



## **MISSION OF BELLEVILLE CHURCH**

**Centered in the inclusive love of Jesus Christ, we seek to be a welcoming, affirming, and healing congregation. Led by the Holy Spirit, we are inspired to grow and be renewed through our worship, fellowship, Scripture study and the sharing of our gifts. Strengthened by God's love and guidance, we strive to serve with compassion those in need, both near and far.**

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## *December Ponderings*

Dear Friends,

I was speechless. Children's time is always an interesting conversation, with the pastor, as usual trying to move from the everyday to something about God, Jesus, or Spirit. We were discussing signs of Christmas on the first Sunday, and when wreathes were mentioned, I was ready to talk about things like circles with "no end," or the "ever" green aspect in wintertime, but one child says: "Oh, the circle has no sides to it, and also Jesus didn't take sides!" Speechless, because I never heard that one before, and speechless because it has both a simple truth, yet also a complexity that would need much more than a two minute children's time to discuss! Jesus not taking sides would be profoundly true in the sense that Jesus was the Prince of Peace, the consummate Peacemaker, always working to unite and reunite people. Yet he was not hesitant to call sin sin and call evil evil, so we could also say that he was on the side of goodness, on the side of truth, on the side of love, etc. With regards to all the bickering and finger pointing that we humans do, I suppose he really would not take sides, since he advised "taking the log out of one's own eye, before going after the speck in the other's eye."

So I will remember this insight this Christmas season when I see a wreath..... now I will begin to see a "wreath of peace." No sharp corners, no straight sides, but that continuum and connectedness of humanity that is also a circle. Unfortunately this 2015 season is full of animosity, hatred, and war on so many levels, from our election year political battles and name calling, to the protracted war in the Middle East. Jesus' teachings instruct us so well on the personal level and hopefully our candidates can debate issues without personal assaults. With "logs and specks" in all our eyes, forgiveness of sin is always needed, for self and for neighbors. But at tribal and national levels, it is so much more difficult. Forgiving murder and terrorist slaughter just doesn't seem effective in stopping it. Some degree of force seems necessary at times, with "surgical precision" if possible, to stop or remove those promising to continue with mass murder.

Anyway, the pink candle of the Advent wreath is about Joy, and it reminds us that we can always rejoice and be thankful for something, no matter how bad things might seem. Gratitude and Thanksgiving with songs of Praise are always appropriate to lift spirits, to heal, to reconcile, as we celebrate that Peace and Love were incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth and are still present for us today as we make room for his Spirit in our lives. Hope to see you soon, and for an evening of light-hearted fun, let me recommend the very affordable acoustic and bluegrass Christmas Concert, Saturday eve, December 19, in our own stage room. I've seen two of their concerts, and the group on stage seems like a big family having some fun with Christmas songs!

Yours in Christ, and awaiting Christ,  
Pastor Ross

# 2015 CALENDAR



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed		Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 5:45pm Bible Study 7pm Choir practice	4	5 9 - 12 Thrift Shop 9am 3MB Fencing NCS 9 - 12
6 10am Worship 11:15 Youth Choir rehearsal	7 6:30pm Girl Scout Troop #78171 7pm CODA NCS 7 - 10	8 8:30am Worship & Education 130 pm Service Club Christmas Party	9 9 - 12 Thrift Shop 7pm Stewardship & Finance	10 5:45pm Bible Study 7pm Choir practice NCS 3:30 - 6 & 7 - 10	11	12 9- 12 Thrift Shop 9am 3MB Fencing NCS Concert 6 - 11pm
13 10am Worship 11:15 Youth Choir rehearsal NCS Concert 12:30 - 5pm	14 6:30pm Girl Scout Troop #78171 7pm CODA	15 7pm Executive Board	16 9-12 Thrift Shop 6pm Men's Fellowship Supper	17 5:45pm Bible Study 7pm Choir practice	18	19 9-12 Thrift Shop 9am 3MB Fencing 7:30pm Bluegrass Christmas Concert
20 10am Worship 11:15 Youth Choir rehearsal Fellowship & Outreach after worship 3pm Sacred Harp Singers	21 6:30pm Girl Scout Troop #78171 7pm CODA	22	23	24 5:30pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	25 Christmas Day 	26
27 10am Worship 11:15 Youth Choir rehearsal	28 6:30pm Girl Scout Troop #78171 6:30pm NCS rehearsal in the Meetinghouse 7pm CODA	29	30	31 New Year's Eve 		



*December*

- 1 James Marshall*
- 2 Stephen Middler*
- 10 Jennifer Allard*
- 10 Tyler Jay*
- 20 Jean Kirkpatrick*
- 21 Michael Allard*
- 22 Scott Smith*
- 25 Norm Hansen*

*January 2016*

- 1 Bob Locke*
- 5 Kip Tyler*
- 10 Caden Allard*
- 12 James Guyette*
- 15 Jennifer Donovan*
- 23 Robert Crofts*
- 23 Nicole Samuelson*
- 26 Jim Samuelson*
- 26 Andrea DeGiovanni*
- 26 Joe DeGiovanni*



December 15th Extra Mile Offering



THE PETTENGILL HOUSE, INC.  
Children & Family Services

December's Extra Mile Offering is The Pettengill House, Inc. Children & Family services. The Pettengill House, Inc. was founded in 1994 by a diverse group of local residents and agency representatives to specifically address the needs of the most at-risk, underserved children and families. The original goals were primarily prevention related. However, it immediately became clear that the organization's clientele were primarily concerned with survival issues of food, clothing, shelter, health and safety.

Last year our community programs served 3,100 clients, distributed 425+ backpacks/school supplies and 395 winter coats, supported 333 students through our [School Link Service Program](#), provided 117,000+ meals, helped enroll 30+ clients in Mass Health, given 48 clients access to food stamps, and aided in providing \$82,000+ in Emergency Assistance Funds (housing, utilities, medical, transportation, education, and after school programs). That's what we call community teamwork, and we want to do more. Pettengill's service area is Amesbury, Byfield, Groveland, Merrimac, Newbury, Newburyport, Rowley, Salisbury, and West Newbury, Massachusetts



## *Advent Candle lighting*

The Christmas season is upon us! Worship and Education is looking for Advent readers for Hope, Peace, Joy and Love and the Christmas Eve lighting. If you would like to volunteer this year please let us know.

Board of Worship and Education

**ADVENT** is a season of waiting, expecting, and hoping. Beginning four Sundays prior to Christmas and ending on Christmas Eve, Advent helps us prepare for the coming, or “advent” of the Christ child at Christmas. (The word “advent” comes from the Latin word that means “coming.”)

For hundreds of years, Christians have used an Advent wreath to inspire their hopes for the coming of Christ. By lighting candles and reading Bible verses, we are reminded about the meaning of Christ’s birth and become more excited about his coming in the past, in the future, and in our own lives. Join us as we get ready for the joyous birth of Christ beginning on November 29<sup>th</sup> with the lighting of the candle of Hope, December 6<sup>th</sup> the candle of Peace, December 13<sup>th</sup> the candle of Joy and December 20<sup>th</sup> the candle of Love.

Worship begins at 10:00am, Sunday school 10:15am (now preparing for our Christmas pageant) Nursery available.

Adult Choir rehearsal begins at 7:00pm on Thursdays, in the stage room, with Andrea DeGiovanni our music director. Youth choir rehearsals are on Sundays after worship/Sunday school. Preparing now for the holidays. New members always welcome!

### **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**

The traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve Family service will be held in the meetinghouse of Belleville Congregational Church. Worship will begin at 5:30P.M. Come join us for the celebration of Christ’s birth with joyous music, carols and the Gospel lessons of this wonderful story. The service will have an invitation to encircle the Sanctuary and sharing of the Light (Candlelight) singing the special Hymn of Silent Night, Holy Night (Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht).

# *Belleville Congregational Church Service Club Christmas Party*



The Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Service Club will take place at 1:30 in the Bannister Room. We will be having our Christmas Party with a \$109 Yankee Swap, food and carol singing with Ross Please join us.

## Men's Fellowship Supper



Wednesday, December 16th  
6:00pm gathering, 6:30 supper

# *Belleville Church Thrift Shop*



The thrift shop is open every Wednesday and Saturday 9am – noon.

Come by and see what's new!

Again this year we will be having a Christmas Shop in the dining room. We will have everything from ornaments and clothes to wrapping supplies and both inside and outside decorations. The shop will be open Wednesday and Saturday mornings from 9 to 12 all of November and December. We will be needing volunteers to help cover the room, so if you can help even one day please notify Sue Wolfendale at 978-462-7473 and spread the word.

## *Sing to the Lord a New Song*



Adult choir rehearsal Thursdays at 7pm.

Youth choir rehearsal Sunday mornings after worship.



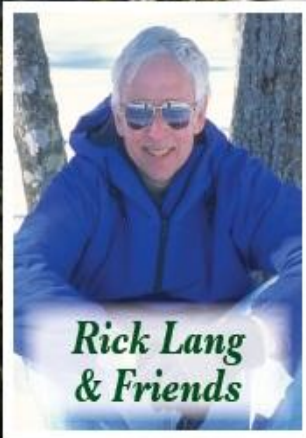
# *Christmas in Historic Newburyport*

## **BLUEGRASS CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

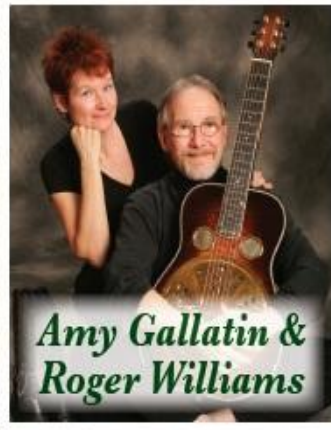
*A seasonal blend of Bluegrass  
& Acoustic Holiday Music*

**Saturday, December 19, 2015  
7:30 PM**

**Belleville Congregational Church**  
300 High St., Newburyport, MA 01950



***Rick Lang  
& Friends***



***Amy Gallatin &  
Roger Williams***



***Blackstone Valley  
Bluegrass Band***

**TICKETS: At the Door • Refreshments**

**\$15 Adults, \$10 Seniors & Children under 12**

*All Seating is General Admission Only • Doors Open at 6:45 PM*

**Church Contact:** Valerie Gates, Pastor Ross Varney

(978) 465-7734 • [bcchurch@worldpath.net](mailto:bcchurch@worldpath.net) • [www.bellevillechurch.org](http://www.bellevillechurch.org)

**For more info on the bands & the annual Bluegrass Christmas Concert Tour contact:**  
[www.blackstonevalleybluegrass.com](http://www.blackstonevalleybluegrass.com) • [www.ricklangmusic.com](http://www.ricklangmusic.com) • [www.amygallatin.com](http://www.amygallatin.com)



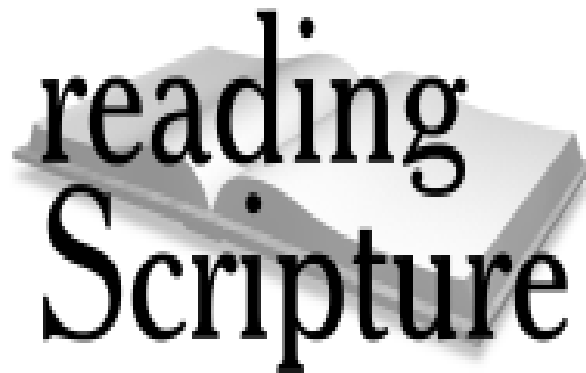
*Communion is the first Sunday of each month*

*December*

- 6 Ben & Heersink & Ron Schmidt
- 13 Chapel Allard & Gail Gandolfi
- 20 Jean Kirkpatrick & Amy Schmidt
- 24 Michelle Anderson, Hunter Anderson,  
Norma & Tim Dean
- 27 Ben & Sue Heersink

*January*

- 3 Gail Gandolfi & Shirley Locke
- 10 Carolyn Kyle & Kathy Raywood
- 17 Jean Kirkpatrick & Peggy Utterback
- 24 Dan Fay & Jon Pearson
- 31 Hans Erwich & Bob Locke



*December*

- 6 Sue Heersink
- 13 Chapel Allard
- 20 Annika Ellis
- 24
- 27 Barbara Colten

*January*

- 3
- 10
- 17
- 24
- 31



## **December**

- 6 Peggy Utterback, Marge Killam & Mardee Beauparlant
- 13 Sue Wolfendale, Norma Dean & Lynn Varney
- 20 Audrey Clarkson, Diane Crofts & Janet Woodman
- 27 No coffee hour – holiday weekend

## **January**

- 3 Jean Hansen, Lori Wiswell & Debra Moore
- 10 Sue Heersink, Dorothy Williamson & Carolyn Kyle
- 17 No Coffee Hour Holiday Weekend
- 24 Shirley Locke, Karen Conway & Marcia Samuelson
- 31 Mary Lou Tyler, Diane Crofts & Jennifer Allard



*Belleville Congregational Church*  
*United Church of Christ*  
300 High Street  
Newburyport, MA 01950  
978-465-7734  
[bcchurch@worldpath.net](mailto:bcchurch@worldpath.net)  
[bellevillechurch.org](http://bellevillechurch.org)

#### Church Staff & Contact Information

Pastor Ross Varney 978-462-4899  
Office hours: Tuesday 11 AM – 12:30  
Wednesday & Thursday 10:30 AM - Noon;  
or by appointment.

Church Office 978-465-7734  
Valerie Gates, Office Administrator  
Office hours: Tuesday, Thursday and  
Friday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Church Email: [bcchurch@worldpath.net](mailto:bcchurch@worldpath.net)  
Website: [www.bellevillechurch.org](http://www.bellevillechurch.org)

Andrea DeGiovanni, Organist & Music  
Director

Bob Locke, Sexton

#### Newsletter Submissions

Do you have an article that you would like to include in  
the monthly newsletter?

If so, please submit your article to the church office by the  
25th of each month.

Thank you!

#### Church Officers

Moderator: Jean Hansen  
Clerk: Kathy Raywood  
Treasurer: Jim Samuelson  
Collector: Norma Dean  
Memorial Fund Treasurer: Kelly  
Burke-Anderson  
Auditor:  
Members-at-Large (Ex. Board)

#### Contact Persons

Board of Fellowship & Outreach:  
Diane Crofts  
Board of Worship & Education:  
Kelly Burke-Anderson  
Board of Stewardship & Finance:  
Hans Erwich, Jim Samuelson  
UCC Delegate: Emery Rice

#### Sunday School Coordinator

Pam Ellis

#### Flower Coordinator

Shirley Locke

#### Hospitality Coordinator

Audrey Clarkson