



The Chimes

NEWS OF ACTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Stewardship



Four weeks after Faith Promise Sunday, with a small number of pledges outstanding, the results of our 2010 Stewardship campaign seemed clear: Missions and Outreach had surpassed its goal, but Local Ministries was \$75,000 below goal and pledges to date.

On December 2, the Church Council authorized a special appeal to close the gap. Bright orange pledge cards were handed out during both services and our Stewardship committee asked that we consider making an incremental pledge in order to bring us to our budget goal of \$680,000. Such a large shortfall would mean major changes to the programs and staffing of our church.

As I write this update, with your support we have closed the gap. Twenty-four of 256 families chose to increase their pledge to Local Ministries for 2010 in response to the special appeal. If you have not yet pledged, or are able to increase your pledge for 2010, please consider the following. We are a large church, serving about 800 people. We have many programs that help us carry out our mission. We are most effective when we have trained, paid ministers and staff to lead our army of volunteers. If we don't make up this shortfall in Local Ministries, our staffing level will need to be cut and programs will suffer.

Be grateful for what you have. Be generous with what you have. Please make your pledge or added pledge now so that the Trustees can move forward with finalizing our plans for 2010 and present a fiscally sound budget at the Annual Meeting on January 24.—Griff Resor for the Stewardship Committee

Annual Meeting - Don't Miss It!

When: Sunday, January 24, noon
Where: Hartman Hall
Who: All Members of Acton Congregational Church
What: Bagels and Coffee will be provided

Annual Meeting Discussions which will include:

- Reports from our ministers
- Acceptance of the Annual Reports
- Acceptance of recommendations of the Nominating Committee
- A vote on the 2010 annual budget proposed by the Trustees
- Consideration of any other matters concerning the church

January 2010

Minister's Message	2
When You Pray	2
Parish Nurse	3
Church Council	4
New Members	5
Womens Ministries	6-7
Adult Education	10
Calendar	12-13

Minister's Message

"For I will restore health to you, and I will heal you of your wounds, says the Lord."
Jeremiah 30:17

In this year's stewardship campaign, we highlighted our "Believing, Caring, Doing" ministries in a brochure that serves as a handy guide to the many ways we live out our faith in response to God's amazing grace. I'm very pleased to share with you that our caring ministry will be broadened with the addition of a Parish Nurse. Jill Standish has accepted God's call to volunteer her gifts to our congregation.

In consultation with me and the Deacons, Jill has shared with us her faith journey, profes-

sional training, and insights from her Parish Nurse Certification Course. On the following page Jill shares with you her own story and clarification on her role as Parish nurse.

I feel we are richly blessed. Jill will serve as a resource to our clergy and Stephen Ministers, and to the congregation at large. Her special role will be to help us integrate our faith, healing, and well being. On January 31, the Deacons will commission Jill in this ministry. Keep an eye on *The Chimes* for further developments as we integrate Jill into our caring ministries.

With you in Christ,
Pastor Andy

When You Pray

"In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."
- Philippians 4:6



Please put this sheet in a place where you will be reminded to pray for others, rejoicing in God's faithfulness. We urge you to send notes and cards. Please pray for...

- o Pam Lowe and her family in the death of her father, John Friedmann, on December 14
- o The family of Pat Dickson, Mabel Grekula's niece, who died unexpectedly after surgery
- o The Small family in the death of Rich's father, Donald Small, who passed away on November 18
- o The Ely family in the death of Margaret's sister, Virginia
- o Mary Spinosa-Wilson and the Spinosa and Wilson families in the death of Mary's mother, Mary Spinosa
- o Former members Paul and Suzan Huntwork, in the death of Paul's mother, Gladys
- o Pauline Jennings, Pam Gillispie's mother, as she recovers from surgery on December 14
- o Those of our congregation and the wider community who are recovering from surgery or dealing with serious illness, including Carolyn Wiseley, Jean Schoch, John Tuttle, David Smith, and the Rev. Colin Baxter
- o Wisdom for our President as he formulates Afghanistan-Pakistan strategies that commit additional troops to the war in Afghanistan, and for the safety of our Armed Forces serving there.

Church Weather Policy - Be Safe, Use Your Judgment

Look for weather-related cancellations on Boston TV channels 4, 5, and 7 under "Acton Congregational Church."

Detailed information will be available on the church website, in the top banner. In the event of a Snow Emergency the church will be closed (this includes weekends and weekdays).

Weekday events:

If the Acton-Boxborough Schools are closed, all day-time programs will be cancelled.

Evening programs/meetings will be left up to each group.

For choir directors and group leaders: To post a meeting cancellation, please email the church at office@actonc.org and email your group directly.

Sunday morning worship services:

We will hold services unless there is a Snow Emergency for our area.

Sunday School cancellation, indicated by "No Religious Classes" on the website, will be decided by the Coordinator of Christian Education and the Senior Minister. Check the banner at the top of the website.

If the streets have not been plowed by 7 AM and 6 or more inches of snow have fallen since midnight, we may cancel the first service, but hold the second service.

For information about cancellation of the first service check the church website or phone the church for a recorded message.

Greetings From Your Parish Nurse

I am honored to volunteer to serve as Acton Congregational Church's first Parish Nurse. Many of you know me. For those who don't, my husband Ted and I joined this church in 2003. We took the marriage course during our engagement, married in October 2003, and have since taken Alpha, Beta, and Stephen Ministry training.

I have always viewed each person as a mind, body, and spirit, believing they are all intertwined and that all the parts need nurturing to be healthy and whole. As a Stephen Minister, I found that many medical questions came up and often thought a resource person could be beneficial. I realized parish nursing was a wonderful way to combine nursing and faith in a holistic ministry and thus began my calling and journey to learn about this possibility.

Parish nursing represents a return to healthcare that focuses on the whole person, with an emphasis on wellness, disease prevention, and health promotion. The role of a parish nurse is one of helping to foster physical, emotional, spiritual, and social harmony with the goals of achieving health and healing.

Parish nursing is rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition and is consistent with the basic assumption that we care for self and others as an expression of God's love.

Today, there are approximately 12,000 parish nurses in the U.S. and many more worldwide. In the mid 1990's, the American Nurses Association recognized parish nursing as a specialty in nursing. In 1998, standards of practice were published and a basic training course was established.

The roles of the Parish Nurse are:

- H** health advisor
- E** educator
- A** advocate/resource person
- L** listener/liaison for faith and community
- T** teacher/supporter
- H** healer of body, mind, and spirit

The role does not include such things as diagnosing illnesses, changing dressings, or administering medications. A Parish Nurse is not a visiting nurse or a homecare nurse.

So, how am I qualified for this volunteer position? I have been in health care for 33 years. I am a Registered Nurse with Bachelor's degrees in nursing and psychology.

I am also a Registered Dental Hygienist. I am a certified holistic nurse and also have a certificate in spirituality health and healing. I attended Anna Maria College for my parish nursing course, finishing in June 2009 and being commissioned at that time. I am a member of the Christian Nurses Fellowship organization and the Palliative Care and Hospice Nursing Association.

Professionally, I have worked the past thirteen years in geriatrics and psychiatry. I am currently employed as a full-time nurse on the Geriatric Neuropsychiatry Unit (dementia/Alzheimer) at Mclean Hospital in Belmont. I am a member of the Palliative Care Committee, where my role is providing spiritual care to our patients and their families. My activities include listening, praying, reading scripture, and/or contacting clergy to visit. Prior to Mclean, I worked for nine years on the Geriatric Psychiatric Unit at Metro West Medical Center in Natick. I have also worked in the community as a homecare nurse and at an adult day health program. Before my nursing career I worked twenty years in dentistry as a Registered Dental Hygienist. I feel my varied background will be an asset to the Parish Nurse role.

My vision is to be available on a part-time basis to listen to members of the congregation, answer questions, offer resources, and educate about wellness. Initially I will provide a monthly newsletter on a specific health topic. I see the role then evolving in response to the congregation's needs.

I am honored to be given this opportunity to serve as Jesus asked of us. I found the following prayer to be an important spiritual component of my role as a nurse:

"O God, who alone can grace my spirit with the gift of a compassionate heart, teach me to care. Help me to reach out to those who are in pain, to those who are lonely, to those who are afraid. Bless my nursing that I may become an instrument of your tender understanding and your love for those I serve. Let me be a vessel of compassion and caring in your name. Amen.

Happy Holidays and many blessings! —*Jill Standish, Parish Nurse*

Church Council Update

The Church Council spent much of its November meeting and part of December's meeting discussing and finalizing a new plan that will enable smooth communication among all music staff, and from music personnel to the church office and professional staff. The work has also redefined the role of the Music committee. In order to complete this project, representatives from the Music committee worked with Church Council and its advisory group to draft a proposal which was implemented in December. This document will be available after the holidays.

In early December, Church Council met with Church Administrator Cindy Schimpf, Brian Schimpf, chair of Deacons,

and Ken Dow, chair of Trustees to offer support to the Trustees as they begin to look at the 2010 budget in terms of the shortfall in local ministries. A plan of action was discussed. Council asked Stewardship to begin a second appeal on December 6. Following that, members of the Coordinating Council (committee chairs) and Trustees came together to talk about the process. The final budget will be put together by the Trustees and will be voted at the Annual Meeting on January 24, 2010. The Council will spend some time in 2010 looking at long term solutions to the shortfall trend in pledges in recent years.

—Char Floyd, Moderator



Meet-the-Ministers Coffee Planned for January 10

The Welcoming Committee is pleased to invite newcomers and visitors to enjoy coffee and coffee cake with the ministers between services on Sunday, January 10 in the Olmsted parlor. This is a wonderful opportunity to become acquainted with Andy, Holgie, and Barbara.—Pam Gillispie, Coordinator of Lay Ministries

UCC Update to Daily Lectionary

A lectionary is a collection of readings from the Scriptures, arranged and intended for proclamation during worship. The practice of assigning particular readings to each Sunday and festival day began in the fourth century, and has continued through the history of the Christian Church.

In 1992, an ecumenical consultation of liturgical scholars and denominational representatives from the United States and Canada, including the United Church of Christ, produced the *Revised Common Lectionary* and in 2005 published the *Revised Common Lectionary Daily Readings*, which provides weekday readings that relate to the Sun-

day Scripture lessons. While the Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ (MAC/UCC) posted resource for Sunday readings comes from the *Revised Common Lectionary*, the daily readings available on their web site pre-date the *Revised Common Lectionary* and so therefore have not necessarily related to the Sunday readings or meshed with other lectionary-based resources.

Starting in November, the MAC/UCC has switched to the *Revised Common Lectionary Daily Readings*. See the link on ACC's home page (www.actonc.org) or www.macucc.org/education/lectionary.htm to access the new

resource. Both versions are available for November (to complete the church year), after which only the *Revised Common Lectionary Daily Readings* will be posted.

These same lectionary readings are also available for download into Microsoft Outlook calendars and for syncing with PDAs (for a very modest \$5.00 fee) at www.ucc.org/lcm/e-calendar.html.

New Members Welcomed on December 6

We welcomed three new members during the first service on December 6. They are: Karen Regan who has lived in Acton for 6 years and comes to us from St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in Marlboro, MA. Karen works full-time providing software technical support, and is mother to Kaila, who was confirmed here last year. She has lived in various parts of New England and Long Island, and when she has time, enjoys skiing, yoga, home remodeling, and gardening. She finds the people of the church are friendly and welcoming. Please introduce yourself to Karen.

Heather Plate grew up in this church and is now returning with her own family, husband Michael, and 9-month-old twins Ella and Logan. She is the daughter of Joe and Robin Murphy. Heather is a realtor with a local agency. She says our church was a big part of her childhood and wants her children to have the same experiences she enjoyed. Since she looks a lot like her mother you will not be able to miss her.

Please welcome Heather home and get to know her again.

More than likely you have already seen Janet Dwyer around the church. She is the mother of members Pam Alcaide and Karen Tower. Janet has joined the group who assembles the Sunday morning bulletins and prepares *The Chimes* for mailing. Although she grew up in a UCC church in Connecticut, Janet comes to us from The United Methodist Church in Wayne,

New Jersey. Janet's late husband was a surgeon in New Jersey and she is a retired registered nurse. Please give Janet a warm welcome.



New members: Karen Regan, Heather Plate, and Janet Dwyer

Quiz

Do you have a warm smile for those you meet?
 Would you consider serving your church one or two months a year?
 The Ushers are looking for a few good people. Please sign up on the sheet found on the Opportunity Table or call Harry Mink, 978-263-2341.

Appreciating our Volunteers: Cornerstone Thrift Shop



Thanks

I tease Rev. Barbara that she is the best thing that ever happened to the Cornerstone Thrift Shop, as she heads down to the shop each Friday morning to spend a little pastoral time with our volunteers. I'm sure they appreciate her care, but I've also noticed that Rev. Barbara generally has some excellent bargains in hand when she returns from these visits.

I remember when the Cornerstone Thrift Shop was started more than five years ago – I thought of it as a tremendous amount of volunteer effort that wasn't likely to produce suffi-

cient results for the effort. OK, occasionally I'm wrong.

In addition to the amazing financial support that The Cornerstone provides the church's ministries and missions, the folks that staff the retail shop and do all of the "behind the scenes" work required have a true ministry. I've lost count of how many times someone from the community has commented to me that it is the only affordable way to clothe his or her family. Others of us who are more fortunate love the bargains too.

One more thing impresses me about this group – they have de-

veloped wonderful friendships and a true fondness for the shop. Karen Green visited recently from South Carolina on a Sunday morning and asked me to open the door just so she could look around and enjoy her memories of working there.

If you haven't been (or haven't been lately), stop by The Cornerstone Thrift Shop on Monday, Friday, or Saturday from 10 AM - 2 PM and check out the bargains – and if you happen to see a volunteer who isn't too busy serving a client or stocking shelves, say a big "thanks" for all that she or he does for the church.—Cindy Schimpf, Church Administrator

Women's Ministries Offerings

Faith Sharing - A new study begins in January.

We all have busy lives and are pulled in many directions. Perhaps you have even made a New Year's resolution to try to make more time for yourself or simplify your life. Faith Sharing will offer a study entitled "Living a Life of Balance" beginning with an introduction and opening coffee on Thursday, January 14, at 9:45 AM. If you have been contemplating joining Faith Sharing this is a great time to give it a try.

In the study Marilyn Nyberg writes "When we consider the life of Jesus and the example He left us, would you say He was balanced? You will remember He sometimes moved away from the clamoring needs of the crowd so that He might be alone... God means for you to live in equilibrium and balance." We hear from the experts about balanced life-styles—that we need proper rest, nutrition, and exercise. It's true enough that we benefit from such things, but we also need spiritual balance.

Come and join us – just as you are. Consider God's word in scripture, listen, reflect, share with

others, and pray — as we each grow through our own spiritual journey. Faith Sharing meets on Thursdays in Hartman Hall from 9:45 - 11:15 AM. Childcare is provided.

Not sure about the "sharing" part of Faith Sharing? At our meetings we enjoy coffee and fellowship, pray, sing, learn about the lesson and discuss it informally. Participation in the discussion is optional – some members jump right in with their thoughts while others quietly listen. All are welcome! For more information contact Carol DiCristina at WM@actonc.org.

Dessert Night

Take a break and relax at dessert night on Friday, January 29 at 7:30 PM. This year Kim Kembel will host as we gather at her house for an evening of delicious desserts and a chance to chat with friends both old and new. Sign up on the Opportunity Table or by email to Lisa Vingerhoet at WM@actonc.org.

Continued on next page



Away In January

As some of you know, I will be away from January 10 - 17 attending a Leader Training course for the Stephen Ministry Pastoral Care Program in Orlando, FL. Upon completion of this training I hope to be more fully equipped to support the Stephen Ministers who serve this congregation. In reality, it will help me in all of my work. During worship on November 22, I was commissioned and blessed to this work by all the current Stephen ministers, Pastor Andy, and the congregation. I am grateful to this congregation for their wise support of pastoral care, lay and ordained, at Action Congregational Church, and their support of me in this new endeavor.

Looking Ahead to the Women's Retreat in April

"Everyday Sacred - An Exploration of Celtic Spirituality"

As I get to be away this month for a time of learning and renewal, I invite any and all of the women of the church – members and friends – to consider the opportunity to come away for a weekend retreat that I will lead April 28 - 30 at the Barbara C. Harris Retreat Center in Greenfield, NH, www.bchcenter.org.

The Psalmists of the Hebrew Bible saw the hand of God at work in the wonders of nature. During this retreat we will explore some of the many ways the natural world speaks of God, brings us to God, and helps us to come to a prayerful place.

Sponsored by Women's Ministries for many years, these retreats offer the possibility for Sabbath time, vibrant fellowship, spiritual exploration rest, renewal, and guilt-free time away. More details will be forthcoming from Women's Ministry next month; I just wanted to give you the basics so you might begin planning. Scholarships are available and are confidential. You may also call me with any questions at 978-979-0704. Something to look forward to!

—Reverend Barbara

With the rising of the sun
 life rises again within me, O God
 In the dawning of the morning light
 you lead me from the mists of the night
 into the clarity of the day.
 In the new light of this day
 bring me to a clearer knowing
 of the mystery that first bore me from the dark.
 Bring me to a clearer knowing
 of the love from which all life is born.
 —J Philip Newell, *Celtic Benediction*

Womens Ministries, Continued

UCC New England Women's Conference

"Together Building Bridges" — Burlington, VT, March 12 - 14. A weekend of workshops, keynote speakers, worship, music and fellowship. Interested in attending as part of a group from our church? Contact Reverend Barbara Aiello at Barbara@actonc.org. For more information about the conference, www.uccwomenscelebration.org

Spring Brunch

Saturday March 6. Look for details in *The Chimes*.

Interested in volunteering to help with this event? Contact Aimee Bainbridge at WM@actonc.org.

Women's Retreat on April 30 - May 1. The speaker at the retreat will be the Reverend Barbara Aiello. Watch *The Chimes* for more details.

Movie Night to Screen Story of Dominican Minor-Leaguer

Sugar (2008) is sure to be a crowd-pleaser. It's the popular and critically-acclaimed story of Miguel Santos, whose journey from a Dominican baseball academy to the minor leagues takes him through the deserts of Arizona to the cornfields of Iowa. Current baseball greats say this fictional film captures their own experience amazingly well, and certainly the film is timely for us as we gather support for our own mission trip to the Dominican Republic.

Sugar is a viewing pleasure, and we hope you'll join us on Saturday, January 9. The movie will start at 7 PM in the Appleton Youth Room.—
Cynthia Williams



Hosmer Children's Library

Did you know that the church has a children's library? The brightly painted room at the end of Hartman Hall is the Hosmer Children's Library and everyone is welcome to come and browse the fabulous selection of Christian themed children's books. There are books for all ages from toddlers to young teens. Many holiday books may be found in our collection.

Each year we add new titles purchased in honor of our Sunday School teachers, so the library shelves are bursting with great books. If you find a one you would like to borrow please sign it out in the notebook located on the right hand shelf in the library. When returning your book check your name off and leave it in the "returns' basket." Sunday school teachers should

also feel welcome to bring their classes to use the library. The worship service is piped into the library. If for any reason you need to step out of the Sanctuary but would like to still hear the service please feel free to come up Hartman Hall and have a seat in the library.

Fellowship and Training Event for Sunday School Parents and Teachers

On Saturday, January 23, from 11 AM - 2:30 PM, the Children's Christian Education Committee is sponsoring a fellowship and training event for Sunday School parents and teachers. The event is called Bridging the Gap between Church and Home. Attendees will be treated to a delicious brunch followed by our featured speaker Elsa Marshall. Elsa serves as a national UCC Christian Education consultant. She is a commissioned minister of Christian Education and commissioned Minister of Youth Ministry. She serves locally with the UCC Mass Conference and the Maple Street Church in Danvers. Elsa has boundless energy and passion for Christian Education. Her stories and ideas will inspire you in your role as a parent and as a volunteer teacher. Elsa's talk will help us all understand the crucial connection between church and home.

Two 45 minute workshop sessions will be offered in the afternoon. Three workshops will be offered at each session allowing participants to choose the ones that interest them the most. Choose from the following topics during session one: Growing in Your Own Faith, Sunday School Games and Fidget Busters and the Bible Scholar Program. The topics for session two are: The Church Seasons, Classroom Management, and Teachable Moments.

The event will conclude with a short worship service led by Holgie Choi. Please make plans to join us for this inspiring event; you will not want to miss some of the special surprises the Committee is planning. Registration forms are available on the Opportunity Table and on the Church website. Childcare will be available.—*Merrill Noble, Coordinator of Children's Christian Education*

Family Meet and Greet Off to a Good Start

On December 3, seven families met for coffee, juice, and a simple craft project in the youth room between services at 10 AM. This is the first in a monthly offering to help families with younger children (kindergarten or younger as an average) become acquainted with other families in the church. Our next "Meet and Greet" will be held on February 7. Dads are most welcome, and kids are encouraged to bring a favorite toy to play with. For more information, contact Cydney Cotter, Deb Henderlong, or Laura Krieger.

Buildings and Grounds Update

My brother recently asked me what it is like to be responsible for the church's buildings and grounds. I said, "Imagine owning a 28,000 square foot house, some parts of which were built 178 years ago, with 11 toilets!" He got the picture.

I thought I'd start the new year by briefing you on repairs and improvements we completed in 2009. You may have read about or experienced some of these. During 2009 we dealt with roof leaks above the Adams Canopy entrance and above the Narthex. We are working on expanding the heating cables on the roof above the Woodbury entrance to avoid the ice dams we experienced last winter. Most of the toilets in the building had necessary repairs to the flushing mechanisms. We repaired a leaking pipe in the main ladies' bathroom. We had the bluestone

lowered and leveled at the Woodbury entrance (from the Bond Courtyard) and had the steeple and front façade of the church scraped and painted. We are working on an electrical problem in the Sanctuary right now, and our electrician will also be replacing worn-out ballasts in the Parlor and in rooms in the Education wing.

With wonderful volunteer help, we were able to paint the Grimshaw room and replace the carpeting, and the room is now more effectively utilized. We have a new Cornerstone Thrift Shop sign at the parking lot entrance and the minister's names on the Concord Road entrance are new.

The Adams Canopy (parking lot) entrance door failed during the year and, after new hardware, is finally working well. The exterior door close to the

day care center and the one leading in from the patio were repaired in December.

In the Walker House, we replaced a radiator and had another repaired, and work is underway to replace the entrance door and sidelight windows that face the church.

We have accomplished a great deal of work, but of course as any home owner does, we have a long list of repairs and improvements waiting in the wings. Thank you to our Buildings and Grounds Trustees, handymen, painters, and to all who helped keep our church campus in good repair and working order over the last year.—*Cindy Schimpf, Church Administrator*

Let's Celebrate!

(If your special day is not listed, and we'd like to include you! Please e-mail your information to: pam@actonc.org.)

January Birthdays

3	Randy Corke	21	Justin Vingerhoet
4	Skip Haase	28	Betsy Bentley
	Bob Puffer		Jenna Newcombe
	Beth Reid	29	Dan Dyer
	Lisa Rose		Rich Small
9	Alyssa Makris	30	Paul Liguori
10	Beth Gillispie		Sandy Panicali
	William Holtz		
11	Perry Makris		
14	Rachel Schillhammer		
16	Bethany VanEmburch		
19	Harry Mink		
20	Delaney Sullivan		



Bell Choir Reaches out to Robbins Brook Inn

On Monday, December 7, the Bell Choir had a wonderful time sharing their musical gifts with the residents of Robbins Brook Inn. Complete with bells, tables, pads, and chimes, they played a small Christmas concert for residents including long time Bell Choir member Ann Ridley who has moved there. Nancy Barnes also led the group in singing Christmas carols. It was nice to share the bells with the residents on behalf of the church. Many of those living at Robbins Brook are not able to get out, and the Bell choir was able to bring a little holiday cheer to them. A special unexpected highlight for the choir was the presence of the local cable TV station who recorded the concert. We hope to see the choir's smiling faces on Channel 8.



Adult Education Forum on Science and Faith

We live in a scientific world. Most of our media and educational systems look to the teachings of science to explain all that we know. How do we Christians learn from these teachings while being faithful to our belief in God? Are there really great conflicts between these understandings or do they support one another?

Come to the next Adult Education Forum on Wednesday, January 13, 7 - 9 PM, and hear the insights of our very own members who work in scientific professions. Scientists Marsha Wilcox, Russell Petter, Jeff McHarg, and Dwight Baker will offer insights into their work, how it has deepened their faith and where they have had to

struggle as Christians in a scientific world. Rev. Armstrong will speak to the church's often conflicted relationship with science from a theological perspective. The panel presentation will be followed by questions and answers.

This Forum will be a wonderful opportunity for members who are also scientists, for those who want to grow in their understanding of the topic, and for our youth who learn at the feet of scientists every day at school. We begin with refreshments at 7 PM. The panel will commence in the Grimshaw Room at 7:30 PM. We look forward to seeing you there.—*The Adult Christian Education Committee*

Church Leadership Meeting

Deacon, Trustee, and Coordinating Council Meeting: February 6, 9 AM – 2 PM

This is for all incoming and active deacons, trustees, committee chairs and church leaders/officers. Please make time for this important leadership opportunity.

Alpha Informational Dinner

On Monday, January 11, the Adult Christian Education Committee is sponsoring a free dinner to explain the details of the upcoming Alpha Course. It will run from 6:30 – 8:30 PM in Hartman Hall, with childcare provided upon request. (In case of stormy weather, the snow date is Monday, January 18.)

Alpha is a 10-week program that presents some of the central teachings of the Christian faith in a way that is freshly packaged

for today. The DVD presentation and the whole structure of the course help participants investigate the issues in a low-key, friendly, and fun environment. Alpha is for those who have little or no knowledge of the Christian faith, as well as those who wish to explore their faith more deeply.

The dinner involves no further commitment; it is simply a chance to see if Alpha might be for you. Feel welcome to bring

friends, whether they have any church background or not, to hear how and why Alpha is spreading so rapidly around the world.

For the sake of the cooks, there is a sign up sheet for the dinner on the Opportunity Table or contact Kathleen Liguori with any questions at 978-692-2812 or kliguori@comcast.net.

A Notes of Thanks

Thank You, Cub Scout Pack 70!

A sincere thank you to the boys of Cub Scout Pack 70, their leaders (including our own Kevin Bolen, Assistant Cubmaster), and their parents for their recent efforts on our behalf. About a dozen scouting families cleared leaves from all around the church, including the play ground, parking lots, and the Walker house. Leaves were piled in the back part of the lot for pickup by our landscapers. When their Saturday date (November 14) was rained out, the group gamely arrived on Sunday afternoon after worship services were over and set to work.

Acton Congregational Church has sponsored Pack 70 for many years, and the group regularly meets in our building.

Mitten Tree

Thank you to the many people who participated in the Mitten Tree giving this year. We were able to brighten what would have otherwise been a bleak Christmas for two hundred and sixty individuals. Your Mitten Tree gifts served children through Minuteman Arc, Lazarus House, and the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Organization, and adults through the Acton Council on Aging and Eliot House.

New to the program this year were a sign up sheet for people to volunteer to take unclaimed mittens at the end of our drive, and a \$25 limit on gift cards. The dollar limit was set in response to requests from the agencies that the gift cards they receive be more uniform in amount.

We welcome your feedback about these changes and as well as any other suggestions to improve this continually expanding program. Please contact Dick Bersani at rabersani@aol.com, 603-759-1356 or Judy Bell at judyymbell@yahoo.com, 978 263-5921 with your suggestions.



Acton Food Pantry Drive

Acton Congregational Church will sponsor a drive during January to help with current needs at the Acton Food Pantry, currently located at St. Matthew's Church. Please bring your offerings to the Glynda Smith Reception Center or leave them on Sundays under the coat racks at the middle level (near the name badges) during the month of January.

I asked what items the Pantry most needs right now. Although they are in need of most items, the following list are the items most requested:

- 100% fruit juice (any size cans or small boxes)
- Cold or hot cereal
- Canned fruit
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly
- Canned black beans
- Toilet paper

Thanks for whatever you can do to help.

Installation of Committee Members

If you are a new committee member this year or are a returning officer, plan to be in church on January 31. The installation of all newly elected committee members and officers will be held at both services.

A.C.C. Weekly Activities

Sunday	8:45-9:45 AM	Worship, Nursery, Sunday School (2-year-olds through Junior High)
	9:45 AM	Prayer after Worship, 113 Conference Room
	9:45 AM	Fellowship Hour, Hartman Hall
	10:00-10:30 AM	Children's Choir Rehearsal, 202 Classroom
	10:45-11:45 AM	Worship, Nursery, Sunday School (2-year-olds through Junior High)
	11:45 AM	Prayer after Worship, 113 Conference Room
	11:45 AM	Fellowship Hour, Hartman Hall
	5:00 PM	JHYF Meeting, Appleton Youth Room
	6:00 PM	SHYF Meeting, Appleton Youth Room
	6:30 PM	Jr. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
Monday	10 AM-2 PM	Cornerstone Thrift Shop, L04/L05 Priest Room
	6:30 PM	8 th Grade Confirmation, G01 Classroom
	7:30 PM	9 th Grade Confirmation, G01 Classroom
Tuesday	7:00-9:00 PM	Bell Choir Rehearsal, Grimshaw Room
	7:00-9:00 PM	Tuesday Evening Bible Study, 203 Olmsted Parlor
Wednesday	9:00 AM	Bulletin Deadline, 102 Church Office
	7:00 PM	Youth Discipleship, Holgie's Office
Thursday	7:00-9:30 PM	Stephen Ministry Supervision, (see hall calendar)
	9:45 AM	Faith Sharing, Hartman Hall
	7:00-9:30 PM	Senior Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
Friday	6:45-8:00 AM	Friday AM Prayer Breakfast, 202 Classroom
	10 AM-2 PM	Cornerstone Thrift Shop, L04/L05 Priest Room
Saturday	10 AM-2 PM	Cornerstone Thrift Shop, L04/L05 Priest Room

January 2010 Calendar of Events

Please join us for worship on Sunday mornings. Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month. The following does not include events/activities that take place weekly. **Please see the hall calendars before every meeting to confirm your meeting room.**

Mon., Jan. 1		New Year's Holiday – Office Closed
Sun., Jan. 3	9:45 AM	History of the Bible, Grimshaw Room
Mon., Jan. 4	7:30 PM	One Voice Rehearsal, 204 Music Room
Tues., Jan. 5	7:30 PM	Deacons Meeting, 202 Classroom
Wed., Jan. 6	7:30 PM	Church Council Meeting, 113 Conference Room
Fri., Jan. 8	9:00 AM	Employment Ministry, Grimshaw Room
Sat., Jan. 9	6:30 PM	Movie Night at the Church, Appleton Youth Room <i>Sugar</i>
Sun., Jan. 10	9:45 AM	History of the Bible, Grimshaw Room
	10:00 AM	Meet The Ministers Coffee, Olmsted Parlor
	12:00 N	Prayer Shawl Meeting, Olmsted Parlor
Mon., Jan. 11	6:00 PM	Alpha Course and Dinner, Hartman Hall
	7:30 PM	Missions and Outreach Meeting, L01 Kaye Room
Tues., Jan. 12	8:30 AM	Safe Church Meeting, 113 Conference Room
	7:30 PM	Trustee Meeting, 202 Classroom
	7:30 PM	Coordinating Council Meeting, Appleton Youth Room
Wed., Jan 13	7:00 PM	Adult Ed Forum, Olmsted Parlor
Sat., Jan. 16	7:30 AM	Men's Breakfast, Hartman Hall
Mon., Jan. 18	6:00 PM	Alpha Course and Dinner, Hartman Hall
Tues., Jan. 19	9:00 AM	Chimes Deadline
	7:15 PM	Youth Committee Meeting, 113 Conference Room
Wed., Jan. 20	7:00 PM	Adult CE Meeting, G01 Classroom
Fri., Jan. 22	9:00 AM	Employment Ministry, Grimshaw Room
Sat., Jan. 23	10:00 AM	Teacher's Training Workshop, Hartman Hall
Sun., Jan. 24	9:45 AM	History of the Bible, Grimshaw Room
	12:00 PM	Annual Meeting, Hartman Hall
Mon., Jan. 25	6:00 PM	Alpha Course and Dinner, Hartman Hall
	7:15 PM	Stewardship Meeting, 201 Classroom
	7:30 PM	One Voice Rehearsal, 204 Music Room
Tues., Jan. 26	7:15 PM	Children's CE Meeting, 201 Classroom
	7:15 PM	Sanctuary Guild Meeting, 202 Classroom
	7:30 PM	Music Committee Meeting, 113 Conference Room
	7:30 PM	Personnel Committee, G01 Classroom
Fri., Jan. 29	5:00 PM	JHYF Winter Retreat, Offsite
	7:00 PM	Women's Ministry Dessert and Coffee, at the home of Kim Kembel
Sun., Jan. 31	9:45 AM	History of the Bible, Grimshaw Room



The mission of The Chimes is to equip and encourage readers to participate fully in the life of Acton Congregational Church.

Submissions are welcome. All articles will be edited for style and length. Complete article submission guidelines and deadline schedule are available from the church office.

Senior Minister: Andrew Armstrong; Associate Minister for Youth: Holgie Choi; Minister of Visitation: Barbara Aiello; Moderator: Char Floyd

Secretary: Billie Kinch; Editors: Molly Mink and Barbara Skaggs

**February Deadline:
Tues. January 19, 9 AM**
**March Deadline:
Tues. Feb. 16, 9 AM**

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