

From the Hill

First Congregational Church of Georgetown

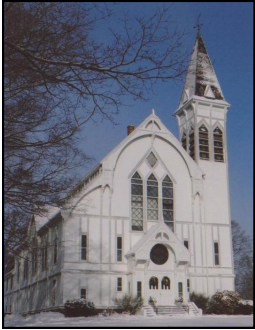
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December 2021



Dear Ones,

As we gear up for the coming of one of the biggest commercial holidays of the year, our lives often speed up to a point of confusion and frenzy. The Christian notion of preparing the way for Peace, for the Prince of Peace to come on earth gets lost in the busy-ness of preparing for the Yule-tide traditions with friends and family.

I love this time of year, and Bill and I are already busy getting ready for Ali and Curt, two grown offspring to be home for a few days. Together we will cook up a storm, create new memories, take silly photos, and relax together by the fire.

And this year I am especially mindful of this first Advent with you, my new faith community. I am grateful for you all and feeling blessed to be on this journey with you as we come together each Sunday and all week long to learn about God's love, our Creator's intension for the world, and how we might best prepare to be peacemakers, heading Jesus's call to follow.

Advent marks the beginning of the church year, even as we end our calendar year. We begin again to remember that Jesus came as an infant; that the Prince of Peace showed up helpless to a willing, innocent young woman who said yes to God. Mary became a vessel the Holy, God's love in the flesh, ushering in a new day and a new way.

During Advent, we are invited to hear these words shouted by John the Baptist, words written in the book of Isaiah and then echoed in Luke's gospel:

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

If you listen to Handel's Messiah at all, either at this time of year or even at Easter (yes, Easter too!) then these words may be familiar.

What do you read in these words?

I read and imagine a time to come when all will be on even ground, and as Isaiah prophesies, all of us will see the coming of Peace, Perfect Peace, we will see it together.

In this faith community we are invited to imagine how we might be vessels ushering in God's love, making crooked paths straight for our neighbors in need, and helping to make rough patches a bit smoother for the next ones who come after us.

With Christmas blessings of hope, peace, joy and love,

Pastor Holly

Stewardship



Thank you for pledging to support 1st Congregational Church in Georgetown. Your financial pledge makes our ministry possible. There is still time to return your pledge card to the church either during worship or by mailing it. Thank you for the gifts you bring to this community of faith.

Missions

The H.O.M.E. Christmas Tree is adorned with angel tags, and each tag represents a child's wish for Christmas. The children are from the greater Orland, Maine community, and H.O.M.E. represents a haven for them and their families by providing help with food, housing, daycare, GED programs, the building of affordable housing, and cottage industries. The poverty in this area is likened to that of the Ozarks in the South. Our gifts will be given to the parents of these children, so that they will have presents for their children Christmas morning. Please take a tag or two; note the coded number on the tag, and write your name on the chart, by the tree, next to the corresponding coded number. Wrap and return your gift/gifts, with tags securely taped to the gifts, by Sunday, December 12th.



Annual Meeting January 2021

It will be here before you know it!

Please prepare your team's **Annual Report** and send to: churchoffice@fccgeorgetownma.org by Friday, January 7th. Teams are asked to get their **2021 Budget** to the Finance team ASAP so they can prepare a report for the January Finance Meeting.



Diaconate

Christmas waves a magic wand over the world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful.

Christmas is coming! Time to celebrate! We wish each of you perfect moments during this special time of joy. Those special moments could be the simple aroma of freshly baked sugar cookies, a pine bough laden with “remember those” ornaments...sigh...and what would these Christmas moments be without the love of our Church Family. We share the lighting of the advent candles, signifying the coming of the “celebration of the birth of Christ.” Add to that the beautiful sounds of Christmas carols being sung, our very own bell choir and the sweet voices of all who share their talent and love of our church. The gathering together on Christmas Eve for our candlelight service is one of those beloved traditions. I always remember Haleigh Harris stewardship talk a few years ago when she declared it was her most favorite service... ! Unpack those hand made mittens that were given to you in love, open your back door for a moment for a ‘smell’ our New England winter, and what in the world is better than a sugar cookie and a cup of hot chocolate, perhaps topped with marshmallow!!!!

Please read all the information here in the December newsletter. Why not make that phone call, snail mail a pretty Christmas card and still uncover those special Christmas mementos that make your heart smile when you unpack them! As we shared in November over Thanksgiving, our blessings abound.

Please be assured your Diaconate Team of Antoinette, Emily, Pam, Rachel and Gladie are always available for you, our Church Family.

We wish you: “May the light of the Star in the East cast Christmas magic over each of you and may your hearts smile this glorious Christmas season.”

Gladie Kneeland, Chair of Diaconate.

Christian Development

The Christian Development Team would like the ladies of the church to **save the date!**

Mark your calendars for May 6-8, 2022 for a Women’s Retreat getaway.

Toni Cassidy is providing a wonderful location and Holly will facilitate this opportunity for us to grow in our faith and fellowship. More information will follow.





Have You Started Christmas Shopping?

The FCC Georgetown is set up to receive a percentage of your purchases when you shop AmazonSmile! smile.amazon.com

- sign in or sign up
- find the dropdown for your account
- find Your AmazonSmile on the list & click on it
- select a charity—First Congregational Church of Georgetown

When you shop, be sure to go to smile.amazon.com for the church to receive credit - not the regular Amazon account (this won't give us credit).



Light The Church Fund

*Our steeple is lit in December to celebrate the baptisms of Charlotte Rose & Sofia Rose
by Richard and Nancy Aberman.*

Contributions for lighting the church can be made in memory of loved ones or in honor of someone special. If you would like to make a contribution or need more information please contact Robert Knapp at 978-352-7489.



Marie Birdsall

Evelyn Hills

Michael Tardy

Brigit Bratland

Michael Lee

Charlotte Winter

Toni Cassidy

Emily Moore

Joycelyn Wormell

Donna DeSisto

Jody Moore

Holly Harris

Tracy Southwick



Christmas Pageant Sunday, December 19 at 10:30 a.m.

Join us for this fun, intergenerational, participatory pageant!

Christmas Eve Service Friday, December 24 at 7:00 p.m.

Bell choir will bring us beautiful holiday music on this holy night.

Hymn sing Sunday, December 26 at 10:30 a.m.

Join us this Sunday morning to celebrate Jesus's birth and sing carols closest to your heart.



STORM CANCELATIONS

In the event of a Saturday night or Sunday morning snowstorm, check Channel 7 or Channel 56 (CW) for storm closings. There is also a mobile app you can download for free by searching WHDH in the app store to view storm status anywhere.

We will also update our website & Facebook page.



The front of our sanctuary will be filled with beautiful flowers on Christmas Sunday morning. The Diaconate welcomes your contributions in memory of beloved friends and family. Donations can be made payable to FCC Georgetown and mailed to the church PO Box 200, Georgetown.

The deadline for your contribution will be Sunday, December 12. A listing of those who have contributed will be printed in the Christmas Sunday bulletin.

Flowers will be delivered to members who are homebound or those who have recently lost a family member.

Yes, I would like to make a donation (in any amount) \$

IN MEMORY OF/IN HONOR OF (please print)

From:

Looking back:

60 Years ago:

Christmas Fair chaired by Wilhelmina (Mina) Marble

40 years ago:

Bellringers of Beverly played during worship service soon followed by The debut of our Bell Choir at the Christmas concert and town wide pageant presented by the Theater Workshop

30 years ago:

"Hallo! God Bless" a musical version of 'A Christmas Carol' created by Charles Naylor and performed by members of our congregation

20 years ago:

The Wizard of OZ presented by the Royal Stage Ensemble

10 years ago:

Lorraine Edwards called to be our settled pastor

Music in Georgetown

Musical Dickens brings holiday spirit to town

Georgetown is in for a real treat next month as a musical version of Dicken's "Christmas Carol" will be presented at the First Congregational Church.

To enhance the excellence of the program, the composer/arranger will accompany the performance on his synthesizer.

Charles Naylor, father of Georgetown Junior High School English teacher Sandra Elkin, wrote the book, music and lyrics for the musical adaptation of the traditional classic.

The production will be presented at the First Congregational Church on December 6, 7 and 8. Tickets are \$6 for adults and \$4 for seniors and students.

Proceeds will benefit the Essex Association of the United Church of Christ that provides affordable home ownership under the auspices of Wellspring Community Land Trust of the North Shore.

Naylor said, "We're particularly pleased that this is a benefit for the homeless, and I'm sure Dickens would have approved too. He was a great champion of the poor; his own father was in debtors prison."

He said he embellished the thrust of the whole show with an emphasis on the joy of giving. One of the most popular musical numbers is "It's not what you get for Christmas; it's what you give."

"This is a very serious work for me," Naylor said. "I wrote it for Broadway."

He said he wanted to do the show for years before he actually got down to writing it.

"I expected Lerner and Loewe or Rodgers and Hammerstein to do it, but they never did."

He said he had a hard time getting started, but Sandy helped him from the very beginning.

"It feels very honest and right," he said. "What makes it is the music. The singers love their songs. Every one feels that his or her song is the best in the show."

The players are all familiar faces around the local arts community. For example, Bob Watts of the North Shore Light Opera Company will be Scrooge and choir director Bob Knapp will be Marley.

The show is produced by Evelyn Boose and directed by Sandy Elkin.

Elkin is already very familiar with the show, since she watched and encouraged her father's composition. She also produced the musical at the Georgetown High School three years ago.

"We're hoping that other small theater companies will see our production and realize just how good it is and how faithful it is to the original book," she said.

Naylor, who has performed with the greats of the musical world, was most enthusiastic about his Georgetown players.

"These people are wonderful," he said. "I don't consider them amateurs; they're just professionals who aren't in the business."

He certainly has a basis for comparison. His musical career has spanned several decades, and he has worked for radio, television, advertising, and the movies.

His compositions include about a score (pun intended) of popular songs. Many of the titles would be familiar to the more mature of us: "My guy", "The Skaters' Cha Cha", "The Dixieland Marching Band" are a few.

He has conducted and arranged for dozens of well-known musicians, such as Louis Armstrong, Merv Griffin, Count Basie, Rudy Vallee, and on and on.

He wrote the scores for three movies for Columbia Pictures.

He wrote 260 arrangements for the Fred Waring Orchestra and was first pianist for that internationally known group. He also worked on TV shows with such luminaries as Red Buttons, Eddie Albert, Eddy Arnold and Merv Griffin.

His radio show credits include Kraft Music Hall, the General Electric Show, and Henry Morgan.

Along with his entertainment achievements, he was musical director of two of the foremost advertising agencies in New York.

For 18 years, he wrote jingles and background music for commercials.

This is where I made most money," he said ruefully.

He and his family were New Yorkers until 1967 when he moved to Bucks County, Pennsylvania, where he still lives.

He moved out of the city with the intention of composing a musical show about Madison Avenue.

His first Broadway show was "The Ad Game," a satire on the business of advertising.

"All six of my girls were born in New York," he said. "We lived there 26 years."

Sandy was second born - barely. She was one of twins, the first Naylor children.

She is a graduate of Temple University in Pennsylvania.

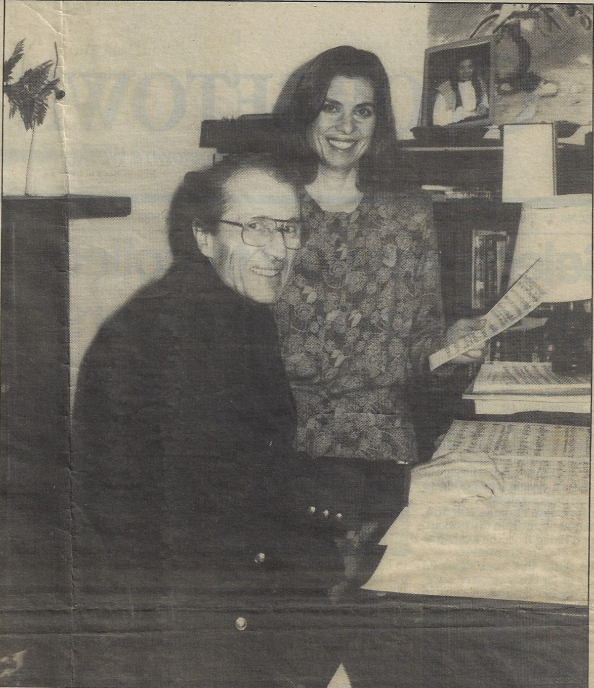
She worked for four years with the Bucks County Theatre and taught acting and drama in the Soleburg School in New Hope.

Since coming to Massachusetts, she said she has done a lot of community theater work.

After moving to Georgetown 13 years ago, she has continued to be active in the performing arts, producing several high school shows in addition to being the debating coach.

"She's a very talented woman," producer Boose said. "She really knows how to make a production go."


Her father agrees, "Her expertise in staging and choreography has helped me a great deal."



Musical family — Composer-Arranger Charles Naylor works on his music with the help of his talented daughter Sandy Elkin.



December 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7 PM Book Club via ZOOM <i>Redeeming Love</i> 7PM Boy Scouts	2 6:30 P.M. Bunco Night	3	4
5 10:30 AM Worship <i>Advent WK 2</i> 12:30 PM Diaconate	6	7 10 AM Bible Study 1 PM Women's Guild Holiday Party 4:45-6:15 Girl Scouts 6:30 PM Bells 7:30 PM Band	8 7 PM Missions Meeting 7PM Boy Scouts	9	10	11 Men's Group 8:00 A.M. Café Sarina
12 9:30 Bells 10:30 AM Worship <i>Advent WK 3</i> Poinsettia Deadline	13	14 10 AM Bible Study 4:45-6:15 Girl Scouts 6 PM Finance 6:30 PM Bells 7:30 PM Band	15 6:30 PM Council 7PM Boy Scouts Newsletter DEADLINE	16 6:00 PM Christian Development	17	18
19 9:30 Band 10:30 AM Worship <i>Advent WK 4</i> Christmas Pageant	20	21 10 AM Bible Study 4:45-6:15 Girl Scouts 6:30 PM Bells 7:30 PM Band	22 7PM Boy Scouts	23	24 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Service—Bells Christmas Day observed-office closed	25 
26 10:30 AM Worship	27	28 10 AM Bible Study 4:45-6:15 Girl Scouts	29 7PM Boy Scouts	30	31 New Year's Day observed— office closed	

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Our Church Mission Statement:
“To nurture those in our own faith community
and to act on our faith by reaching out to others.”
We are an Open and Affirming church of the United Church of Christ.