

Belleville Congregational Church

May 2013
News and Views



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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Dear Friends,

Have you heard the news..... no, not bombings in Syria, no, not bombings in Boston, no, I'm thinking about the news that people affiliated with religious organizations are not the MINORITY in America, just under 50% now. And if you add the phrase "who attend regularly," stats appear to say it is less than 25% of the American People..... and many say that in Massachusetts, we are on the lower end of the average, probably only 10-15% of us attending worship or prayer services regularly. Wow. There seems to be a small bubble of increase after events like the Boston Bombing. Perhaps it has to do with the saying "no atheists in foxholes," or just the common need to gather together as community to help each other heal and do whatever we can so that these things don't happen again.

I like the latter idea..... that now, more than ever, we can see the need for peacemaking in this world, for creating communities that make peace, that truly follow the golden rule. Many argue that religions are causing the violence in the world, but from what I can gather, it seems to be only an extremist wing of any religion that promotes violence to solve conflicts. It is all the more urgent for those of us who follow in Christ's way to insist that his way is centered in inclusive love!

Which brings up the big news of this week that an NBA ballplayer just came out as gay, reportedly the first pro ball player; initially all I heard was positive and supportive comments. But I did just read of one retired NBA player who tweeted support, and then was promptly "disinvited" from a speaking engagement at some church, on the basis of its moral code. After all the goodness seen in gay leaders in every field of endeavor, how can anyone still insist that same sex relationships are a moral failing and sin? Bible interpretation may be one reason. So my next question is how can anyone still take the Bible as literally prescriptive for every generation? I suppose an extremist or fundamentalist Christian group may do so. The Bible, in most of our understanding, is a "guide" that has obvious historical and cultural conditioning. One has only to look at issues regarding women and slaves to determine that. Jesus was re-interpreting scriptures of his day constantly as has the entire rabbinic tradition.

Was Jesus "soft on crime?" Was so tolerant that "anything goes?" Of course not. But let's be sure that things we call evil and fight against are truly harmful to the rest of society. "Who one loves" cannot be harmful to society, while forms of exploitative or abusive sexuality clearly are. How can tweeting support for someone's courage and honesty be harmful? But judging people as deficient for who they are, or excluding them from community surely can be.

So have you heard the news? Violence and discrimination are still alive and well in the world. Let us be part of the good news that says there is another way! There is the way of making peace, of dialogue rather than striking out with force. There is the way of including others who are different from us, withholding judgment, rather than judging others as wrong or sinful and then excluding them. Let us insist that the Good News in Jesus is always about healing, love, and reconciling people in beloved community. We may be a minority in our culture, even a small seed, but let's keep sowing and watering, trusting that God does give the growth.

Yours, in Christ's love,
Ross Varney, pastor

2013 CALENDAR

May

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Recycling 1pm Long Walk to Water 1pm Gentle Chair Yoga 7:30pm Choir practice	3	4 9am Thrift Shop 9am 3MB Fencing
5 10:00am Worship May Day Celebration at coffee hour 4pm Visionary Book Group	6 7pm CODA	7 11:30am Service Club	8 9am Thrift Shop 1pm Roots Mtg 4:30 Worship & Education 7:30 Stewardship & Finance	9 1pm Gentle Chair Yoga 7:30pm Choir practice	10	11 9am Thrift Shop 9am 3MB Fencing
12 10am Worship	13 7pm CODA	14 7:30 Stewardship & Finance	15 9am Thrift Shop 1pm Roots Mtg 4:30pm Worship & Education	16 Recycling 1pm Gentle Chair Yoga 7:30pm Choir Practice	17	18 9am Thrift Shop 9am 3MB Fencing 8pm Roots Concert – Cheryl Wheeler
19 10am Worship	20 7pm CODA	21 8pm Executive Board	22 9am Thrift Shop 1pm Roots Mtg	23 1pm Gentle Chair Yoga 7:30pm Choir Practice	24 News & Views deadline	25 9am Thrift Shop 9am 3 MB Fencing
26 10a m Worship	27 7pm CODA	28	29 6pm Men's Fellowship Dinner	30	31	



May

- 2 David Morrow**
- 8 Robert Gandolfi**
- 8 Chapel Allard**
- 9 Hans Erwich**
- 12 Jean Hansen**
- 12 Jeanne Mantarian**
- 12 Talya Ipbuken**
- 13 Daryl Fay**
- 16 Jen Lovejoy Gandolfi**
- 30 Norma Dean**

June

- 3 Bill Silsby**
- 3 Judy Moore**
- 4 Taunya Till**
- 6 Rita Vreeland**
- 7 Shirley Locke**
- 9 Karen Conway**
- 10 Yvonne Cedras**
- 13 Ben Tyler**
- 17 Marcia Samuelson**
- 20 Andrea Samuelson**
- 25 Marcia Peirce**
- 29 Hazen Brown**



Singer/Songwriter Cheryl Wheeler will perform at Belleville on Saturday, May 18th at 8pm.

For more information, visit the church website bellevillechurch.org
or email us at bellevilleconcerts@gmail.com.



Cheryl Wheeler is both a gifted singer/songwriter with a beautiful voice and a natural storyteller with a fantastic sense of humor. She is also a performer who has to be seen to be appreciated. Nothing you read and nothing you hear from her albums prepares you for how entertaining she is.

FAME says, "Cheryl Wheeler is an anomaly on the acoustic scene. She has a rare gift for writing songs with lush melodies and lyrics of incredible beauty. On the other hand, she is a master of quick wit. Her observational humor has brought us a number of songs describing the utter ridiculousness of the world around us. And then there is the richness of her silky alto telling us what lies in the deepest recesses of her songwriter's heart." *Sing Out!* describes Cheryl as "a rare artist...strong poetry, complex melodies, clever wit.

"Cheryl lives in New England and tours extensively.

Find out more at www.cherylwheeler.com.

Tickets are \$25 in advance / \$30 day of show / \$10 children 12 and under.

Tickets are general admission. Group sales are available.

[Buy now.](#)

Advance tickets are available at:

- **Belleville Congregational Church, 300 High Street, Newburyport**
 - **Church Office: Tues, Thurs, Fri - 9 am to 1 pm**
 - **Thrift Shop: Wed & Sat - 9 am to noon**
- **Dyno Records, 1 Middle Street, Newburyport**

And online at:

www.bellevillechurch.org/roots.php or www.mktix.com/bc

If available, tickets will be sold at the door on the day of the event.

The building is handicap accessible. Refreshments will be available.

For more information, email: bellevilleconcerts@gmail.com

Or visit: www.bellevillechurch.org/roots.php

May Day Celebration Sunday May 5th

Join the festivities as we Celebrate May Day by dancing around the May pole, eating strawberry shortcake and making May baskets to deliver to friends.

This fun event will take place during coffee hour on Sunday, May 5th.

If you are scheduled for Coffee hour please come to give the Sunday school teachers a hand setting up.

The following lists what is needed and the people whose last name begins with

A-H bring prepared strawberries

I-K bring whipped cream

L-N ginger ale

O-R Angel food cake or shortcake

S-V Vanilla ice cream or raspberry sherbet

W-Z more strawberries or angel food cake

Thank you!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

On April 21st, Belleville Congregational Church welcomed the following new members for us to support and love in Jesus name: Connie Golder, Barbara Habelt and Judi Smith.

We are truly blessed that such wonderful people have chosen to become part of our Belleville Family.

SERVICE CLUB

The May meeting of the Service Club will be a week early this month. On May 7th (the 1st Tuesday) we will meet at the Poet's Inn at 11:30 for an enjoyable luncheon after all our hard work at the Rummage Sale. Our Rummage Sale was a success and we raised over \$500. Our part 2 Rummage Sale will be on Saturday June 22. Soooo...Save the date and it's not too late to bring us items while doing your spring cleaning. Just drop them off at the Thrift Shop donation table. Thank you in advance.

This is a BIG note of thanks to the "Rummage Sale Gang" for my wonderful gift that they gave me. I really appreciated it as well as all the hard work they put in to help both the Service Club and our church. Sue

THRIFT SHOP



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



May readers

- 5 Gail Gandolfi
- 12 Carolyn Kyle
- 19 William Silsby
- 26 Sue Heersink

June readers

- 2 Nancy Smith
- 9 Hunter Anderson
- 16 Marion Spark
- 23 Emery Rice
- 30 Lynn Varney

If you cannot read on the date that you have been assigned, no worries, just call the next person on the list or send out an email and trade.



May	5	COMMUNION – Shirley Locke & Gail Gandolfi
	12	Jon Pearson & Bob Locke
	19	Jean Kirkpatrick & Anna Guyette
	26	Ben & Sue Heersink
June	2	COMMUNION - Audrey Clarkson & Kathy Raywood
	9	Hunter & Michelle Anderson
	16	Jean Kirkpatrick & Gail Gandolfi
	23	Norma & Timothy Dean
	30	Rita Vreeland & Anna Guyette



MAY

- 5 Audrey Clarkson, Jean Kirkpatrick & Helen Hatcher
- 12 **Mother's Day** Bill Silsby, Bob Locke & Ben Heersink
- 19 Janet Woodman, Rita Vreeland & Pam Ellis
- 23 Memorial Day – no coffee hour

The first person listed is asked to please take charge of the coffee hour for that week and notify the rest of the volunteers. This schedule is also posted on the bulletin board. Please feel free to swap around with anyone if the assigned week is a conflict for you.

The church will supply the napkins, cups, plates, coffee, cream, sugar and juice.



Belleville Congregational Church

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Newburyport, MA 01950
Permit No. 105

Church Staff & Contact Information

Pastor Ross Varney 978-462-4899
Office hours: Tuesday 11 AM - Noon;
Wednesday & Thursday 10:30 AM - Noon;
or by appointment, suggested Wed/Thur.
evenings
Please call to assure the pastor is available.

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
Website: www.bellevillechurch.org

David Morrow, Organist/Choir 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
20th of each month.
Thank you!

Church Officers

Moderator: William Silsby
Clerk: Jean Hansen
Treasurer: Mary Lou Tyler
Memorial Fund Treasurer: Kelly
Burke-Anderson
Auditor: Kathy Raywood
Members-at-Large (Ex. Board)

Contact Persons

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

Sunday School Coordinator

Pam Ellis

Flower Coordinator

Shirley Locke

Hospitality Coordinator

Audrey Clarkson