

The Courier

Semi-monthly Newsletter

November 15, 2007

www.mhcc-ucc.org

CITY MISSION SOCIETY



Christmas Shop Gift Suggestions

Please avoid food or very small items
ONLY new items are accepted.

You can help by donating gifts at church; the list of needed items follows:

INFANTS: Snowsuits, layette sets, sleepwear, blankets, sweaters, hats, 'onesies', rattles & soft toys including **stuffed animals without button eyes.**

GIRLS 2-12: Ethnic dolls, doll clothes, games, books, educational toys, craft kits, stuffed animals, sweaters, socks, warm jackets, hats & mittens.

GIRLS 13-16: Warm coats & jackets, backpacks, books, sweaters, tops, purses, sweatshirts (especially with sports team logos), jewelry, sleepwear, hats, gloves, accessories, & cosmetics. *Gift cards* are also great for teens.

BOYS 2-12: Toy cars/trucks, games, action figures, balls, books, preschool & educational toys, craft kits, sweaters, sweatshirts, turtlenecks, socks, warm jackets, hats & mittens. Clothing should generally be "large".

BOYS 13-16: Soccer balls, footballs, basketballs, waffle ball sets, games, models, books, sweaters, sweatshirts

(especially with sports team logos), shirts, jackets, warm jackets, socks, backpacks & gym bags, hats & gloves. *Gift cards* are also great for teens. Clothing should generally be "large" or "extra-large".

WOMEN: Sweaters, gloves, hats, scarves, purses, perfume, jewelry, bath robes, night gowns and pajamas, afghans or fleece blankets.

MEN: Jackets, shirts, sweaters, gloves, hats, wallets, sweatshirts, hair clippers, socks, electric razors T-shirts and underwear.

PREFERRED ITEMS: Stylish gifts for teens and extra large winter coats. We are also recommending \$15+ gift cards from CVS, Walgreen's, Target, etc. which can be used for all age groups.

**Items should be dropped off in
the Church Office or at
Sunday Worship no later than
December 2nd**

NEW ORLEANS MISSION GROUP



Mission Trip

On Oct. 28th the New Orleans Mission group shared the story of their July trip during the sermon time. Many people who heard it said that they were

surprised to learn that there was still so much recovery work to be done down there. Such comments highlight the need for better understanding, starting within our own congregation. The slides and speakers on Sunday outlined both the devastation and hardship experienced residents of New Orleans, and the great need for continuing help. For those who may have missed the presentation, here is an excerpt. These are Nicole Goodhue's words:

They say that the second time around doing something is always better. You know what to expect, you're an old pro, you have the upper hand. But for me, the second time around was no better than the first. Coming back to New Orleans, a year later, I guess I might have expected too much progress to have been made, and to say that I was disappointed with the conditions in the city, is an understatement.

It was the last stop of the day for John's group on Monday. We had just spent the morning packing up boxes for another home owner whose top floor had not been touched. At this point I was getting really aggravated because the work I had done was wicked easy and I felt like I was useless. We pulled up to Ms. Ingrid's house and I honestly just

wanted to do what we had to do and get out of there. We were told that we just needed to move a few boxes and a couch so that the plumbers could get in and do their work. We met Ms. Ingrid, and she told us her survivor story.

She was on her way to church when she looked up at the sky and knew that she had to evacuate. She packed the car and she, her cancer stricken brother, and Fred the Rottweiler made their way to Georgia. She stayed at a hotel and the only food that the three of them lived off of was whatever was served at the continental breakfast that morning. On an excursion to Walmart, Ms. Ingrid ended up getting rushed to the hospital as her gallbladder had burst.

While in the hospital she was so worried about her brother that she got one of the nurses to locate him and they ended up going to check up on him and Fred. She was reunited with her brother and Fred, but their time together would be shortened, as her brother fell very ill, and passed away. She used her insurance money from the hurricane to ship his body back to New Orleans for proper burial. However, her home, and her church were completely destroyed.

After hearing this story I have never been so motivated to move a few boxes in my life. While the work we did for her may seem comparable to chores at home, we saved her about \$300 dollars by doing the labor ourselves.

Ms. Ingrid was so grateful she introduced us to Fred, who is the sweetest Rottweiler I've ever met. Fred is no spring chicken and it pains me to think of what is going to happen to her when

he is no longer there and she is left alone in her FEMA trailer. Ms. Ingrid let us into her trailer which is nothing more than a camper. She is confined to "x" amount of space and yet her spirit is so strong and undefeated.

My experience in comparison to last year was very different. Instead of all my energy and emotion being poured into one person, one job, my week was spent doing odd jobs for a bunch of different people, many of whom I will never meet. But one thing is the same: every single person has a story and wants to be heard.

I speak to you today not just to convey the idea of helping others, but to ask for your support as I express my frustration. It makes me so mad to think that I live in one of the richest nations in the world and yet the gulf coast of our United States has turned into a mini third world country. What makes me even more irate is the ignorance around the issue. It has been over two years since Hurricane Katrina hit and the attention around the issue has diminished. Since the media only covers the story on the anniversary of the hurricane and the US government is not drawing attention to it, I have to.

I am serviced by the people I have encountered as their advocate. While I may not be able to rebuild their homes, by sharing their stories with you I hope that I can inspire some of you to help however you are able. By speaking today I hope that I can light a fire within this congregation to become educated on the conditions in the gulf coast. I hope that I can be the pebble to your pond, and

together we can create a ripple effect, spreading their stories and hopping on the restoration bandwagon.

LIBRARY NEWS



We are proud of our Church library, and it is helpful periodically to review the system for checking out and returning books. When checking out a book, remove and sign the white card from the back of the book and place it in the file box on the corner desk. When returning the book, place it in the white container on the desk. The library committee will replace the card and return the book to its proper place. Checkout time is considered to be two months maximum, and reminders can be sent to borrowers after that time.

We thank our recent contributors including Ann Gilbert for donating Maeve Binchy's "Whitethorn Woods" and Anita Shreve's "A Wedding in December."

See you in the library!



To my Church Family –

To just say "thank you" seems inadequate to express my sincere gratitude for your prayers, comfort, cards and love during Ken's lengthy illness. Life is full of angels.

I was so touched when Don Johnson came to our door several weeks ago with the beautiful flowers from the altar. They changed a "cloudy day" into a cheery one.

May God's grace be with each of you as we all travel this road together.

Lovingly, Barbara



The family of Joseph Orender who died November 4 and whose life was celebrated here on November 8.

NOTES FROM THE MBA FALL MEETING & WORSHIP SERVICE

On November 4th, a bright autumn Sunday afternoon, the Metropolitan Boston Association fall meeting was held in Roxbury at the *Eliot Congregational Church*, a historic and very beautiful Gothic style church. A warm and gracious welcome from Eliot Church members was extended to all of us who gathered from area churches. There, Wendy's new ministry was blessed in a very moving worship service. I am thankful to have been present and wish I might be able to convey here the feeling evident in that sanctuary during the laying on of hands in the blessing for Wendy but I will try. At that moment in the service Wendy and the MBA Moderator, Bradford Harding, walked to the center of the sanctuary where Brad and I each laid a hand on Wendy's shoulder and with the encircled congregation connected to Wendy by this spiritual practice, a very beautiful prayer was given by Brad. The presence of the Holy Spirit was surely felt in this blessing. Wendy then moved to the front of the sanctuary to conclude the worship service with a typically wonderful responsive prayer: "A Litany of

Praise and Thanksgiving." In her still new ministry of Acting Associate Conference Minister of the MBA of the MA Conference, UCC she comfortably and capably picked up that mantle in this, her first public role in this highly responsible position.

It is a time of difficult change in all Churches, including our wider church, but a strong sense of warm, energized and positive support was evident between Wendy and the gathered people. It was a very moving experience for me and for many present that day. I brought messages of love and blessings from our Church family to Wendy and she sent back to you love, blessings and hugs.

The meeting ended after very interesting and inspiring messages from the National UCC Wider Church Ministry's Executive Minister, Rev. Cally Rogers-Witte and guest preacher Rev. Felix Ortiz-Cotto and was followed by a wonderful traditional church supper prepared and served by the Eliot Church members.

This is an opportunity to share with you words about the MA Conference of the UCC and its vital importance in our local churches. Several years ago I attended my first UCC MA Conference yearly gathering at Mt. Holyoke and try, when possible, to attend the spring or fall meeting. I found inspiration in our connection to one another as we shared ideas in faith and ministry. In the diversity of our people and worship styles, there is the wonderful realization that we are "one body in Christ." An awareness of participation in the wider community of our faith is not only inspiring but I believe absolutely vital in a troubled

world so in need of love and caring.

Our Board of Christian Outreach reminds us that our Senior Youth Group's mission experience this summer was possible only because the ministry of the MA Conference of the United Church of Christ exists and is supported by local churches like ours.

On October 7th World Communion Sunday, Peggy's very beautiful and meaningful service called us to recognize the common universal meaning of the sacrament of Holy Communion as it expressed in different traditions.






Resources are readily available to us:

- ✓ The *United Church News* is free to all of us. Please let us know if you are not receiving it.
- ✓ The wider church website is also a wonderful resource: www.ucc.org and our local chapter at www.macucc.org.
- ✓ The Global Ministries information displayed after worship with our guest preacher Rev. Felix Ortiz-Cotto will be displayed again in Fellowship Hall on Sundays.
- ✓ The *Calendar of Prayer* from the UCC inserted into our bulletin and our booklet *The Upper Room* are a very meaningful part of daily worship.

Our children are growing up in a multiracial, multi-ethnic world where seeing ourselves in one another and caring for one another is what Gods call us to do. Charlotte Swann, Deacon

✂ *cut and save - - - -*

Rotation Workshop Schedule

December 2 <i>1st Sunday of Advent</i>	December 9 <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i>	December 16 <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i>	December 23 <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i>	December 30 <i>5th Sunday of Advent</i>
<p><i>Hanging of the Greens</i></p>  <p>Enrichment Activity Preschool- Grade 2</p>	 <p>Enrichment Activity All Grades</p>	<p><i>Music Sunday</i></p>  <p>Enrichment Activity Preschool- Grade 2</p>	 <p><i>No Church School or Child Care</i></p>	 <p><i>No Church School or Child Care</i></p>

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