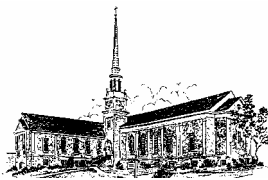


- **Headliners:** p. 2, Confirmation class needs your help



The Courier

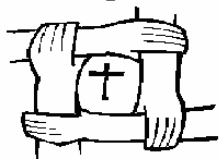
Semi-monthly Newsletter

January 12, 2007

Melrose
Highlands
Congregational
Church

www.mhcc-ucc.org

2007 New Orleans Mission Trip is Planned.



Almost two years have passed since Hurricane Katrina. The needs are as urgent as they were in September of 2005. The needs however are different now. One year ago there was a great need to assist people cleaning out their homes and removing the moldy walls and ceilings. That work is still needed as 2600 homes in the New Orleans area still have not been cleaned out since Katrina. However, there is a greater need to rebuild communities one at a time, block by block, parish by parish.

MHCC has an opportunity to assist in this disaster response recovery ministry. We have scheduled a 6 day mission trip beginning on Sunday morning July 29, 2007 and departing on the afternoon of Saturday, August 4, 2007. We are scheduled to stay at the Little Farms Church, River Ridge, LA. This Church has cots, air mattresses, showers, laundry, and kitchen facilities for 20 people. Read more about the mission trip and how you can sign-up or help on page 3!

LIVING YOUR STRENGTHS



**A Retreat Day for MHCC
Saturday, February 10 from
9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Centre Church in Lynnfield**

A Retreat Day with the theme “Living Your Strengths” is being planned by the Timothy Project Team.

Keeping with its mandate – to build on our strengths – the Timothy Project Team is designing a day of discovering our individual strengths.

To date, we have identified and are discerning ways to build on our strengths as a church community. We believe MHCC’s top three strengths of Focusing on the Community, Caring for Young People, and Empowering Leadership will be served if individual members have a good sense of their own strengths.

To that end, we are planning a Retreat Day that will utilize the Gallup organization resource “Living Your Strengths.” The resource includes an on-line assessment that identifies your top five strengths. Attendees to the retreat will need to receive a book with a code that gives access to this on-line assessment ahead of time.

Our Timothy Project coach, Rev. Jeff Johnson, will be on hand to help us understand our strengths and how they might be offered and strengthened through MHCC.

Sign up today so you may receive a copy of the book! The computers at Church will be available, with coaching, to do the on-line work if you do not have a computer at home. We believe you will find this time well spent.

Sign up with Wendy through the Church Office or email or see a Tim Team member on a Sunday morning. **The deadline is January 24th.**

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN IN THE WORKS FOR EARLY SPRING

For the past two months, the leadership of the church has been discussing the possibility of a Capital Campaign and potential projects and priorities that could be addressed to strengthen our church’s ministry and fulfill our vision.

The input of the whole church is vital to this endeavor. An opportunity for such input will be held on February 25 after worship. Please flag this date on your calendar and plan to be there.

In advance, please also place Sunday, March 18 on your schedule for a kick-off lunch for the Campaign.

THE 2007 CONFIRMATION CLASS IS DOING OUTREACH WORK AND NEEDS YOUR HELP ...

CityReach
January 19-20

CityReach gives young people a chance to learn about homelessness from people who are homeless or who have been homeless. The Confirmation Class will participate in the ministry to poor and homeless people by offering hospitality, food, and clothing to guests on Saturday morning inside at the *Cathedral Church of Saint Paul* and/or outside in downtown Boston by participating in a street outreach team.

In addition to the time spent in service, the class must also bring donated items to support the program of the day.

If you wish, you can support this effort by providing any of the items –primarily focused on the population which is 80% men - listed below by Thursday, January 18 to the Church office.

NEW ITEMS:

- Toiletries such as bars of soap, shampoo, deodorant, hand and body lotion, chap stick, tooth paste, and shaving cream in small sizes, as well as tooth brushes and disposable razors, and tampons in small quantities for the 20% or so women;
- New white socks (there can never be too many of these);
- New underwear (again, there can never be too many and be sure to bring 80% of the underwear for men);
- New white T-shirts for men;

USED ITEMS:

- Sleeping bags (used and in good condition);
- All kinds of carrying cases such as backpacks, tote bags, fanny

packs, small suitcases with wheels (used and in good condition);

USED CLOTHING including:

- Sweat shirts and sweat pants (especially hooded sweatshirts);
- Nylon jackets and pants, ponchos, and raincoats;
- Warm winter jackets;
- Sweaters;
- T-shirts;
- Long-sleeve shirts;
- Jeans, khakis and other casual pants (80% for men);
- Waterproof boots, comfortable shoes, and sneakers;
- Belts, hats and gloves.

Thanks in advance for any support you can offer!

Church School Heifer Project



Calling all Chefs!

We are looking for each Church School family to contribute a recipe that will be included in a cookbook to be sold at the Heifer Tasting Party.

There will be tasting tables, serving sample sized portions of each recipe. Members of the congregation can then place orders for a cookbook. To simplify the cookbook publication we prefer you submit your recipe through email. You may choose to contribute one recipe per family or one per child. Please email your recipe(s) to MaryAnn at BarrissFamily@comcast.net by January 26th and thank you for your participation!

Bonnie & MaryAnn

Back to School Almost!!

The Highlands Nursery School is getting ready for the fall of 2007. If you are thinking about a preschool experience for your child or know of

someone who would be interested in our school, now is the time to gather information.

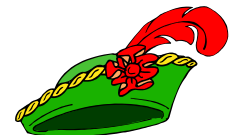
As a courtesy to our Church families who support our Church and its activities, we open our registration to you first. Come see us anytime to register. March 1st begins registration to the public. For more information call the school at 781.665.4202.



**Heifer Fundraiser
February 11th**

The Church School Heifer fundraiser this year is surely a treat for all to share! We invite you to come sample the delicacies made by the Church School Families during Fellowship Hour on Sunday, February 11th. The recipes from these culinary treats will be available for you to purchase in the form of a MHCC Church School Cookbook that will be for sale in Fellowship Hall following worship on the 11th. The proceeds from the sale of the cookbooks will be used to purchase fish farms for families for *Heifer International*.

“FEATHER IN YOUR CAP”



Awarded with thanks to **Steve Calabro** for donating a flat screen and connecting an additional office computer to the internet.

New Orleans Mission Trip, continued from page 1...

We are estimating the cost of the trip will be \$750; however we plan to offset this by conducting several fund raisers prior to our departure. The cost includes airfare, van rental, food, gas, and a \$50 fee to cover expenses at the Little Farms Church.

If you are interested in participating MHCC 2007 New Orleans Mission Trip or would like additional information please contact John Everett at 781.665.2409. The deadline for sign up is February 10th.

IN THE LIBRARY



Now that life has returned to normal activities, set aside some time for reading.

There are many choices in our library: fiction, mysteries, biographies, history and children's books.

Thanks to Keren Hummer we have a copy of Anne Lamott's "Traveling Mercies."

Come on down!



Thank you so much for the beautiful poinsettia plant I received this Sunday. I was thinking of the beautiful memorial service Wendy gave us for Mom and this just reassured us of the loving thoughts of friends and family helping us through this difficult time.

Thanks again,

Maryann Elia-Hermance



Addison Mia Carvill was born on December 29, 2006 at 9:32 p.m., weighing 8 lbs. 8 oz and 20.5 inches long.

Proud parents are Lynmarie and Michael Carvill, Big Sister is Caleigh, grandmother is Diane Bucknil and great-grandparents are Polly and Ken Walker.



In a recent Clergy Colleague Group meeting, my fellow clergy and I were reflecting on our work and the length of tenure each one of us has served in our current setting.

There are different opportunities and challenges serving a church in the first year or two or moving into a decade or longer. In the first few years of service the focus is on "getting to know you" and "building trust."

The longer tenure of service affords taking some more risks, pushing edges and experimenting because the relationship is built and, presumably, the trust is present.

It could tilt the other way of course. The temptation to keep doing what you've always done and find yourself in a rut is always present.

This Fall I realized that I am in the longer tenure track here at MHCC when almost all of the seven young people who were in a communion class with me were children I have baptized. This summer I will be doing a wedding for a young adult who was in the first

Confirmation class I taught here!

These nine years have gone by quickly and have been a very full, rewarding and "keep you on your toes" time. One of my colleagues asked me, "are there still things to do in Melrose?" My response – "of course there are!" I wouldn't be here if there weren't still visions to be fulfilled.

I am thinking about these things too as we anticipate a Capital Campaign. While meeting with Jeff Winey and Teri Vienot, who are Co-Chairs of the Campaign, and who will be recruiting a committee to work with them, the possibilities of what we can accomplish together are inspiring.

Realizing we have significant repair that needs to be done to the organ in the Sanctuary led us to consider how to address it. With deterioration in the mechanism that allows the keyboard to talk to the pipes, it is likely that the organ will become unplayable and it could happen at any time.

Faced with this problem, the Executive Council saw an opportunity to broaden our vision beyond raising money for this one "big ticket item." So we have begun to dream some dreams and think big thoughts.

Your voice, dreams, ideas and input are needed as we begin and continue to pray on our vision and potential. Please plan to be in church on February 25th so your voice can be heard and your dreams counted.

- Rev. Wendy Vander Hart

Affordable Housing Lottery



OAK GROVE VILLAGE

12 Island Hill Avenue

Affordable 1 & 2 bedroom apartments within newly constructed apartment buildings near downtown Melrose will be available soon.

Meetings are happening and a lottery will be held to fill the apartment. If you are interested in information regarding eligibility requirements and a copy of the application visit: www.cityofmelrose.org OR oakgrovelottery@winnco.com OR by calling Oak Grove Village at 781.662.3900.

NEXT COURIER DEADLINE

Friday, January 19th at noon.

SYG NEWS

In early December the 10 members of SYG participated in sorting donated presents for the *Boston City Mission Society*. In addition, the group was able to create creative gift bags for families. ♦ On Dec 16th we had our annual holiday dinner at TGIFridays which was very well attended. ♦ We began the new year with discussions on resolutions, goals and dreams. ♦ On January 21st the group will be going on an adventure to The Tomb in Boston. This is a team building, Indiana Jones style, interactive adventure experience set in realistic pharaoh's tomb in an archeological dig site set in Egypt. ♦ In addition we are planning a 2 night ski trips to King Pine Ski area the weekend of March 9th and 10th.

John Everett and Liz Faughnan



Keep in Your Prayers

The family of **Virginia Barrett** who died and whose life was celebrated in a funeral on December 28.

The family of **Margaret Sargent** who died and whose life was celebrated in a service at church on December 30.

Polly Harlow - at Melrose-Wakefield Hospital.

Vi Vienot - at Elmhurst Nursing Center.