion as *Keeping Current*. **The deadline for the weekly bulletin is Wednesday morning at 10 am.**

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A Note From Your Moderators

Though New England winters can feel awfully long, spring seems to leap upon us and before you know it we're breaking for the summer. The church calendar is always quite full and the springtime can really highlight this point. So many great things happening, but it truly is hard to take it all in!

For those of you who may be new to the church, over the next few months considerable time is spent looking at the overall church life and examining where changes can be implemented next year; seeing where there are gaps in leadership, where new folks might want to get involved, where a new initiative might occur. You will read articles in the Sunday bulletin, Stacy will make announcements, folks may talk with you at reception hour -- but the bottom line is, this is a time when we all can do some introspection on where we might want to stretch ourselves a little next year, or to explore something we feel we're being nudged to pursue. Have you always kind of wondered what the Mission Committee does but been reluctant to ask for fear you'll be asked to head up a project? Have you wanted to attend Java Gents but felt a tad shy to show up on that Friday morning at 7:00 a.m.?

In May we plan to have a "Committees Fair" during reception hour where you can peruse the room, asking the committee chairs and members any and all questions you might have.

We are an open and inclusive church. We welcome and encourage all into participation and leadership in whatever way feels right to you at this time in your life. If you'd like to talk further about the various programs in the church please don't hesitate to call Pastor Stacy Swain (stacy@ucw.org), Kent Wittler (kwittler@aeuw.com) or me (mollymok@comcast.net). We'd love to hear where you feel you're being called within the UCW community.

Blessings,

Molly Owen-Kiritsy

Co-Moderator

Upcoming Social Events!

*Don't miss our next Game Night,
held on Friday evening, April 12th at 6:00 p.m. in the Reception Room*

and

*the All-Comers Dinner,
held on Friday evening, May 3rd at 6:30 p.m.
at Alicia Collins and Tony Abbiati's home. More details to follow.*

**Exploring Sacred Spaces:
Day Trip to the Boston College Labyrinth
and Episcopal Monastery in Cambridge
Sunday, April 28, noon to 5:30 p.m.**

Please join us for an afternoon discovering two of the wonderful sacred sites in the Boston area, the labyrinth at Boston College (<http://www.bc.edu/alumni/association/labyrinth.html>) and the monastery of Society of St. John the Evangelist in Cambridge (www.ssje.org). We will gather at noon, after the morning reception, for a light lunch and introduction to walking the labyrinth, then travel to BC. After walking we will have time to discuss our experiences before driving to Cambridge. The 4 p.m. evening prayer service at the monastery will last between 30 and 40 minutes. Afterward we will have a brief conversation over tea and coffee (in Harvard Square) then return to the church. It is fine to visit one or both sites; directions will be given to those who wish to travel separately.

If you have any questions or comments, please see Kathryn Henderson after worship or write to her at kathryn@ucw.org.

Looking forward to sharing these beautiful places with you!

A special welcome to our newest members!

On March 10th

Beth Sears,

Linda Lynch

and Kevin Johnson

joined The Union Church in Waban.

Christian Education and Formation for Adults

Meditation Drop-ins

Would you like to learn more about meditation or practice with a group? Our last meeting in this series will be on Saturday, April 13th. From 9:30 to 10:00 a.m. Kathryn will meet with anyone interested in receiving instruction or guidance with specific meditation practices. From 10:00 to 11:00, the entire group will meet for meditation and conversation about related topics. If you have any questions, please email kathryn@ucw.org.

“Conversations Along the Way”

Grab your coffee and curiosity and continue the conversation that was begun over two thousand years ago on that road to Emmaus (Luke 21:13). We will join those two disciples in frank and honest conversation as we engage our questions, our doubts and skepticism about what exactly this Christian faith is all about. We will talk candidly about how and if the ancient story of Scripture has relevance for our living today and how we are to understand what it means to “love kindness, do justice and walk humbly with our God” (Micah 6:8) in this time and place. The agenda for this time is not to try to get each other to believe in a certain way or to try to rid us of our questions. Quite the opposite is true! The agenda for this time, which is consistent with the spirit of the Union Church community, is to simply welcome all, wherever we may be on our spiritual journeys, and to engage our questions honestly and openly, without judgment and with love.

We meet once a month on Wednesday mornings, and this month we will meet on April 3 at 9:00 a.m. at the Waban Starbucks.

Living Waters Prayer Group

Living Waters Prayer Group meets each Wednesday morning in the side chapel from 7:30 to 8:15 a.m. You are invited to gather with others in the chapel off the sanctuary for a time of silent contemplation, meditation on scripture, and prayer. Steeping ourselves in the peace and presence of God in the quiet of prayer makes a qualitative difference in how we experience what the week brings. Again, if you are interested in this time of prayer, but mornings just are not convenient for your schedule, please see Stacy about exploring a weekday evening offering. Stacy@ucw.org

From the Lunch Bunch

April’s meeting of Lunch Bunch will be on Tuesday, April 9th at noon. Please consider joining us for Lunch Bunch. Each month we catch up on the happenings in our lives, and then discuss a topic of interest. If you need a ride, please give Stacy a call at 617-965-3893.



Christian Education and Formation for Adults (continued)

The Waban Health Nursing and Rehabilitation Center: Taking Worship Beyond Our Sanctuary's Walls

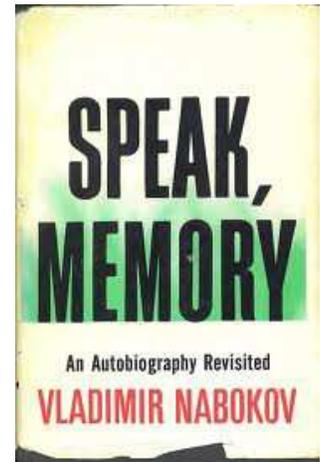
One Thursday morning per month at 10:30 a.m., Stacy is joined by others in the church to lead a monthly Protestant worship service for our neighbors, the residents of the Waban Health, the nursing and rehabilitation center located in Waban Square just behind the Waban Market. Waban Health provides short-term rehabilitation, long-term dementia, and respite care, to 90 residents. Hearing God's word and sharing communion with people who we may not have any other opportunity to know is tremendously enriching. If you are interested in sharing in this ministry, please let Stacy know by either emailing her at Stacy@ucw.org or by calling at 617-965-3893. This month's visit will be on April 11th.

Book Group

The next meeting of the Book Group will be on Tuesday evening, April 30th at 7:30 p.m.

We will be reading *Speak, Memory: An Autobiography Revisited* by Vladimir Nabokov.

For more details go to <http://www.amazon.com/Speak-Memory-Autobiography-Vladimir-Nabokov/dp/0679723390>



Java Gents

Java Gents is an informal monthly breakfast hour for the men of the UCW congregation. It provides friendly fellowship and mutual support to the men. Java Gents meet the third Friday of each month in the church reception room at 7:00 a.m. Breakfast is provided. Jay O'Beirne usually hosts the lively discussion of timely topics, and personal goings on among the men. This month's meeting will be on April 19th.

Wellspring Women's Group

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Wednesday, April 17th 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Women's Wellspring meets throughout the year, usually on the second or third Wednesday of the month. Mark your calendars for this month's meeting on April 17th at 6:30 p.m. when you are invited out of the demands of your days and into a place of peace. You are invited to set down that which burdens you and pick up laughter, love and learning. You are invited to fill places of hunger with good food and fellowship. Women of the church, you are invited.

Come every month or come when you can. It will be good to be together!

### Bible Study

Bible Study continues this month with the study of the Gospel of Matthew. We meet on Sunday mornings at 8:00 a.m. in Stacy's office.

Bible Study is a great way to not only help us grow in our own understanding of who God is for each of us personally, but it also enlivens our experience of worship and helps us to be more curious and engaged in our faith throughout the week.

Please join us; the study is open to everyone. Biblical literacy or previous study is not needed. Come when you can; there is no commitment to attend every Sunday.

**A Note from NICA**

Hola!

The Nicaragua Outreach Committee is pleased to report that our first Ancianos event held on March 3rd was a big success. Our event brought together 54 Newton seniors, members of the Taiwanese Church, and our own older adult members for a fun lunch with bingo, music, and fellowship.

Thank you to all who helped make this event such a success.



**Ancianos Luncheon  
March 3**



The Elephant Walk is hosting a benefit dinner for *Communities Without Borders* on Monday, April 8th. Cost is \$40 per person and includes hors d'oeuvres, 3-course dinner, coffee/tea, tax and tip. 50% of proceeds go to support our mission of educating orphans and other vulnerable children in Zambia. Reservations are required and can be made at <http://elephantwalk.myshopify.com/products/monday-benefit-dinner-for-communities-without-borders> . Hope to see you there! --

Anne Gatewood



Please join us for a dinner to benefit

## Communities without Borders

[www.CommunitiesWithoutBorders.org](http://www.CommunitiesWithoutBorders.org)

Monday, April 8, 6:30 p.m. at

### The Elephant Walk

663 Main Street, Waltham, MA

Come and enjoy award-winning Cambodian and French cuisine at this highly-rated restaurant. There will be passed hors d'oeuvres, followed by a 3-course dinner with coffee/tea service, for \$40 per person, including tax and tip. Other beverages are available for an additional charge.

The Elephant Walk **will donate half** of all food, drink, and gift certificate purchases to Communities without Borders. This incredibly generous donation is part of their serious ongoing commitment to support many causes as a [Benefit Restaurant](#).

Your family and friends are welcome. The restaurant requires advance registration and payment. To make your reservation, visit the online store at:

<http://elephantwalk.myshopify.com/products/monday-benefit-dinner-for-communities-without-borders>

For more information, contact:

Debra Minard

617-244-4045

[Debby@FreshPowder.net](mailto:Debby@FreshPowder.net)

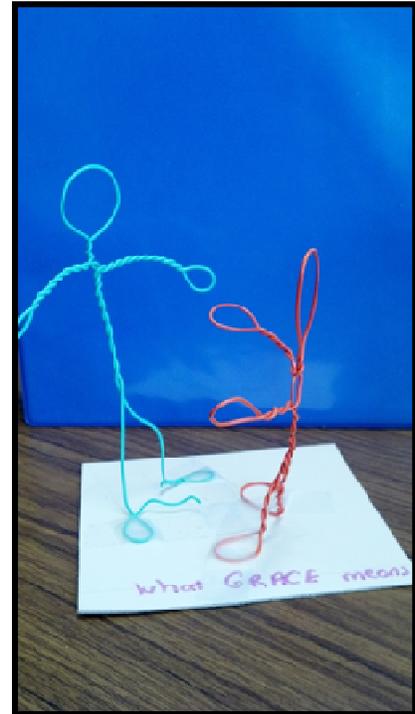
## Christian Education News for Children and Youth

by Kathy Malone

### Scenes from Sunday School in March



After reading the parable of the Prodigal Son, the Noah's Ark class built the forgiving father's house out of boxes and then decorated it for a party to welcome home the younger son.



The second through fifth graders sculpted wire figures to express the emotions of the forgiving father and the prodigal son as a way to learn about the meaning of grace.

### Appreciation for our Sunday School Teachers

Thanks to everyone who helped out with Sunday School in March: Sandy Nelson, Alex Kiritsy, Susan Hunt Stevens, Nancy Laste, Liz Caronna, Jaap van Reijendam, Katheryn DeRogatis.



Christian Education News for Children and Youth (continued)



Holy Week Putt Putt Golf

The middle schoolers led the K-1<sup>st</sup> grade class through the major events of Holy Week Putt Putt golf style on Palm Sunday. After worship, all the Sunday School kids joined in.



## Christian Education News (continued)

### Sunday School Schedule for April

|                                                                                               |          |                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| One Room<br> | April 7  | Resurrection Prayer Stations: Using our Five Senses to Remember Jesus |
| One Room Church School                                                                        | April 14 | Peter's Second Chance                                                 |
| One Room Church School                                                                        | April 21 | Psalm 23                                                              |
| Classes                                                                                       | April 28 | TBD                                                                   |



*Early Release Day: Saint Patrick's Party at the Waban Health Center*



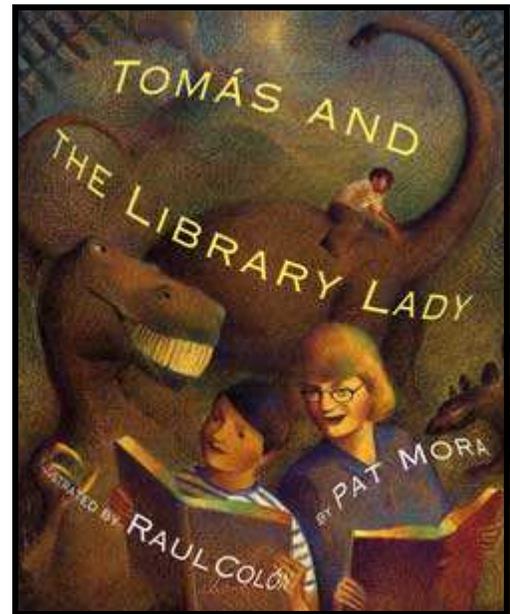
Dawn, Luke, Lucy and Elisabeth enjoy conversation and cookies with the Residents of the Waban Health Center for our joint Saint Patrick's party on March 14. UCW kids and adults shared jokes and singing and passed out shamrock decorations. A good time was had by all!

### ***Promoting Literacy with Russell School***

Twelve members of the church continued our local initiative partnership with the Russell School in Dorchester at a Training of the Trainers workshop on March 25th. Together we learned:

How do you explore a book? What resources do parents have for promoting literacy at home? When you have two jobs and very little time, how do you read to all your children using the same book?

On April 4th we join with the teachers and parents in a Literacy Night where the books we were able to purchase will be used across the entire school, as parents read and children read to their parents -- and we are guided in our approach to support children's literacy.



### ***Renew, Rejoice, Proclaim!***

At the Union Church, the season of spring marks our annual Stewardship campaign. While many churches hold such campaigns in the fall, we chose the season of rebirth as a fitting time for our celebration of and support for the Union Church.

The Hosannas of Palm Sunday mark the kick-off of our 2013-2014 Stewardship Campaign: ***Renew, Rejoice, Proclaim!*** Easter season carries the sense of renewal we feel throughout the church year in all our fresh endeavors – the Russell school initiative, the ReNew summer camp, meditation classes, and resuming a church-wide retreat. We rejoice in the sustaining power of our faith community to support those within and beyond our walls – from the Java gents, Wellspring, and Living Waters to Waban Health, Nicaragua, and Zambia. And we proclaim our support for this vibrant faith community – its work within and outside our walls – with our pledge to sustain it.

Our campaign kicks off Sunday, March 24th and concludes Sunday, April 28th. We invite you to take time this spring to reflect on the place the ministry and life of the Union Church has in your own life, and then join in the spirit of celebration on April 28th.

Keep your eyes out for the stewardship mailing that will contain more information along with your pledge card. If you have any questions, feel free to contact any member of the Stewardship committee.

Sincerely,

Karen Weisgerber  
 Jay O'Beirne  
 Grant Gund  
 Tony Abbiati  
 Larry Scott  
 Karen O'Beirne (treasurer)

***“Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you...”*** I Thessalonians 5: 16-18

# APRIL 2013

| Sun                                                                                                                                                            | Mon       | Tues                                                         | Wed                                                                                                                                  | Thurs                                                              | Fri                                                                          | Sat                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                | <b>1</b>  | <b>2</b><br>6:00 p.m.<br>Deacons' mtg.                       | <b>3</b> 7:30 a.m.<br>Prayer Group<br>9:00 a.m. Con-<br>versations Along<br>the Way (Waban<br>Starbucks)<br>6:30 p.m.<br>Council mtg | <b>4</b>                                                           | <b>5</b><br>Friday Fun Night<br>for 4th and 5th<br>Graders<br>6:00-8:00 p.m. | <b>6</b><br>Council Retreat<br>8:30 a.m.- 12<br>noon. |
| <b>7</b> 8:00 a.m.<br>Bible Study<br>10:00 a.m.<br>worship and Sun-<br>day School                                                                              | <b>8</b>  | <b>9</b> 12 noon<br>Lunch Bunch<br>7:00 p.m.<br>Mission mtg. | <b>10</b><br>7:30 a.m. Prayer<br>Group                                                                                               | <b>11</b><br>7:30 Choir<br>Rehearsal<br>10:30 a.m.<br>Waban Health | <b>12</b><br>7:00 a.m. Java<br>Gents<br>Game Night<br>6:00 p.m.              | <b>13</b><br>Meditation<br>workshop<br>9:30-11:00 a.m |
| <b>14</b> 8:00 a.m.<br>Bible Study<br>10:00 a.m.<br>worship and Sun-<br>day School                                                                             | <b>15</b> | <b>16</b>                                                    | <b>17</b><br>7:30 a.m. Prayer<br>Group<br>6:30 p.m. Well-<br>spring                                                                  | <b>18</b><br>6:30 p.m. Teach-<br>ing Parish Com-<br>mittee         | <b>19</b><br>Youth Group<br>6:00-8:00 p.m.                                   | <b>20</b>                                             |
| <b>21</b> 8:00 a.m.<br>Bible Study<br>10:00 a.m.<br>worship and Sun-<br>day School                                                                             | <b>22</b> | <b>23</b>                                                    | <b>24</b><br>7:30 a.m. Prayer<br>Group                                                                                               | <b>25</b><br>7:30 Choir<br>Rehearsal                               | <b>26</b>                                                                    | <b>27</b>                                             |
| <b>28</b> 8:00 a.m.<br>Bible Study<br>10:00 a.m.<br>worship and Sun-<br>day School<br>Noon-5:30 p.m.<br>Exploring Sacred<br>Spaces (held at<br>Boston College) | <b>29</b> | <b>30</b> 7:30 p.m.<br>Book Group                            |                                                                                                                                      |                                                                    |                                                                              |                                                       |

# MAY 2013

| Sun                                                                                | Mon       | Tues                                                             | Wed                                                                                                                                  | Thurs                                                      | Fri                                                                         | Sat       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
|                                                                                    |           |                                                                  | <b>1</b> 7:30 a.m.<br>Prayer Group<br>9:00 a.m. Con-<br>versations Along<br>the Way (Waban<br>Starbucks)<br>6:30 p.m.<br>Council mtg | <b>2</b>                                                   | <b>3</b><br>All-Comers din-<br>ner at Abbiati/<br>Collins home<br>6:30 p.m. | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>5</b> 8:00 a.m.<br>Bible Study<br>10:00 a.m.<br>worship and Sun-<br>day School  | <b>6</b>  | <b>7</b> 6:00 p.m.<br>Deacons' mtg.                              | <b>8</b> 7:30 a.m.<br>Prayer Group                                                                                                   | <b>9</b> 7:30 Choir<br>Rehearsal                           | <b>10</b>                                                                   | <b>11</b> |
| <b>12</b> 8:00 a.m.<br>Bible Study<br>10:00 a.m.<br>worship and Sun-<br>day School | <b>13</b> | <b>14</b> 12 noon<br>Lunch Bunch<br>7:00 p.m.<br>Mission mtg.    | <b>15</b> 7:30 a.m.<br>Prayer Group<br>6:30 p.m. Well-<br>spring                                                                     | <b>16</b><br>6:30 p.m. Teach-<br>ing Parish Com-<br>mittee | <b>17</b>                                                                   | <b>18</b> |
| <b>19</b> 8:00 a.m.<br>Bible Study<br>10:00 a.m.<br>worship and Sun-<br>day School | <b>20</b> | <b>21</b> 7:00 p.m.<br>Pastoral Rela-<br>tions Committee<br>mtg. | <b>22</b> 7:30 a.m.<br>Prayer Group                                                                                                  | <b>23</b> 7:30 Choir<br>Rehearsal                          | <b>24</b>                                                                   | <b>25</b> |
| <b>26</b> 8:00 a.m.<br>Bible Study<br>10:00 a.m.<br>worship and Sun-<br>day School | <b>27</b> | <b>28</b> 7:30 p.m.<br>Book Group                                | <b>29</b> 7:30 a.m.<br>Prayer Group                                                                                                  | <b>30</b>                                                  | <b>31</b>                                                                   |           |

*Don't miss*  
*Game Night*  
*April 12th*

*and*

*All-Comers Dinner*  
*May 3rd*