

THE MESSENGER

PAYSON PARK CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

365 BELMONT STREET, BELMONT, MA 02478

617-484-1542

office@paysonpark.org www.paysonpark.org

FEBRUARY 2011

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

*We believe God is calling us to walk in the ways of Jesus Christ
and to bear witness to the Gospel through worship and service, empowered by the Holy Spirit.*

Each month we gather around many tables together. We gather for committee meetings and at Fellowship Hour; we gather in fellowship groups and in God's Garden. In large and small groups we meet and talk, working for the life of the church. At these gatherings we not only share our "business" concerns but also our personal lives. No matter how or when we gather here at Payson Park Church, it is always as members of a community of faith, striving, as we proclaim, to "walk in the ways of Jesus."

It's with this ultimate purpose in mind we can admit there is one table around which we gather that is more important than all the rest: it's the table set before us as we celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion. What a blessing it is to meet this way! Through Communion we celebrate our unity with God and one another, as well as with other Christians around the world. In prayer and contemplation we are joined with the One who calls us into new community, offering us a chance to recommit ourselves to "the living body of Christ." What a privilege!

It's with this sense of gratitude that we can move through 2011 together. With our new slate of Officers, committee chairs, and committee members approved at the Annual Meeting, we will gather around many tables in the months ahead. May our thoughts and words always be inspired by the table set by Jesus: the table of abiding love and communion with God. Thanks for being a part of it all!

With gratitude and love,

The Reverend Lael Atkinson



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WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6

10:30 AM

**Communion Sunday &
Food Pantry Collection Drive:**
The Reverend Lael Atkinson preaching
Sermon "Hallowed Be Thy Name"

The acolyte is Carolyn Gulley. Serving communion are Lorraine Clifford, Nancy and Paul Fergus and Merry & Terry Ray. The deacon serving today is Marty Gledhill. The fellowship hour is given by the Property Committee. Reading scripture is Marilyn Brownlie. The ushers greeting are Carl Miller and Phil Ripley. The food pantry collection drive will go to the Belmont Food Pantry this month.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13

10:30 AM

The Reverend Lael Atkinson preaching
Sermon "Thy Will Be Done"

The acolyte is Carolyn Gulley. The altar flowers are given by Isabella Martin in memory of her husband, William H. Martin. The fellowship hour is given by the Nursery School Committee. The deacon serving today is Merry Ray. Reading scripture is Sally Markham. The ushers greeting are Carl Miller and Phil Ripley. Elizabeth Rose Fleury Connell will be baptized.



**LET IT SNOW,
LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW...
BUT PLEASE, NOT ON SUNDAY!**

As we continue the winter season, the Diaconate reminds you that Sunday morning worship services will be cancelled when a parking ban is in effect in Belmont. To confirm such a cancellation, please call the Church after 8:00 a.m. on the Sunday in question. The recorded message will provide information about the morning service. If you call the church and do not hear the recording, please call again. The line may be busy with another caller. Thank you!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20

10:30 AM

The Reverend Lael Atkinson preaching
Alleluia Choir: *We are Marching in the Light of God*
South African freedom song
Sermon "Our Daily Bread"

The acolyte is Carolyn Gulley. The altar flowers are given by Irene Richard in loving memory of her sister, Grace Stockbridge. Altar flowers are also given by Mary Simonds in memory of her husband, John J. Simonds. The fellowship hour is given by the Music Committee. The deacon serving today is Cynthia Lasker. Reading scripture is Isabel Best. The ushers greeting are Carl Miller and Susan Clark.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27

10:30 AM

The Reverend Linda Knight, preaching;
The Reverend Lael Atkinson presiding
The Youth Choir: *Cantate Domino* Brian Lewis
Sermon "Do Not Be Anxious About Your Life"
Scripture Psalm 23; Luke 12: 22-31

The acolyte is Carolyn Gulley. The altar flowers are given by Rich MacDonald in loving memory of his mother, Amy MacDonald. The deacon serving today is Lorraine Clifford. The fellowship hour is given by the Mission & Outreach Committee. Reading scripture is Nancy Slavinsky. The ushers greeting are Carl Miller and Susan Clark.



WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

Thank you for being with us in January, in person as well as in spirit! With the weeks being cold and often snowy, our worship attendance was understandably low. It is on such days we may trust that even when absent our love and prayers are with one another.

Jan. 2:	77	Jan. 9:	80
Jan. 16:	80	Jan. 23:	91

WORSHIP & ADMINISTRATIVE NEWS

WINTER SERMON SERIES:

APPRECIATING THE LORD'S PRAYER

Each week in worship we unify our voices with hundreds of thousands of men and women all over the world as we say The Lord's Prayer together. What do these words really mean to us? How do they encapsulate our Christian faith? Through February and March we'll reflect on questions like these as Lael's sermons delve into the rich history and current power of this prayer that is such a central part of our worship and tradition. Reflections will also occur at our weekly Adult Education class on Thursdays (see page 6).



A NOTE OF THANKS

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

As the annual stewardship appeal winds up at Payson Park Church, we are happy to report that our numbers are increasing! Thank you for committing your financial support to the church and to the mission of Jesus Christ. We have currently received over 50 pledges for a total of nearly \$123,000. If you have not yet made a pledge and would like to do so, please contact the church office soon. We are grateful to be growing together in faith and service.

“PEACE STARTS WITH A SMILE”

BUILDING COMMUNITY TOGETHER

Help us grow as a faithful and loving community! In addition to wearing a name tag on Sunday mornings, it's also important that we reach out to others each week. Please make an effort to talk to someone you do not know after worship, whether it's someone new to our congregation or a long-time member. Take a chance, make a new connection. It's all a part of “walking in the ways of Jesus” right here at Payson Park. Amen!

CELEBRATING OUR GIFTS TOGETHER:

LINDA KNIGHT PREACHING THIS MONTH

On Sunday, February 27, we welcome The Reverend Linda Knight to our pulpit to lead us in our time of prayerful contemplation. Linda is a new member at Payson Park Church and the Belmont area. She is a retired UCC Pastor and Hospital Chaplain, most recently serving at Massachusetts General Hospital. A regular and loving presence in our Sunday gatherings, it will be a joy for us all to worship with her and Lael. Please plan on attending the service that day!

ANNUAL MEETING & LUNCHEON:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Thank you to all who helped with and attended the Annual Meeting and Luncheon on Sunday, January 23. A special thanks to our Senior Deacon, Nancy Fergus, and members of the Diaconate. It was a festive and meaningful occasion for all, helping us to build our relationships with God and one another. Thank you for being a part of Payson Park Church!



SCRIPTURE READERS

WELCOMED!

Would you like to give voice to one of the scripture readings during our Sunday morning worship services? A sign-up sheet for the upcoming months is on the bulletin board outside the Church Office. We would love to have you be a part of our prayerful time together in this way!

SHARING & CARING

A NOTE OF THANKS

Blessings are everywhere. Fortunately I fell at church as opposed to being home alone. Your cards and calls have cheered me. Thanks to you all.

Bobbie Bradt



A NOTE ABOUT PARKING:

TREATING OUR MEMBERS & NEIGHBORS WELL

As we seek to grow together here at Payson Park Church, we celebrate the fact that the number of people attending Sunday services and other events is increasing. The challenge that arises from such growth is that parking space near the church is limited. Please park carefully, being sure you do not block a driveway. Especially as much snow has arrived, we want to be good neighbors. We also hope that those who arrive early to church for choir, ushering, or other duties, will save parking close to our entrances for those who have difficulty walking in the inclement weather. We thank you for presence here and for your caring consideration.



ARE YOU MISSING SOMETHING?

CHURCH LOST & FOUND

Did you leave a hat or glasses at church one Sunday? Are you missing a mitten or ball? If you get home and find something is lost, please call the Church Office during the week. It's there we have a Lost & Found box and we will be happy to help you locate your missing item if it has been turned in.

WITH GRATITUDE:

A NOTE FROM OUR PASTOR

Sunday, January 9, marked my seventh anniversary with you all at Payson Park Church, and it was wonderful to celebrate our history together at fellowship hour. I thank Merry Ray, who served as the chair of the Pastor Relations Committee for the past several years, for her kind words, and all of you who came together to enjoy the cake and share in that special moment of celebration. It is an honor and privilege to serve as your pastor, and I am grateful that we continue to grow in faith, service and love. Blessings and peace to us as we continue on this journey together!



IN MEMORIAM:

ROBERT COREY

On December 19 after worship, it was with sadness that we learned of Bob's death. Bob was a long time member of Payson Park Church, and his devoted presence at our Sunday services and at Coffee Hour will be missed. Visiting hours and a graveside service were held on December 22. The Memorial Service will be Sunday, February 6, at 12:00 pm. If you would like to be a part of this service or have a memory you'd like our pastor to share, please speak with Lael. The Payson Park community was Bob's family in many ways, and it is with such care and love we come together to celebrate his life in God's world.

NEW MEMBERS TO BE RECEIVED

INTO THE LIFE OF PAYSON PARK CHURCH

Are you looking for a church to call "home" at this time in your life? Would you like to explore what it means to be a member of Payson Park Church and the United Church of Christ? New members will be received into the life of this congregation later this winter. Please speak with Lael if you have questions about membership opportunities.

MISSION & MUSIC NEWS

THE PASSION PLUNGE:

A MESSAGE FROM ALLEN BUTTIMER



Dear PPC Friends/Family, I'm heading to the beach a little early this year and I'll be known as a "plunger." I know the water will probably be below 40 degrees on February 26th, but let's be honest, it won't be much warmer come summer - we are in New England after all! Why would I do something so wacky? The Passion Plunge helps support thousands of individuals with intellectual disabilities who have chosen to live a healthier and happier life by participating in programs offered by Special Olympics Massachusetts. All Plungers and Chickens are asked to raise a minimum of \$250 - will you please consider supporting me? For every \$100 I raise, one athlete will be able to take part in Special Smiles screening. As part of the Healthy Athletes program, Special Smiles offers dental screenings, health education and prevention services, and refers athletes to potential sources of treatment and follow-up care. If I raise the minimum of \$250, it will pay for a group of 10 athletes to participate in a Healthy Huddle session. Athletes who attend a Healthy Huddle session will receive health education and awareness about sports-specific topics. They will get to see a speaker and take part in an interactive portion of the event. Each athlete will take home health education tools and materials and, hopefully, become a better athlete on and off the playing field!

You can help me reach this goal by making a donation online or please speak with me on a Sunday during fellowship hour. Use the link below and you will be taken to my personal donation page where you can make a secure online credit card donation. And feel free to meet me when I come out of the water with a cup of coffee and a towel!

www.specialolympicsma.org

PLL BE WET AND COLD ON FEBRUARY 26TH

AND IT IS GOING TO BE GREAT!

A NIGHT OF SONG:

SPECIAL MUSIC CLASS IN FEBRUARY

Megan Henderson writes, "I hope you will be able to join us for our first Shape Note sing on Tuesday evening February 15. We will sing some favorites from the Sacred Harp book. I will teach you how to read the shapes that gave the tradition of Shape Note singing its name. Please join us in the choir room from 7:00 to 8:30 for an evening of rousing and contemplative American Sacred tunes. Reading music is not a requirement. All are welcome!"



BRISTOL LODGE FOOD KITCHEN

HELPING THE HUNGRY NEAR HOME

THANK YOU to the many kind friends who have given cash toward the grocery expenses for the monthly meals. There is enough money in the kitty now to carry us for several months. And THANK YOU to the new volunteer cooks; I am so happy to have you join the fellowship of volunteers!

The upcoming dates and menus:

Sunday, March 20 Sandwich Making at church

Thursday, March 31 - Mission Soup

Friday, April 29 - Tortilla Lasagna

Tuesday, May 31 - Sausage and Peppers

Wednesday, Jun. 29 - Taco Salad

Please sign up on the M & O bulletin board near the church office and speak to Cynthia Lasker about cooking, delivering and serving. Thank you.

A COMMUNITY IN ACTION:

OUR ACTIVE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Please bring in new canned goods and dry food items on Sunday, February 6, to continue with the mission project for our two local food pantries in Belmont and Watertown! Your contributions have been well received. Both pantries have specific needs. These lists are posted on the M & O board.

EDUCATION & FELLOWSHIP

LECTURE SERIES:

SPONSORED BY THE

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Mark your spring calendars. Expanding from the faith-oriented topics usually offered for our Christian Education programs, we venture into a March through May monthly presentation on other topics of compelling interest to our community. The series will be held at noon on the first Sunday of the month. We begin on March 6th with the focus on issues facing the blind and deaf, will then explore autism on April 3rd, and conclude with a discussion about Alzheimer's disease on May 1st. Speakers have not yet been finalized. Please join for one or all, as we continue building our community of faith by looking at these topics together.



PAGE TURNERS:

BOOK DISCUSSION

Are you interested in gathering with a new book discussion group? Please speak with Lael if you would like to reflect on the book "Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life" by Karen Armstrong. One of the most original thinkers on the role of religion in the modern world, Armstrong now gives us an impassioned and practical book that can help us make the world a more compassionate place. Karen Armstrong believes that while compassion is intrinsic in all human beings, each of us needs to work diligently to cultivate and expand our capacity for compassion. Here, in this straightforward, thoughtful, and thought-provoking book, she sets out a program that can lead us toward a more compassionate life. The twelve steps the author suggests begin with "Learn About Compassion" and close with "Love Your Enemies."

FAITHFUL REFLECTIONS:

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY & DISCUSSION

Are you looking for a way to think about your faith and how it applies to your most practical decisions? Would you like a chance to talk about your spirituality with other people? *Faithful Reflections* is a class that provides just such opportunities as Lael leads us in a time of meditation and conversation about the coming week's scripture passage. With the sermon series on The Lord's Prayer beginning in February, these classes will be especially thought provoking. Join us for one class or each week, Thursdays from 6:30 – 8:00 pm as we gather in the Parlor for light supper and great sharing.



FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE FELLOWSHIP:

TUESDAYS IN FEBRUARY, 2:00 - 4:00 P.M.

The group would like to invite you to join them whether you knit or not. They meet on these Tuesdays: 1, 8, 15, and 22 weather permitting (please check the church voice mail to find out if the gathering is cancelled, as the message will be updated on Tuesdays.) Inspired by the knitting of prayer shawls, this is a time of "sharing and caring" in the spirit of faith, hope, and love. Please consider coming once or every week to get together with new and old-time friends of the church.

THE GOOD AFTERNOONS:

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16

Through the year we have enjoyed sharing tips about healthy living. In our February gathering we will continue sharing groundbreaking information and articles, discussing together the joys and challenges we face maintaining good health at any age. If you have the afternoon free and would like to join us from 2:00 - 3:30 p.m., please come. Everyone is welcome as we give thanks for God's creation in this unique and spiritual way.

FEBRUARY 2011

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1

2:00 PM Faith, Hope, & Love
7:00 PM Church Council

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3

6:30 PM Faithful Reflections Bible Study

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6 10:30 AM

Communion Sunday

**And Collection for the Food Pantries:
The Reverend Lael Atkinson preaching**

9:00 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal
9:30 AM Youth Choir Rehearsal
10:00 AM Nursery Care
10:30 AM Worship & Church School
10:45 AM Nursery Music Time
11:15 AM Cherub Choir Rehearsal
11:30 AM Fellowship Hour
11:40 AM Alleluia Choir Rehearsal
12:00 PM Memorial Service

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8

9:00AM Food Pantry Drop off
2:00 PM Faith, Hope, & Love
7:00 PM Property Committee

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10

6:30 PM Faithful Reflections Bible Study

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13 10:30 AM

The Reverend Lael Atkinson preaching

9:00 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal
9:30 AM Youth Choir Rehearsal
10:00 AM Nursery Care
10:30 AM Worship & Church School
11:15 AM Cherub Choir Rehearsal
11:30 AM Fellowship Hour
11:40 AM Alleluia Choir Rehearsal

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15 *Office Closed*

2:00 PM Faith, Hope, & Love
7:00 PM Diaconate
7:00 PM Music Class: Shape Note Sing

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16 Messenger Deadline

2:00 PM The Good Afternoons

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17

6:30 PM Faithful Reflections Bible Study

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20 10:30 AM

The Reverend Lael Atkinson preaching

Alleluia Choir: *We are Marching in the Light of God*

9:00 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal
9:30 AM Youth Choir Rehearsal
10:00 AM Nursery Care
10:30 AM Worship & Church School
11:15 AM Cherub Choir Rehearsal
11:30 AM Fellowship Hour
11:40 AM Alleluia Choir Rehearsal
12:00 PM Christian Education Committee

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22

2:00 PM Faith, Hope, & Love

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24

6:30 PM Faithful Reflections Bible Study

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27 10:30 AM

The Reverend Linda Knight preaching;

The Reverend Lael Atkinson presiding

The Youth Choir: *Cantate Domino*

9:00 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal
9:30 AM Youth Choir Rehearsal
10:00 AM Nursery Care
10:30 AM Worship & Church School
11:15 AM Cherub Choir Rehearsal
11:30 AM Fellowship Hour
11:40 AM Alleluia Choir Rehearsal



DO YOU NEED TO REACH THE PASTOR?

The Reverend Lael Atkinson can be reached through the Church Office or at home (617) 464-4990.

THE MESSENGER

PAYSON PARK CHURCH
365 BELMONT STREET
BELMONT MA 02478-3438

COMING SOON, VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2011:

“PANDA MANIA, WHERE GOD IS WILD ABOUT YOU”



Our June summer program for children is in its planning stages and we need your help! The Decoration committee is beginning to collect items with an Asian theme and, of course, pandas. If you have an item to lend or donate, please bring it to church and give to Cindy Lou Benson, our VBS director. We are looking for long paper tubes (similar to and including wrapping paper tubes) thin pvc pipes; any lengths over 3 feet, Chinese lanterns, hoola hoops, green crepe paper and panda stuffed toys. Registration information and confirmed dates will be available in March. Please speak with Cindy Lou, anytime on Sunday or send her an email.

Mark your calendar for Saturday, April 16, from 9:00 to noon as we will be hosting Group Publishing for our third year of VBS U. At this event, we'll learn the tricks of the trade from Group's VBS veterans. This totally hands-on training gives volunteers pointers on everything VBS from fundraising, recruiting, and decorating to clean-up and follow-up. We'll learn to plan, coordinate and experience our church's best VBS yet while hosting a place for other church leaders to come and learn too. This is YOUR chance to get connected with other VBSers. Sign up today with an email to Cindy Lou.

cedirector@paysonpark.org