

# THE MESSENGER

## PAYSON PARK CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

365 BELMONT STREET, BELMONT, MA 02478

617-484-1542

office@paysonpark.org www.paysonpark.org

## JANUARY 2012

### 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.*

Beginning a new year together we continue to celebrate Jesus' arrival, remembering that the Christian story is about the birth of love, radical and unconditional love that comes into the world to lead us to unity and peace. Whether we take the Christmas and Epiphany stories as myth or miracle, we find in them a description of love that is offered to all people, justice and redemption born in a world filled with the realities of war and poverty and natural disaster. Through the babe in the manger, we find a love that strives to put to an end the divisive presence of prejudice and hate, a love that inspires healing not just of our individual hearts but for all humankind. This is a love that arrives poor and helpless to inspire us to work to end poverty, hunger, and homelessness.

It is as we contemplate the great stories of our tradition that we can ask ourselves important questions with the start of 2012: What kind of story are we telling with our days? Are we helping to build upon the mission of the One we call the Prince of Peace?

It's never too late. That's what we learn at the scene in the manger, and even more powerfully it's what we learn on Calvary, there at the cross, the place where God's love was most brutally betrayed. But what happens in Jerusalem? Love is restored. New life prevails. The Christian message of hope is that no one can stop the God's eternal and everlasting grace.

Yes, it's in this season we celebrate the powers of love that bring people together. Just as Mary and Joseph gathered with the shepherds and Wise Men, so we, too, have the opportunity to build new community here at Payson Park Church and beyond. May we be opened this year to new life and greater love, by the Spirit's power.

With love from The Reverend Lael Atkinson



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Worship Schedule	2
Mission & Outreach	3
Sharing & Caring	4
Education & Fellowship	5
Worship & Special News	8
Calendar	9
Pageant	10



# MISSION & OUTREACH

## **A COMMUNITY IN ACTION WITH AN ACTIVE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING: AN OFFERING TO OUR LOCAL FOOD PANTRY**

Please bring in new canned goods and dry food items on Sunday, January 1st, to continue with the mission project for our two local food pantries in Belmont and Watertown! The “Active Prayer of Thanksgiving” will take place during the children’s moment in worship and will be an offering of food (and/or money for food) to help feed God’s hungry children. There will be a procession to the altar steps where the donations will be delivered. After church the teen youth will gather the offering for this month’s recipient, the Watertown Food Pantry.

## **BRISTOL LODGE FOOD KITCHEN HELPING THE HUNGRY NEAR HOME**

Date: Tuesday, January 24 - oven beef stew  
Delivery: 3-5 p.m. delivery to Emmanuel  
Methodist Church, Waltham  
Serve: 5-5:45 p.m.

We have now been assigned the fourth Tuesday of every month, beginning in January, with the exception of July and August when we take a break. In the spirit of a new year, why not consider a new personal mission? Help is needed in preparing monthly hot meals for men and women in the Waltham area. It’s easy to buy the ingredients and prepare the basic meal for 12 people and it’s also rewarding to serve the food to the appreciative guests at the Waltham church. Check the Mission & Outreach bulletin board for details, recipes and sign-up. Please speak with Cynthia Lasker if you have any questions. Thank you. The future dates are:

Tuesday, Feb. 28 - mission soup  
Tuesday, Mar. 27 - tortilla lasagna  
Tuesday, Apr. 24 - country-style chicken  
Tuesday, May 22 - ham/corn casserole  
Tuesday, Jun. 26 - oriental chicken salad

## **WALKING IN THE WAYS OF JESUS: A WORD OF GRATITUDE FOR YOUR SERVICE**

Joyful thanksgiving for the wholehearted participation in and generous response to the Mission & Outreach appeals throughout 2011.

Your pledges and contributions supported the United Church of Christ’s One Great Hour of Sharing, Spring Storm Appeal, Neighbors in Need and Christmas Fund; the Thanksgiving offering to Pilgrim Church, Dorchester; God’s Garden ongoing collection of food for the Belmont and Watertown Food Pantries; Church World Service Blanket Appeal; and City Mission Society’s Great American Book Drive and Christmas Gifts collection.

Through your giving, you recognize God’s mystic bond that makes all people one and offers help and hope to those in need. May you be blessed in your caring and sharing.

Your Mission and Outreach Committee



## **THE MINISTRY OF ALL BELIEVERS: OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE AROUND**

Are you looking for a way to serve the church or the world? The Nominating Committee is currently recruiting members and friends of the congregation to serve on the committees of the church. If you would like to explore ways to offer your talents and time, please speak with Carl Miller, Nominating Committee Chair.

# SHARING & CARING

## **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. With the start of a new year and particularly as the winter's snow arrives, 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.

### **LET IT SNOW**

**LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW...**

**BUT PLEASE, NOT ON SUNDAYS!**

As we enter the winter season, the Diaconate reminds you that Sunday morning services will be cancelled when a parking ban is in effect in Belmont. To confirm whether or not we will gather for worship, please call the church after 8:00 AM on the Sunday in question. The recorded message will be changed IF our service is cancelled. If you call the church and do not hear the recording, please call again as the line may be temporarily busy with another caller. Thank you!

### **SHARING OUR LIVES WITH ONE ANOTHER**

We want to hear from you! Sharing news about events in the church and wider community as well as personal concerns *and* celebrations for prayer is a vital way we grow together. Through the winter season, announcements will continue to be made by the pastor during Sunday's worship service so that the information can be heard by all. If you have something to share, please speak with Lael during the week or before Sunday services so that your information may be announced to the congregation. You may also give a written request to an usher. Thank you for sharing – and caring!

## **IN MEMORIAM**

On Thursday, May 24, Kevin Finnerty, brother of Janet Coleman, Director of the Payson Park Nursery School, died suddenly at home. Reverend Atkinson led the funeral service at Short, Diamond, and Williamson Funeral Home on Monday, December 12. As we continue to give thanks for Kevin's life and grieve his death, please feel free to reach out to Janet and her family in this trying time. Cards can be sent to her home, 5 Knox Street, Belmont, MA 02478.

### **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 this winter. Please speak with our pastor Lael if you have questions about membership opportunities.

## **TRANSPORTATION:**

### **RIDES TO CHURCH AVAILABLE!**

Do you or someone you know need a ride to Sunday worship services or a special church event? The Transportation Committee is here to help! Please speak with Tom Cappadona or our pastor if such assistance would allow you to be more active in the life of the church. Don't be driven to despair – let us help you be transported to hope and life in community!

### **MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY**

Please note: the church office will be closed on Monday and Tuesday, January 16 and 17 in observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day holiday. If you need church assistance, please call our Administrative Coordinator, Cindy Lou Benson, Wednesday through Friday of that week. Thank you!

# EDUCATION & FELLOWSHIP

## **BRING A FRIEND TO CHURCH SCHOOL SUNDAY, JANUARY 8 STORYTELLING IN RELIGIOUS SETTINGS**

Storyteller Valerie Tutson

It has been said that storyteller Valerie Tutson is an energetic, dynamic performer who leaves the room vibrating when she exits. Valerie Tutson graduated from Brown University with a Master's degree in Theatre Arts and a degree in a self-designed major - Storytelling As A Communications Art. She has been telling stories in schools, churches, libraries, festivals and conferences for over 10 years and we welcome this refreshing and enthusiastic storyteller to God's Garden on Sunday, January 8th.

Valerie draws her stories from around the world with an emphasis on African traditions. Her repertoire includes stories and songs she learned in her travels to South Africa, her experiences in West Africa, stories from African American history.

When she is not on the road, Valerie is a member of the Sheldon St. Church, the first Protestant Cape Verdean church in the country. She loves singing in the choir and she loves to share the stories and songs of the faith that move us past the mind to reconnect us to the heart and soul.

This event is hosted by the Christian Education Committee. We welcome Valerie as she tells her stories to our youth in God's Garden in church school on Sunday, January 8th.



## **FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE FELLOWSHIP TUESDAYS IN JANUARY, 2:00 - 4:00 P.M.**

The group is back from taking their winter break! They would like to invite you to join them whether you knit or not. They meet on these Tuesdays: 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31 weather permitting. 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.

## **ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES: SPECIAL OFFERINGS IN FEBRUARY**

Has the Christian tradition seemed irrelevant or inaccessible to you? Do you wonder what it means to be a person of faith in contemporary times? These weekly discussions seek to provide a place for education as well as exploration as Lael leads us in reflecting on the upcoming Sunday's gospel text, allowing us to contemplate and discuss the theme of our worship service in an extended manner. Mark your calendars for Thursday evenings in February.

### **THE GOOD AFTERNOONS:**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2:00 – 3:30 PM**

Through the year we have enjoyed sharing tips about healthy living. In our first winter gathering we will review the information we have shared, discussing together the joys and challenges we face with aging in addition to learning from a newly released video by Dr. Furman. If you have the afternoon free and would like to join us, please come. All ages are welcome as we give thanks for God's creation in this unique and spiritual way.

### **GROWING IN FAITH & UNDERSTANDING:**

**BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR LOAN IN THE PARLOR**

Looking for a good book to stimulate your faith and spiritual practices? Or would you like to share a volume or two that you found particularly inspirational? The Christian Education Committee's book cart may be just the thing for you! Located in the Parlor near the piano, this cart serves as our church's lending library. Working on the honor system, you're invited to browse the collection regularly and take a book to read, replacing it once you're finished.

## WORSHIP & SPECIAL NEWS

### CELEBRATING

#### MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Join us as we celebrate the ministry of The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. this year. On Sunday, January 15, The Reverend Linda Knight will help us reflect on the ways we are called to work for justice and healing, following in the footsteps of previous disciples.

### WINTER PLANNING:

#### A NOTE FROM THE

#### PASTOR RELATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR

With the fall and holiday seasons filled with such strong programs and services, we enter the winter season gratefully. Thank you all for the many ways you support the life of Payson Park Church! It is with such thankfulness that I write to report that the Pastor Relations Committee met and discussed the appropriate time for Study Leave so that our pastor can complete revision work on her dissertation. Recognizing that Lael is contracted to take two weeks of such important leave each year, we agreed that the first two weeks of January would be a good time for this endeavor. Preachers have been arranged and pastoral coverage will be provided, Lael then returning the week before our Annual Meeting. If you have questions about this process, please let me know. Again, I thank you for the ways you support the church and our Pastor.

Faithfully from The Reverend Linda Knight.



### GROWING IN STRENGTH & NUMBER:

#### ANNUAL PLEDGE APPEAL UPDATE

As the annual pledge appeal continues here at Payson Park Church, we thank YOU for making a financial pledge to benefit this community and the continued mission of Christ in this glorious and yet broken world. Working toward 100% participation, we have at this point received nearly 36 pledge cards. Thanks to those who have made such a commitment, and “please pledge soon!” to those who have not yet responded. Every friend and member counts as we work to build a community filled with God’s unifying and inspiring Spirit.

### ANNUAL MEETING:

#### SAVE THE DATE

Calling all members and friends of Payson Park Church! The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 22 after worship. This is an important event as we discuss not only the financial concerns of the church but also topics related to membership growth and long-range planning. Please plan to attend this meeting and the luncheon to follow.

### 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.

### CABLE BROADCAST SCHEDULE

If you or a loved one are unable to attend worship on Sundays, we hope you’ll join with us in the spirit of prayer during the week. The Sunday services of our church are broadcast on local cable networks at the following times: In Arlington - Sundays and Wednesdays at 4:30 pm, Belmont - Sundays at 9:00 am, and 4:00 pm, Waltham - Sundays at 8:00 am, Watertown - Sundays at 10:00 am and Mondays at 4:30 pm.

# JANUARY 2012

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 1** **10:30 AM**

**Service of Holy Communion &  
Food Pantry Collection Drive:  
The Reverend Lael Atkinson preaching**

9:00 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal  
9:00 AM Nursery Care  
9:15 AM Youth Choir Rehearsal  
10:30 AM Worship & Church School  
11:30 AM Fellowship Hour (Endowment Trustees)  
12:00 PM Share Your Faith in Films

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 3** *(Office closed)*

9:00 AM Drop off food pantry (Watertown)  
2:00 PM Faith, Hope & Love  
7:00 PM Church Council

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 8** **10:30 AM**

**Bring a Friend to Church School &  
Epiphany Sunday:  
Nancy Slavinsky, Lay Preacher**

9:00 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal  
9:00 AM Nursery Care  
9:15 AM Youth Choir Rehearsal  
10:30 AM Worship & Church School  
11:30 AM Fellowship Hour (Christian Ed.)

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 10**

2:00 PM Faith, Hope & Love  
7:00 PM Property Committee



**SUNDAY, JANUARY 15** **10:30 AM**

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend:  
The Reverend Linda Knight, preaching**

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

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 17** *(Office closed)*

2:00 PM Faith, Hope & Love  
7:00 PM Diaconate

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18** *Messenger Deadline*

10:00 AM PPNS Committee

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 22** **10:30 AM**

**Annual Meeting Sunday &  
Youth Choir Singing:**

**The Reverend Lael Atkinson preaching**

9:00 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal  
9:45 AM Youth Choir rehearsal  
9:00 AM Nursery Care  
9:15 AM Youth Choir Rehearsal  
10:30 AM Worship & Church School  
11:30 AM Annual Mtg. & Luncheon (Diaconate)

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 24**

2:00 PM Faith, Hope & Love

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25**

9:00 AM Messenger Committee

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 29** **10:30 AM**

**The Fourth Sunday after Epiphany  
The Reverend Lael Atkinson preaching**

9:00 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal  
9:00 AM Nursery Care  
9:15 AM Youth Choir Rehearsal  
10:30 AM Worship & Church School  
11:30 AM Fellowship Hr. (Church School Parents)  
3:00 PM Songs for Sophie Benefit

**TUES., JAN 31** 2:00 PM Faith, Hope & Love

## 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



Payson Park Church celebrated the Christmas season with their annual pageant, *Carriers of the Light*, presented by the Children's Youth Choirs, directed by Molly Jo Rivelli, Youth Choir director and Cindy Lou Benson, Christian Education Director. The pageant was followed by the annual festive Christmas luncheon! Shown in the front row are Julia Giles, Audrey Hayes, Elizabeth Connell, Lizzy Thidemann as the angel, Eleanor Thidemann as Mary, Olivia Cronin and Rose Muldrew. Back row are the Shepherds: Henry Troop, Jack Hayes, Dylan Giles, Adam Cronin and Julian Thourot with Elliott Ronna portraying Joseph in blue. Not shown are Harry Thidemann as King Herod with soldiers; Jack Giles and Matthew Muldrew. 8