



December 2014

Church of the New Jerusalem

Monthly Newsletter

A community united by faith in God and love to the neighbor

The Christmas Cactus

Not long after our family moved into the Parsonage, Cindy Priest brought us a lovely housewarming gift - a Christmas Cactus. I will be completely honest, and admit here that I had absolutely no knowledge about this plant; I didn't even know its name or what it did. And since life was pretty hectic at that moment, the plant was moved to a place near the window. Often enough I watered the plant, and the seasons passed. The fall turned into winter, winter into spring and spring into summer. Soon enough, through the windows, the leaves could be seen falling down like orange and red confetti. Autumn had arrived again. And still, the plant sat by the window, with no one paying much attention.

Then one morning, not too long ago, I found myself at about the 7 o'clock hour, sitting at the dining room table, watching for the bus to come down the road. Looking over at the plants on the table by the window, it dawned on me what I was seeing. Why, that plant that Cindy had given us was up to something! At the ends of the stems, beautiful pink buds were growing. When did this happen! What a lovely sight to see! *What was the name of that plant, anyway?* I asked myself, searching for the little marker

inside the pot, hoping I hadn't tossed it. And then I found it - this was a Christmas Cactus. I pointed out the new buds to the children, and we began to watch them grow and open a little more every day. What a gift! As I thought more and more about this plant, and how much enjoyment it was bringing me, a few lessons came to mind.

First, I realized that I didn't even know what I had (and I'm glad I didn't forget to water that plant!). How often does this happen - gifts go silently unnoticed? Secondly, I had the enjoyment of learning what I had. Right away, I was glad to learn more about this flowering plant that hails from Brazil.

Finally, learning about when this specie of *Schlumbergera* flowers led me to think about one more lesson - timing. Sometimes blessings take a long time to show, but they always happen in God's perfect timing.

I'm reminded of Abram (later Abraham), who was told by the Lord at the age of 75, that he would be blessed with a family that would in time be as numerous as the dust of the earth and the stars of the sky. For 25 years, he was reminded of that promise every time he looked at the ground or the night sky; but still Sarai had no children. And then, at the age of 100, and

The Fryeburg New Church aka The Church of the New Jerusalem

12 Oxford Street • Fryeburg, ME 04037

Rev. Alison Lane-Olsen, Pastor • Email: pastorfnc@gmail.com

Office: (207) 935-3413, Cell phone (620) 960-6748

*Office Hours: Pastor ~ Wednesday thru Friday 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.,
Saturday by appointment*

Secretary ~ Wednesday thru Friday 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

www.fryeburgnewchurch.org

Sarah at 90, they were blessed with Isaac. It must have been unbelievable – it had finally happened.

Or perhaps more fitting with Advent season now upon us, we might turn our thoughts towards those who were waiting so long for a Messiah to come. At least 400 silent years followed the last prophecy of the Old Testament about the coming Christ. Preparing us for both John the Baptist and the Christ, Malachi shared these words, “I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple” (3:1). The prophet Isaiah, who shared these familiar words, “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son and shall call His name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14), had an even longer wait, living in the 8th century BCE.

If you feel like something good is never going to happen, do not lose hope! If we seek to live the best we know, allowing God’s love and wisdom into our hearts, minds and actions, the goodness and beauty of life will be made clear and God’s purposes and plans will become clear...even if not yet.

As Swedenborg writes in *Divine Providence*, the Divine gifts us with the ability to choose to think “in terms of eternity even while we are thinking about what is present.” May we not be only short-term thinkers, but realize there is so much more going on and that blessings can and will come later. Our God’s activity is constant. The Christmas Cactus that sits on a shelf and acts as if nothing is happening or changing within is only an appearance. God’s activity is constant. I am looking forward to this season of waiting, this season of Advent; may we gather together many times this Christmas season, as people of hope and faith, and as a people filled with gratitude for the blessings in our life that are already blooming and made so clear.

Advent blessings to you and yours,

The Lane-Olsen Family

Office Hours: Weds -Friday 8:30am-12:30pm,
Saturday by appointment

Email: revlaneolsen@yahoo.com

Office phone: 935-3413

Cell phone: 620-960-6748

Worship Schedule

Sunday School 9:00 AM

Family Worship 10:00 AM

Nov. 30: Hanging of the Greens

We are taking a page out of Dickens' Christmas Carol for our Advent Worship service theme!

Dec. 7: Spirit of Christmas Past

Dec. 14: (Communion Sunday) Spirit of Christmas Present

Dec. 18: Blue Christmas Service, **7pm at FNC**, led by Rev. Dr. Tim LeConey and Rev. Alison. Many of us are acquainted with the paradox of the Advent and Christmas seasons – a time when we feel we are supposed to celebrate hope, love, joy and peace, and yet it is a time that many may be feeling sadness, grief or loneliness. Blue Christmas services offer special recognition of the struggles that many people face during this season.

Dec. 21: Spirit of our Christmas Future: Children’s Film/Pageant

Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 7pm, First Congregational Church

Dec. 28: Rev. Alison away; Service led by Sally Gibson and Martha Richardson. *Thank you Sally and Martha!*



Thank you for your donations to the Sweden Food Pantry Thanksgiving Baskets and for donations offered to the Brownfield Food Pantry during the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service. Your help is greatly appreciated!

Church Report

The Trustees

The Trustees' next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, December 2, 2014 at 7:00 pm**. The meetings are open to all, but you should contact the Chair prior to the meeting to get an item on the agenda. Also, please speak to any of the Trustees with your questions, concerns, compliments or complaints. We are here to serve you.

Currently Serving Trustees

Jon Crowe, <i>Chair</i>	925-1302
Dede Frost, <i>Vice Chair</i>	935-3344
Cindy Priest, <i>Treasurer</i>	935-3360
Jennifer Richardson, <i>Secretary</i>	935-4509
Jane Fullerton	890-9454
Jean Cressy	935-7093
Judy Hatch	935-2223
<i>Women's Alliance Representative:</i>	
Patty Swett	603-939-2263

Women's Alliance

The next meeting of the Women's Alliance will be on **Monday, December 15, 2014 at 12 noon at FNC** for a potluck luncheon. Meeting and exchange of gifts to follow (not to exceed \$10:00). We meet the third Monday of each month at the Church. All ladies are welcome!!

2014 Officers for the Women's Alliance are:

President Jean Cressy
Vice-President..... Claire Kiesman
Secretary..... Sally Harnden
Treasurer Patty Swett
Chaplain Betty Baker



POINSETTIAS

Orders for red poinsettias need to be in to the office by Friday December 12th. The cost for each poinsettia is \$8.00, you will find an order slip and envelope enclosed. Office phone #935-3413. Thank you!



**The Fryeburg New Church
is once more partnering with
Equal Exchange!!**

We will have coffee, tea and chocolate available for purchase at the church
They make great stocking stuffers!

Christmas Eve Candlelight Ecumenical Service

Please join us on Wednesday, December 24th at 7:00 p.m. for the Christmas Eve Candlelight Ecumenical Service at the First Congregational Church at 655 Main Street in Fryeburg.



All are welcome.

And the Winners are:

The winners for this year's Christmas Cupboard raffle prizes are as follows:

1st prize: \$25 Gift Certificate to Jockey Cap
won by Renie Chaplin

2nd prize: Pocketbook made by Debbie
Urgese won by Gail of Glen, NH

3rd prize: Decorated Wreath won by
Sally Gibson

Congratulations to our lucky winners and thank you also to everyone who donated items, helped set up and worked at the Christmas Cupboard sale!

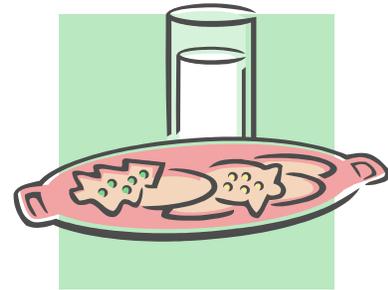
In Our Prayers

Continued prayers to Sue Davidson for a speedy diagnosis and recovery; we continue to wish Barbara Ferguson a steady recovery; healing prayers for Jen Richardson and family. We are glad to share that Joyce Syracuse is back home and feeling better after a brief stay in the hospital. Prayers go out to Harvey Walker and Lawrence Pangaro, whose beloved wives recently passed into the spiritual world.

Youth Group

Youth Group met on Sunday, November 16. We worked together to set up the Christmas tree and count up the donations that we received from the Fair Booth counter cans. This year we made a little over \$217! After completing these tasks we ordered pizza and walked over to the Shed to pick it up. We talked a little about future activities and about our annual theme. We ended the evening with a game of Psychiatrist. Thank you Dawn Crowe for working as the co-leader at this gathering.

Kurt



Milk and Bookies

Please join The Fryeburg New Church on Sunday, December 7th for a Milk + Bookies Event from 4 pm to 6pm. Your child can bring or purchase, inscribe, and donate a book for kids ages 0 to 5. The Book Warehouse from Conway will be available to help with purchases. Participants can choose to donate books to either the Fryeburg Head Start Program or the Mother Seton House. We will be enjoying cookie decorating, craft and a special Christmas story from Mrs. Clause. After the event we will be walking to the Christmas Tree Ceremony at Bradley Park which begins at 6pm. Please come join us!



12-25-2002

NAUGHTY IS UP 10% THIS YEAR ... NOT THAT IT MATTERS, THEY'RE ALL GETTING LOVE AND FORGIVENESS AFTER ALL



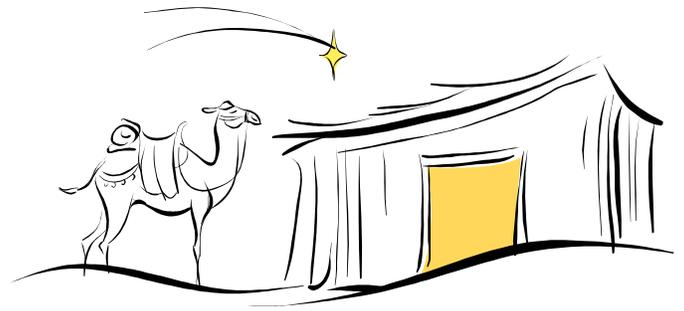
Thanks to John Michael Sullivan (See Luke 2:1-16) 12-23-2005

AT LEAST WE CAN SAY THAT HE WAS BROUGHT UP IN A STABLE HOME



Thanks to Christopher Carver 12-24-2007

CAN YOU CHECK SANTA'S NICE LIST ... I'M PRETTY SURE I'M ON THAT ONE



Christmas Pageant

Please join us for a special film debut and see our children reenact the Christmas story on the silver screen! The film will be shown at the Fryeburg New Church on **Sunday, December 21st** during the Worship Service. It is sure to be a wonderful presentation!! Christmas Party to follow.



Fa la la la....

It's almost time to go caroling!!!! This year, anyone interested in going caroling is invited to gather at the Parsonage at 5:45pm, Saturday, December 13th. Homeowners along the caroling route will be notified in advance that we will be coming their way, and they will be invited to join us! Our plan is to sing our way to the church, with goodies and hot chocolate at our destination to help us warm up. If you would rather not sing, but would love to join the party, come to the church! Doors at the church will be open at 6pm.

Welcomers for December

Dec 7 *open*
 Dec 14 Debbie Dolley
 Dec 21 Martha Richardson
 Dec 28 *open*

Ushers for December

Dec 7 Tom Barrett & Sue Davidson
 Dec 14 Stanley Dolley & Chuck Priest
 Dec 21 Jen & David Richardson
 Dec 28 Dean Harnden & Jean Cressy

Coffee Hour for December

Dec 7 Jean Cressy
 Dec 14 Donnette Barnes
 Dec 21 Christmas Party
 Dec 28 Mary Dysinger

WORSHIP SERVICE ATTENDANCE NOVEMBER 2- NOVEMBER 30, 2014		
Date	Adults	Children
Nov 2	40	11
Nov 9	42	10
Nov 16	39	7
Nov 23	37	12
Nov 30	--	--



Calendar for December 2014 (held at our Church unless indicated)			
Nov 30	Sun	Birthday Bank Sunday Food Pantry Sunday First Sunday of Advent "Hanging of the Greens" Adult Choir Sunday School Family Worship	8:45 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.
2	Tue	Trustees' Meeting	7:00 p.m.
3	Wed	Dinner Bell North @SEAS	5:00 p.m. .
4	Thu	Bible Study	10:00 am
7	Sun	Second Sunday of Advent Adult Choir Sunday School Family Worship "Potluck with a Purpose" <i>Milk and Bookies</i>	8:45 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. after worship 4 - 6 p.m.
10	Wed	Dinner Bell North @SEAS	5:00 p.m.
11	Thu	Bible Study	10:00 a.m.
12	Fri	Poinsettia orders due	
13	Sat	Christmas Caroling	5:45 p.m.
14	Sun	Third Sunday of Advent Adult Choir Sunday School Family Worship	8:45 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.
15	Mon	Women's Alliance	12 noon
17	Wed	Rev. Alison @ FHCC Dinner Bell North @SEAS	10:30 a.m. 5:00 p.m.
18	Thu	Bible Study Blue Christmas Service	10:00 a.m. 7:00pm
21	Sun	Fourth Sunday of Advent Christmas Pageant and Party Adult Choir Sunday School Family Worship Christmas Party	8:45 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:00 am after worship
24	Wed	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service @ First Congregational Church	7:00 pm
25	Thu	Christmas Day	
28	Sun	Birthday Bank Sunday Food Pantry Sunday Adult Choir Sunday School Family Worship	8:45 a.m. 9:00 am 10:00 a.m.



Church of the New Jerusalem
a.k.a. *Fryeburg New Church*
12 Oxford Street
Fryeburg, ME 04037

Address Service Requested