



December 2007

Church of the New Jerusalem

# Monthly Bulletin

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

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Dear Friends,

Like my faith in God, regularly examining things from a perspective of doubt and skepticism keeps it fresh and strong, so it is with my professional relationship with ministry. After nearly twenty-five years, I'm still just beginning to figure out what it means to be a minister. Recently, I was in one of my two or three times a year moods when I was wishing I did something else for a living, anything else! Preferably digging ditches, or humping brush ( a technical term that means hauling tree limbs and scrap cuttings to the chipper), or anything else that was physically demanding and emotionally and mentally not. It this was one of those times when I was deep in the downside of things. What is more, Laurie and my mom were devoting the afternoon to preparing and the evening to throwing a baby shower at our house for our "adopted daughter" Shirley Thunderhorse. With the threat of a dozen women and as many kids, most of them knee high or less, I decided to get out of there—for everyone's spiritual well-being! So I went to our summer camp in Bridgton and was looking forward to a few quiet hours by myself, hopefully followed by a "boys night out" jamming with my hunting buddies. I had arrived at the camp, settled my stuff and was just

beginning to settle myself in, letting the fading light off the lake and the welcoming dark of the forest calm my mind and emotions. I was just beginning to forget I was a minister when the phone rang. It was Laurie telling me that the local funeral director had called and was asking if I could do a memorial service on Monday. Contemplating another lost day off, mixed with wonderings if I knew the person and if I could get through this service without getting too deeply enmeshed in the emotional depths of pain and loss and my own helplessness at not being able to take away their suffering. Then it was that Laurie said, "It's for Katherine Seavey."

The name was vaguely familiar and floated around inside my head for a minute without making any connections. And then it dawned on me: this was the woman I had known as 'Kay' Seavey! She had been in a nursing home for over five years now and her husband Earl had died even before that. Then, in an instant, everything I had been thinking and feeling went out the window; like the spirit moving across the face of the water, everything changed. I was flooded with the memories of sitting in their cozy living room so many times and talking with her and her husband Earl while trying to keep their sixty pound dog off my lap. All the stories they shared, mostly of hunting and

**The Fryeburg New Church aka The Church of the New Jerusalem**

Church Office Hours: 8 a.m.- noon Tuesday - Friday

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early years in Fryeburg long before my time flowed through my mind. Earl told me about all of his favorite hunting places, and they shared their favorite camping and fishing spots. Earl and Kay were deeply involved in the church when I had first arrived over twelve years ago. Earl taught me how to do the pick-ups when we still used to gather stews, chili and pies for the fair cooked in people's homes. At five AM we would drive around town making anywhere from five to ten stops and the deliver everything to the Fair Booth by seven. They had some great stories and both Kay and Earl had lived hard lives. They were both on the small side physically, but Earl was powerfully built and tough as nails and not somebody I would want to wrestle, even just for fun! And Kay had the hard leanness with the look in the eye of pioneer woman who had endured plenty, and who was going to go right on doing so!

I loved Kay and Earl for the hardships they had endured and the experiences they had learned from to become the kindly, caring, helpful, humble people that I knew them as. I had forgotten how grateful I was to them for without even knowing it, they helped me a great deal in the sometimes difficult transition into the position of "the new pastor" in a small town. It was after this phone call for Kay Seavey's funeral, and the four calls I made after that setting up arrangements, that I began to see with my minds eye the many calls that would follow creating the connecting network of people moving out through this community we call the Fryeburg New Church. I saw clearly with a new appreciation that as pastor of this church my role, my purpose, my function, my use, is to be present as a nexus of communication and spiritual connection. And within that, it is to be with people over time and through their moments of transition as a representative of, and an expression of, God's caring love. It is to be a presence for the individuals and families and the community in the times when their foundations are shaken. Just being here day to day over time allows me to serve as a kind of spiritual light house in the dark, foggy and some times stormy times in the lives of the people of this community. My role is to provide a centering presence and an expression of God's

benevolence in the joyful, ecstatic and often emotionally chaotic times of birth and celebration as well as in the painful, fearful and often emotionally devastating times of loss and grief. When I had finished my calls and the arrangements with the various people who served in various functions around the unfolding of this memorial service were complete, I sat back and saw, in a whole new way, just how important the role of "pastor" is.

Given the variety of skills and abilities required, the centrality, the constant visibility, the responsibility and the ongoing emotional engagement with so many different people that serving in this role requires, it is perhaps understandable why this job is not for everyone. Many who sincerely want to serve, simply are not equipped to do what is needed in the right way, some burn out way too soon, and some fail with devastating consequences. But it is also easy to see how rewarding it can be when things go well and how meaningful it can be when we stay centered in God and move through troubled times together, when the community comes together to serve both God and "the neighbor" in sometimes joyful, sometimes sad, but reverent and more importantly relevant ways, and when the community rests in a place of spiritual peace and trust and well-being. These are the rewards of being a minister.

Jack London said something about wanting to burn brightly across the sky, even if it meant burning out quickly. He didn't want to just flicker along unnoticed. To be a good minister, you cannot think like that. If you burn out quickly and are gone, you've damaged yourself and your absence makes you no more use to anyone. The challenge is to burn bright enough and constantly, but only with such an intensity that can be maintained over time. It is on this day when I felt like chucking it all, when I wanted to be anywhere but where I was, wishing that in some way I could be anything but a minister, that because of a phone call for the funeral of a past parishioner, that I see with new eyes and new appreciation what being a minister means.

The death of Kay Seavey has brought me new life. Thanks be to God, to Kay, and to the people of this church community for allowing me to be your minister.

Blessings,

Rev. Ken

## *Winter Schedule*

**Sunday School 9:00 AM**  
**Family Worship 10:00 AM**

### **"The Season Of Advent"**

- 12/2 Communion Sunday**  
"The Prophecies and John The Baptist"  
Malachi 4:1-4; Luke 1:5-19
- 12/9 "Stars and Angels: The Bringers Of Light"**  
Isaiah 60:1-4; Luke 1:26-33; 2:8-14
- 12/16 "Shepherds and Sheep: The Heart Of Love"**  
Isaiah 56:1-8; Luke 2:15-20
- 2:00 PM Sunday School Christmas Pageant and Christmas Party**
- 12/23 "The Stable: From Humble Beginnings"**  
Isaiah 55; Luke 2:27-40
- 12/24 Ecumenical Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**  
**Monday, 7:00 PM at the First Congregational Church**
- 12/30 "The Magi: Better Late Than Never!"**  
Isaiah 62:1-6; Matthew 2:1-12

## *Random Thoughts Upon Returning Home*

I have just returned home from a week visiting in the San Francisco Bay Area. I was visiting our Seminary there which is on the UC Berkeley Campus and part of the Pacific School of Religion (PSR), which is a conglomeration of seminaries from various denominations that share classes, teachers and resources. The Committee on Admissions to the Ministry, better known as CAM, was meeting and I have just begun a three year term serving on that committee. It is our task to twice a year interview students, monitor and evaluate their progress both academically and personally, and assist and guide them in their development and formation of a plan of ministry. It is also our responsibility to give the initial recommendation to the Council of Ministers that they be ordained as ministers of our denomination, or not.

I have been twelve years here in Fryeburg, and twenty years in Maine. I love it here. The small town familiarity, the rural culture of woodstoves, pickup trucks, hunting season, the accessibility of local politics, the family connections that wind throughout the community, canoeing in summer, the colors of fall, the snow of winter, OK, not the mosquitoes and black flies of spring, but other than that I pretty much love it all. But this recent trip to the West Coast reminded me that we here in Fryeburg are definitely rural America, and that there is a great big world out there that is changing rapidly. Granted most of us are hooked into contemporary culture to some degree. If not via the internet, certainly by TV, radio and the newspapers; at the very least by the young people in our family circles. We are aware of how much our culture is changing. Because of technology and increasing levels of interaction, the variety of different ethnic cultures is beginning to blend together like the variety of ingredients that make a soup. It's not all good, but it is by no means all bad. Granted, some young men wear their pants hanging down below just about anything that would keep them up (one of the modern mysteries of physics), and tattoos and piercing jewelry are all commonplace. My own attitude toward the new styles and the new music is alarmingly similar to the attitude my parents had toward my

generation's new styles and music. But along with that, I can see that young people today have a kind of familiarity and if not appreciation of, at least tolerance for, the different kinds of people and cultures that make up our world that has grown significantly from when my own generation was young. The technology of our modern era is bringing the far corners of the world into our living rooms, even here in little ol' Fryeburg.

Twenty-five years ago, when I was in seminary, along with the Biblical theology, the politics of political and economic oppression was the hot topic. 'Liberation theology' was the cutting edge thinking and was mostly centered around responding to the dictatorships of South America and the cold war with Russia. We boycotted grapes and marched against what we understood to be a war of economic colonialism.

Today, in seminary, there is a similar 'liberation theology' that is the hot topic, only now the issue is gender equality and acceptance of sexual orientations that have in the past been marginalized and discriminated against. PSR is one of the more liberal seminaries in the country, located in one of the most liberal cities in the country, and they have opened their doors to those who in the past have been shut out. There is a growing number of gays and lesbians entering in and moving through seminary, and now the "oppressor" is not identified as the male dominated realm of politics, but rather the male dominated realm of business. Straight, white males are the minority at PSR, and if they happen to be masculine, successful, and assertive, it is too often assumed they are oppressors, religious bigots and sexual discriminators. And sadly, they are often dealt with prejudice and pre-conceived assumptions about who they are and what they believe. This, ironically, is the essence of racism and gender bias that is so offensive to those who have suffered bias and discrimination because of their gender orientation!

So after spending time with our students, with students from other denominations, meeting gays and lesbians, having a very nice chat with a black six-foot five, two hundred pounds of muscle seminarian who spent twenty-two years in the navy as a male, but now calls herself

Monica and is a sweet and sincere dear heart, I come away with my belief confirmed that even though we have made progress as a society, there is still a wide spectrum of oppression, discrimination, struggle, freedom, accomplishment, inspiration and success in all areas of human endeavor. And when it comes right down to it, people are still just people, as we have always been and always will be. Each one of us, whether male or female; white, black, Hispanic, oriental, mid-Eastern, Asian gay, straight, bi- or transgender (does anyone ever consider celibacy anymore?), omnivore or vegan; Republican, Democrat or Independent, we must all make the journey of spiritual growth for ourselves, from beginning to end. And all of these categories we use to try to understand our differences are pretty superficial and have very little to do with our spiritual essence. More often than not, the categories that some of us seek to see beyond and yet are the source of so much conflict between us, serve to obscure our view of who the other person really is. And at times they serve to obscure our view of who we really are. Whoever we may be, and whoever we may encounter, it is our relationship with God and how that translates into our ability to love one another (whether we understand one another or not) that defines our humanity. It is still a struggle and there is so much room for growth, but it is in this that we define who we are becoming spiritually. And in this, we are all equally childish in the eyes of God. It was good to learn this again and I am grateful for the experience. I look forward to my next visit out West, and I'm glad I'm at home here in Fryeburg.

Rev. Ken Turley  
Fryeburg, ME  
November, 2007



# Church Report

## The Trustees

The Trustees' next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, December 4, 2007 at 6:30 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

Patricia Swett, <i>Chair</i>	603-939-2262
Cindy Priest	935-3360
Nels Liljedahl	935-3741
Deneane Frost	935-3344
Scott Ferguson	925-3207
Susan Wheaton Logan	603-694-3743
<i>Women's Alliance Representative:</i>	
Sally Harnden	935-2546
<i>Treasurer:</i> Stan Dolley	935-2887

### Nominating Committee for 2008

Billy Holt, Deneane Frost, Susan Logan

## Choir



**Youth Choir** will meet for the Christmas season beginning Wednesday, November 28th at 5:00 at the church. We will learn a song to sing for

the Christmas service on Sunday morning, December 23rd. All children who love to sing are welcome to join us.

**Adult choir** will meet at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays at the church, along with the ecumenical choir. We will rehearse songs for Sunday morning services as well as for the Christmas Eve ecumenical service. Adult choir will also meet at 8:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings this month. We will rehearse until 9:00 and then break while the children rehearse their Christmas pageant.

All are welcome and invited to attend our choir rehearsals. Merry Christmas!

## Women's Alliance

Women's Alliance will meet on **Monday, December 17th at 6:00 p.m for our annual Christmas Party.** The Christmas Party will be a Potluck Supper and Gift Exchange. Gifts should not exceed \$10. Sally Harnden and Edie Leach are serving on the committee.

*Officers for the Women's Alliance are:*

*President .....Jean Cressy*  
*Vice-President.....Sally Harnden*  
*Secretary.....Claudia Graves*  
*Treasurer.....Patty Swett*  
*Chaplain.....Betty Baker*

*...and the winners are:*

The Christmas Cupboard raffle drawing was held on Saturday, November 17<sup>th</sup> at noon. Congratulations to the following winners:

**1<sup>st</sup> place** Raggedy Ann and Andy dolls won by Helen Hill, **2<sup>nd</sup> place** Handmade Afghan won by Patty Swett, **3<sup>rd</sup> place** Folding Tote Bag on Wheels won by Edie Leach, and the **4<sup>th</sup> place** Decorated Christmas Wreath was won by Judy Hatch.

## Welcome New Members!



**Kevin and Bonnie James,** and **Greg and Jenny Huang-Dale** were confirmed into the Lord's New Church and voted into membership at the Fryeburg New Church at the Annual

Church Meeting on October 28, 2007.

Please welcome these two wonderful couples into our Church family!

## Christmas Pageant



Please join us for the Christmas Pageant and see our children reenact the Christmas story! The Pageant will be held at the Fryeburg New Church on **Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m.** It is sure to be

a wonderful presentation!!

## Youth Group

The next youth group is our **Christmas Party!** We'll meet at the Fryeburg New Church on **Sunday, December 16 from 4 - 7 p.m.** *Please bring a wrapped gift to swap.* It should be something that you would like to receive and valued no more than \$10. Our youth group is the same day as the Christmas Pageant (which begins at 2 pm), so you are welcome to come early and enjoy the Sunday School presentation of the Christmas story (directed by Ian), sing carols, and join in the celebration.

Please email me at [kfekete@hotmail.com](mailto:kfekete@hotmail.com) to confirm your attendance so we know how much food to plan on. Also let me know if you need a ride from Portland to Fryeburg. I can meet Portland teens at 1 pm at the N. Windham Hannaford. See you all there!

Kurt

## Christmas Gift Idea

Our limited edition, colored, 11"x14" matted print would make a beautiful and meaningful gift for that special person in your life. Please visit our web site for more information and the mail order form:

<http://www.fryeburgnewchurch.org/orderform.html>

All proceeds from the sale of these prints go into our Capital Fund which makes many worthwhile projects possible. This truly is a gift that keeps on giving!



## Christmas Eve Candlelight Ecumenical Service

Please join us on Monday, December 24 at 7:00 p.m. for the Christmas Eve Ecumenical Service at the First Congregational Church. The church is located at 655 Main Street in Fryeburg. All are welcome.

## Gathering Leaves

You are invited to a weekend of spiritual enlightenment in a caring environment surrounded by six acres of lawns and beautiful trees in the heart of the English countryside.



The third New Church women's gathering is being held at Purley Chase, the newly refurbished British Conference spiritual retreat centre July 11-14, 2008.

The weekend will include worship, workshops, plenary sessions, group sharing and social time. Also included is a day trip to Shakespeare's Stratford-upon-Avon.

Please pick up a brochure, schedule of events, and booking form at the front information table.

## Poinsettias



Orders for poinsettias need to be called in or sent to the office by **December 19<sup>th</sup>**. The cost for each poinsettia, which will only be available in red this year, is \$8.00 each. Office phone: 935-3413



## Welcomers for December

Dec 2 Martha Richardson  
 Dec 9 Sally Gibson  
 Dec 16 Debbie Dolley  
 Dec 23 Debbie Urgese  
 Dec 30 OPEN

## Ushers for December

Dec 2 Jean Cressy and Judy Hatch  
 Dec 9 Kevin and Bonnie James  
 Dec 16 Donnette Barnes and Billy Holt  
 Dec 23 Billy Holt and Greg Hesslein  
 Dec 30 Claudia Graves and Herb Eastman

## Coffee Hour for December

Dec 2 Jody Hesslein  
 Dec 9 Debbie Urgese  
 Dec 16 Bonnie James  
 Dec 23 Sally Harnden  
 Dec 30 Donnette Barnes

### WORSHIP SERVICE ATTENDANCE

NOVEMBER 4 THRU NOVEMBER 18, 2007

Date	Adults	Children
November 4	45	5
November 11	40	3
November 18	45	2



*MERRY CHRISTMAS TO  
 ALL AND HAVE A  
 HAPPY AND HEALTHY  
 NEW YEAR!*

## Calendar for December 2007 (held at our Church unless indicated)



2	Sun	<b>First Sunday of Advent</b> Sunday School Family Worship <b>Communion Sunday</b> <b>Tree Lighting-Bradley Park</b>	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.  6:00 p.m.
4	Tue	<b>Board of Trustees Meeting</b>	6:30 p.m.
5	Wed	Dinner Bell North @ EAS Adult Choir	5:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.
9	Sun	<b>Second Sunday of Advent</b> Sunday School Family Worship	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.
12	Wed	Dinner Bell North @ EAS Adult Choir	5:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.
14	Fri	Rev. Ken @ Maine Council	8:00 a.m.
15	Sat	<b>Christmas Pageant Rehearsal</b>	10:00 a.m.
16	Sun	<b>Third Sunday of Advent</b> Sunday School Family Worship <b>Christmas Pageant</b>	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 2:00 p.m.
17	Mon	<b>Women's Alliance Christmas Party</b>	6:00 p.m.
19	Wed	Rev. Ken at FHCC Dinner Bell North @ EAS	10:30 a.m. 5:00 p.m.
23	Sun	<b>Fourth Sunday of Advent</b> Sunday School Family Worship	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.
24	Mon	<b>Christmas Eve Ecumenical Service @ 1<sup>st</sup> Cong Church</b>	7:00 p.m.
25	Tue	<b>Christmas Day</b> Rev. Ken vacation week	Office closed
26	Wed	Dinner Bell North @ EAS	5:00 p.m.
30	Sun	Sunday School Family Worship <b>Birthday Bank Sunday</b>	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.