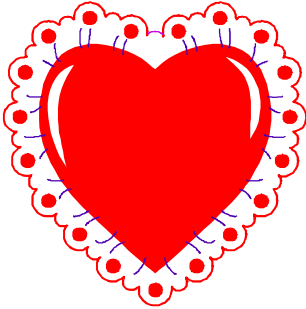
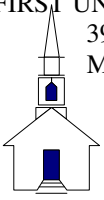


The Messenger-February 2008

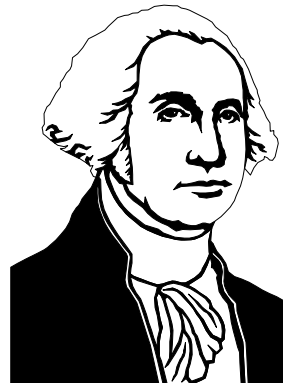
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

39 Exchange St
Milford, MA. 01757



THE MESSENGER

February 2008



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

39 Exchange Street

Milford, Massachusetts 01757

The Rev. Dorothy Asare, Pastor

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February 2008

A Word from the Pastor

'Happy Love Days'

"Love is patient, Love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud, It is not rude, it is not self seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth".

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

The Loves, mom, dad and two daughters are a Christian family. They go to church on a regular basis. The kids attended Sunday school as youngsters. The two sisters, Rachel and Leah were embroiled in what seemed like the Third World War in their home. They divided the corridor that led to their bedrooms into two, by chalk, so that they will not walk on each other's half. Their exasperated parents were at their wits end as to how to get their daughters to learn to co -exist peacefully in their home.

It was the beginning of February and the parents came up with the bright idea of the family exchanging Valentine day cards. If they can create the cards that will even be better. Rachel the older daughter, not wanting to be bothered, decided to copy parts I Corinthians 13, in the bordered colored paper she folded nicely into a card. She landed on verses four through seven, which she copied dutifully three times over, for dad, mom and Leah.

At the end she was touched by those words. She decided the title of her cards will be "Happy Love Day".

As those words took root in her mind and soul, the anger, bitterness and quarrelsome spirit melted away and she was able to give Leah a real hug as she

handed her the card. That brought an end to the war in the Love's home.

Our Abba Father, must be feeling pretty exasperated with us- in our human family, in the world at large, in our communities, in the church, and in our homes. There is enough -Love, food, water, and the needed resources for life, to go around. But a lot of our human family is living in deprivation, anxious and on the edge. Maybe what we need is the ability to 'open our arms and hug each other', as the power of God's love takes root in us. The labels we put on ourselves do not matter, Abba Father created us be the LOVE FAMILY!

"Love Divine All Loves excelling, breathe, O breathe thy loving spirit into every troubled breast;" UMH 384

How can we 'give a hug' to someone who needs one? I wish you a *lovely* Valentine's Day.

Pastor Dorothy

Lenten Season

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday February 6, and ends on Easter Sunday, March 23.

Ash Wednesday service:

February 6, 7:30 pm

We will begin the season of Lent in reflection and prayer, with the imposition of ashes.

Lenten Studies

As part of the Lenten discipline, we come together for Lenten studies: Tuesdays, at 7:30 pm; February 19, 26, March 4 & 18. We have a great Lenten study guide. The book costs \$8. 60, pick up a copy from the church office. Participants will gather needed items for the Food Pantry when we meet for each study, as part of our Lenten journey.

Readers for February

February 3 Laurie Lovell
February 10 Gail Perry
February 17 Muriel Kearsley
February 24 Cheryl Creber

Ushers for February

February 3 Teresa Creber, Paula Malnati
February 10 Ed and Fran Hollister
February 17 Betty and Sara Milo
February 24 Edith and Elizabeth Ashley

Acolytes for February

February 3 Brittany Miner, Megan Stewardson
February 10 Kelsey Tardif, Brittany Miner
February 17 Megan Stewardson, Jesse Fischer
February 24 Brittany Miner, Skylar Suffletto

Greeter/Host for February

Charlotte Kensil



February Birthdays

If your or your child's birthday is not listed, please call the office so we can update our Birthday List. Thanks!

February 3 John Lemon
February 5 Dick LeBlanc
February 10 Elizabeth Ashley
February 14 Jean Prickett
February 16 Jean Smith
Arthur Knust-Graichen, Jr.
February 19 Robert Kearsley
Gordon Lewis
February 20 Wendy Laliberte
February 22 John Beattie

Please note:

- Is the Lord calling you? We need persons to serve as: Christmas Fair Coordinator(s). All the different committees and their leaders are in place. The coordinator(s) makes sure every thing comes together smoothly.

Homework Haven

Our Homework club has been evolving over the past 3 years to become a wonderful collaboration between Woodland Elementary School, teachers, families, high school honor students, and our church.

On Wednesday evenings at 5:30pm you will see families arriving to drop off their 3rd and 4th grade children. Pam Larkin, a Woodland School teacher and the coordinator of Homework Haven, greets the children and makes sure they are signed in. The children then have a light meal prepared by various volunteers.

At 6pm you will see groups of high school students arriving to help tutor the younger students. They greet each other with "high fives" and questions about how their week went and then the homework comes out of the backpacks and the work begins. Each 3rd and 4th grade student has his or her own high school tutor. Supplies such as paper, pencils, markers, scissors and resource books are available.

The fellowship hall is filled with murmurs between the students and you see heads bowed together over math problems and spelling words. By 7:00pm the hall is cleaned up and families arrive to pick up their child.

As a church we should be proud to be a part of this incredible collaboration. So you ask, "What can I do to help?" You can donate money to help purchase the food for the light meal, or come by and offer a hand to help set up, prepare food or clean-up. If you would like to be a part of this either through donations or time, please see Pastor Dorothy or Donna Kling.

What Our Focus Groups Said Are Important...

As we reviewed the data from our focus group meetings, it became very clear that there are 3 things that we, as a church think are important:

1. Improve how we keep in touch with all our members and how we respond to each other's needs.
2. Support the ministry of Homework Club.
3. Support the ministry of the Sunday Evening Service

Without exception, each focus group mentioned the importance of ministering to each other and that we need to improve that. It was also evident that we are proud of our ministry with Homework Club and our Special Needs Sunday Evening Service.

Our Next Step Leadership Team believes that we need to choose one or two areas that we should work on. We have not yet charted a course, but it seems that we will be heading in the direction of the ministries mentioned above.

I challenge every one to prayerfully consider how you can contribute to **one** of these ministries and to let our pastor or lay leaders know how you want to help.

Milford FUMC Support of West Angolan Pastor

Last year (2007), we supported a pastor from the West Angolan Conference in the amount of five hundred sixty nine dollars and eleven cents (\$569.11).

Thank God for empowering us to reach out to our brothers and sister in West Angola. A team from the New England Annual Conference just returned from a visit to West Angola. We will be linked with a specific church in West Angola. We hope to keep communication back and forth between our two churches, and thus enhance each other's ministry. We thank God for this wonderful opportunity.

Souper Bowl for Caring

Our Senior High Sunday School Class will hold soup pots at church doors on Souper Bowl Sunday, February 3, 2008. They will join young people in churches across the country to collect money for those who are hungry and hurting. In 2007, over 14,500 groups participated in the Souper Bowl of Caring generating over \$8 million. All of the money collected is donated to a charity selected by the participant. None of the money is sent to Souper Bowl headquarters. Organizers only ask that each participant report their collection so national totals can be determined and announced. Since the Souper Bowl of Caring began in 1990, more than \$41 million has gone to help people in need. Please support the youth of our church in this effort to "love our neighbors" by dropping your dollar in the soup pot on February 3 to support our Milford Daily Bread Food Pantry.