

THE MESSENGER

PAYSON PARK CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

365 BELMONT STREET, BELMONT, MA 02478

617-484-1542 FAX 617-484-1526



JANUARY 2009

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.”**

As the days of Christmas lead us into the season of Epiphany, we shift our attention from the baby lying in the manger to the early events of Jesus’ ministry. Whether teaching in a synagogue or healing on the streets, Jesus demonstrates that God’s grace is for all people. As God’s beloved, Jesus leads us to recognize that we, too, are cherished and loved as God’s blessed creation.

Of course there’s a hitch. While the invitation to live with such love comes to us continuously, we must respond to such grace. What will we do? Can we embrace this unconditional care? Might we allow it to transform our lives?

Martin Luther King, Jr. said “yes” to God’s invitation. Through his personal and vocational choices he allowed God’s grace to flow, working like Jesus to bring people together no matter what their race or class, cultural or educational background. Like Jesus, Dr. King worked for unity and peace, inspiring us to do the same.

It is for this reason I am excited to celebrate the ministry of reconciliation in these days of Epiphany. From participating in City Mission Society’s “Day of Service” on Saturday, January 17, to our special worship service the next day, we will give thanks for the ways we at Payson Park Church work to build unity in this world. We also have the chance to celebrate another important ministry in our midst: the nine years of The Reverend Rob Asinger’s service in during worship on January 25 and at our Annual Meeting Luncheon. Please join us for these and other important times of sharing!

F R O M T H E



PASTOR

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With love from The Reverend Lael Atkinson

JANUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 2009 **10:30 a.m.**

The Reverend Lael Atkinson preaching

Sermon "Our Search for Hope"

Scripture Psalm 28: 1-2 & 6-9; Matthew 2: 1-12

Anthem "The Three Kings" Peter Cornelius

Our Fellowship Hour will be hosted by the Nominating Committee.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11, 2009 **10:30 a.m.**

**John Brock, Ministerial Intern preaching;
The Reverend Lael Atkinson presiding**

Sermon "Loving God through Prayer"

Scripture Luke 5: 12-16

Anthem "Mighty Lord, Thy Faithfulness
Abideth Ever" Antonio Lotti

Pick-up Choir

"Hear My Prayer, O Lord" Antonín Dvořák
Kaori Emery, solo

Our Fellowship Hour will be hosted by the Finance & Property Committee. Altar flowers are given by Bob and Linda Jones in loving memory of Linda's parents, Charles and Edna Giles.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18, 2009 **10:30 a.m.**

The Reverend Lael Atkinson preaching

Sermon "To Be Known and Still Loved"

Scripture Psalm 139: 1-6 & 13-18; John 1: 43-51

Anthem "Rise and Shine" Todd Jolly

Solo "Lord, I Don't Feel No Ways Tired" Spiritual
Davron Monroe, soloist

Our Fellowship Hour will be hosted by the Music Committee. Altar flowers are given by The Benjamin Family in loving memory of Olive E. and Harold S. Moore.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 2009 **10:30 a.m.**

**The Reverend Rob Asinger preaching;
The Reverend Lael Atkinson presiding**

Sermon "Recognizing Christ Among Us"

Scripture Psalm 148; Luke 2: 22-40

Anthem "If Ye Love Me" Thomas Tallis

Our Fellowship Hour will be hosted by the Diaconate. Altar flowers are given by Armen and Janet David in loving memory of Thomas and Marion Serino.



WORSHIP LEADERS WELCOME!

Would you like to participate in worship? All are welcome to join in the leadership of our Sunday services. If you would like to read Scripture or sing with one of the choirs, please speak with Lael, Terry, or Cathy. We want you...we need you!

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

Again, we thank members and friends for worshipping with us. Our attendance for the month of December was as follows:

November 30:	117	December 21:	100
December 7:	151	December 24:	230
December 14:	173	December 28:	71

WORSHIP & ADMINISTRATIVE NEWS

HONORING MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.: WORKING FOR JUSTICE & PEACE

Join us as we celebrate the ministry of The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. this year. On Sunday, January 18, The Reverend Lael Atkinson will help us reflect on the ways we are called to work for justice and peace, following in the footsteps of those who participated in the Civil Rights Movement. As listed on the Mission & Outreach page, a workday on Saturday, January 17 will also be taking place.

Then, on Monday, January 19, our celebration continues as we join with the others in the community at Belmont High School for the Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast held from 8:45—11:00 a.m. Please join Lael and many others for this important time of witness and sharing. Reservations can be made at www.belmontagainstracism.org.

THE MINISTRY OF ALL BELIEVERS: OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE ABOUND

Are you looking for a way to serve the church? 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, chair of the Nominating Committee.

PLEDGING OUR LIVES IN LOVE: ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP DRIVE

As we progress through the month of January we have the opportunity - and challenge! - to consider how we give our gifts of treasure to God. As a member or friend of Payson Park Church we hope you'll consider making a financial pledge this year for the benefit of this church and the continued mission of Jesus. Members of the Finance and Property Committee will make special outreach efforts and announcements this month. May we respond in faith, with gratitude and generosity!



Save the date! The Annual Meeting of Payson Park Church will be held on Sunday, January 25 after worship. This is an important event as we not only review the past year but plan for the future. More information about this meeting is on pages 6 and 7.

It is after this meeting that we will gather for our annual Church Luncheon, where we'll celebrate The Reverend Rob Asinger's nine years of ministry among us. If you would like to help plan this luncheon and special festivities, please speak with Alice Holt, Co-Senior Deacons, or Karen Harvey. Mark your calendars for these important events!



CABLE BROADCASTING TIMES

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 Belmont, Sundays at 9:00 a.m., Tuesdays at 3:00 p.m., Thursdays at 9:00 p.m., and Fridays at 5:00 p.m.; in Waltham, Sundays at 9:00 a.m.; in Arlington, Sundays and Wednesdays at 4:30 p.m.; and in Watertown, every other Tuesday at 9:00 p.m.

EDUCATION & FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



BODY & SOUL

**A TIME OF SHARING & CONTEMPLATION
MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 7:00 - 8:30 P.M.**

Looking for a way to deepen your spiritual practices in the new year? Mark your calendars for this prayerful opportunity for spiritual growth and support! On Monday, January 12, the group “Body & Soul” will meet for a time of extended meditation and personal sharing. Lael Atkinson will offer special music selections from artists she finds inspirational, in addition to providing reading resources that have helped her to grow spiritually. The night’s discussion will also include a time of sharing around the ways of our faith encourages us to care for our bodies in healthy ways. Please join us for this evening of quiet reflection - and bring resources that you find helpful in your life!

FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE FELLOWSHIP

Our group has met monthly, summer and winter, on Wednesday evenings in the parlor or the Pastor’s Study. However, we have decided to change our meeting time to Tuesday afternoons from 2 to 4 pm. (We will not meet on the last Tuesday of the month when The Good Afternoons group meets). There are usually five or six of us, and you can drop in any time, or knit at home if you can’t come during the day. We also give instructions. It’s a simple pattern. There are a couple of people who often come in just to chat. We enjoy their company, too. With out daytime meetings, we are hoping that more people can join us. We will begin our Tuesday afternoon meetings on January 13. Mark your calendars!

THE GOOD AFTERNOONS: TUESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2:00 - 3:30 P.M.

Through the year we have enjoyed sharing tips about healthy living. In our January gathering we will review the information we have shared, discussing together the joys and challenges we face with aging. 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.



THE WIDER CHURCH: EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Are you interested in attending educational or other events offered by our denomination? The offices of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ, located in Framingham, provide a host of classes and workshops that are available to lay and clergy members alike. Events are regularly posted on our bulletin boards, or you may log on to the denomination’s website: macucc.org.



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

As we enter 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!

MISSION AND OUTREACH NEWS

ANGEL TREE

Thank you to everyone who participated as an angel donor for our Angel Tree! We provided over 110 gifts for over 50 women and children. The Second Step Shelter in Newton greatly appreciates everything we have done!

CARING FOR CREATION

MONDAY, JANUARY 21, 7:00 - 8:30 P.M.
ENERGY USE IN OUR CHURCH

Our church is our home, too. Not only do we all help pay the bills, but we are responsible for the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming, from our gas heating system and the electricity for our lights. Two reasons to conserve energy!

We have asked Rick Marsh to speak with us at this special meeting to understand how our heating system works and how the planning is done to use it efficiently. All are welcome to learn and to share your concerns on this very important topic.

On December 8th we admired Christmas tree balls made with ribbons and new jewelry from old, created by Carolyn Fish, and were reminded that donations to Heifer Project and other charities in the name of loved ones make wonderful Christmas gifts. Local programs that help wild and feral animals would be glad of our support too.

We also talked about how to make sure lights are turned off at night when various groups are using our church building. Would you feel more responsible to help with this if there were signs by some light switches? And would it help to have more receptacles for recycling paper/cardboard? Let us hear from you; better yet, come join us!

Isabel Best
 617-489-2236
isabel.best@verizon.net

HONORING MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.:

DAY OF SERVICE, JANUARY 17

The Mission and Outreach committee is sponsoring a day of service on Saturday, January 17 in conjunction with City Mission Society's MLK Day of Service. We are part of a team of volunteers emulating Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King's message of peace instead of simply commemorating it.

Last year 140 volunteers from two dozen churches came together to worship and to perform a variety of services throughout the city, from painting and cleaning at service sites to packing up books and other items to be shipped to people in need. One said: "Saturday was a wonderful experience for all of us. It provided an outlet to honor Martin Luther King that appealed to those of us who want to 'do something'."

If you are interested, a sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board or you can contact John Brock at intern@pasyonpark.org.

BRISTOL LODGE FOOD KITCHEN: HELPING THE HUNGRY NEAR HOME

Date: Friday, January 30
 Delivery: 3-5 p.m. delivery to Emmanuel
 Methodist Church, Waltham
 Serve: 5-5:45 p.m.
 Menu: Oven beef stew, tossed salad, rolls

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 M & O bulletin board for details, recipes and sign-up, and speak to Cynthia Lasker with questions.

LETTER FROM THE MODERATORS

December 29, 2008

Dear Fellow Members of the consolidated Payson Park Church,

This letter has two purposes. The first is to urge you to attend and participate in the church's annual meeting on Sunday, January 25, 2009, immediately following the regular worship service. The second is to explain the procedure that we follow to amend and clarify the parts of the bylaws describing the nature of this church and to consider changing the name of the this church. A name change would be a bit complicated because it requires compliance with both the church's bylaws and with a state statute.

First let us explain what has happened so far. Many of you will be familiar with this because you have participated in it. At the time of the consolidation between the former Phillips Church of Watertown and the former Payson Park Church of Belmont, it was agreed that the consolidated church would operate initially under the current name and the current bylaws of the former Payson Park Church. It was also agreed that the co-moderators would appoint a committee to review the bylaws and to propose amendments to those bylaws at the first annual meeting following the consolidation.

The Co-Moderators set up this committee, appointing Fred Isaacs, Bob Phillips, Will Clifford, Nancy Marsh, Karen Harvey, Ann Alves, and Mark Clark. Lael Atkinson and Rob Asinger participated in their capacities as Co-Pastors. Al Gledhill stepped in for Bob Phillips. This committee has already reported, and members of the consolidated church adopted many of the changes proposed by the committee at a special meeting on December 7.

A few aspects of the bylaws are subject to a special amendment procedure and cannot be amended at a special meeting. Under Article VII of the consolidated church bylaws (the former Payson Park

Church bylaws), some articles of the bylaws can be amended only at an annual meeting by a three quarters majority. The articles that are subject to that special amendment procedure are those dealing with the nature of the church including Article I, which states the Church's name. The Bylaw Committee did not recommend a particular name change. Instead, the committee recommended a procedure for the church members to choose an alternate name which would be considered at the next annual meeting

The bylaw committee recommended changes to several other sections of the bylaws. A new committee structure was voted on and approved by that meeting to other Articles of the bylaws which will also require final approval at the Annual Meeting.

The alternate name (the "candidate" as it were) is "Payson Park Phillips Church." But that is only a "candidate": it will not become the name of the consolidated church unless two things happen. First, Article I of the bylaws must be amended at an annual meeting. Second, state law must be complied with. If either one of those two things do not happen, the name will remain "Payson Park Church."

According to the current church bylaws, amendment of the articles describing the nature of the church requires a vote of a least three-quarters of those present and voting at an annual meeting and the affirmative vote must consist of at least fifty (50) votes. Compliance with the state statute for a name change requires either a vote of two-thirds of the entire membership of the consolidated church or a petition to the Commonwealth Secretary of State who may grant a name change even if the technical requirements of the statute have not been met. (The former Payson Park Church followed this petition procedure at the time of the original Phillips-Payson Park consolidation.)

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MUSIC MINISTRIES

LETTER FROM THE MODERATORS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

If the proposed name change achieves bylaw amendment approval but fails to achieve the vote specified by state statute for lack of numbers at the annual meeting, we intend to pursue the petition route. Current bylaws do not permit participation in the annual meeting by proxy. Therefore, it is especially important that as many members as possible attend the annual meeting and participate in person. Please attend the annual meeting and participate in consideration of the name change. If you have questions about this matter, do not hesitate to contact either of us, the pastors, or any member of the Bylaw Committee.

With All Good Wishes for the New Year,
Al Gledhill & Jeff Cronin
Co-Moderators



THE PICK-UP CHOIR WELCOMES YOU!

Psalm 95 reads, "Sing joyful songs to the Lord." Praise the mighty rock where we are safe. Come to worship God with thankful hearts and songs of praise." You don't have to have a trained voice or any musical experience to join in our praise; all are welcome. We hope you'll join us next Sunday, January 11, at 9:00 a.m. in the sanctuary to rehearse the *cap-pella* anthem "Mighty Lord, Thy Faithfulness Abideth Ever" by Antonio Lotti. Section leaders will help us learn our parts. Questions? See our Director of Music, Cathy Meyer.



"Chimes Ringing in the Night" was a huge success! Thank you to everyone who helped out, especially our cast members and team members who helped make costumes, decorate the hall and the set, provide props, serve dinner for our guests, and fill the hall with a warm audience for our children!

JOIN IN SONG TO CELEBRATE THE MINISTRY OF REVEREND ASINGER

A group of people will be coming together to sing at the annual meeting in celebration of Rob's ministry with us. If you would like to participate, let Cathy Meyer or Karen Harvey know. Rehearsals will be held after church on Sunday, January 11 and before church on Sunday, January 25. See your Sunday worship bulletin for more information.

CHILDREN'S MUSIC MINISTRIES

Our children's choir program had a very successful fall term, with about 50 children participating in weekly rehearsals and singing in worship. Our spring term will begin on the following dates:

Senior High Choir: Sunday, February 1

Cherub, Alleluia/Junior Choirs: Tuesday, February 3

Youth Choir: Wednesday, February 4

If you would like to register, please speak with Cathy Meyer or email musicdirector@paysonpark.org. We have some wonderful things planned for the new year - we certainly hope you will join us! Bring your friends!

SHARING & CARING



A TIME OF SUPPORT AND SHARING THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 6:00 - 7:30 P.M.

The stress of the holidays is only increased if you are caring for a loved one, near or far away. If you would like to share the joys and challenges you are facing in these days of January, please join John Brock and others in the Pastor's Study on Thursday, January 29 from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. This is a time of sharing and prayer - it is a night for YOU. Caregivers You-Night! [Please note: if you plan to attend, please let John know by Wednesday, January 28.]

HEART TO HEART: A GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

“Heart to Heart” is a monthly confidential support group for people dealing with recent loss and long-term grief. Facilitated by the Reverend Joanne Hartunian and others, the interdenominational and ecumenical gathering offers participants an opportunity to share experiences of grief and stories of loved ones in addition to adopting skills to cope with issues of anger, abandonment, guilt and betrayal. For more information about these meetings and their location, please call 617/484-0776. New members are welcome; transportation is provided for those who prefer not to drive at night or come to a meeting alone.

ARE YOU MISSING SOMETHING? CHURCH LOST & FOUND

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

WORDS OF THANKS

To our Payson Park Church Family: Thank you so much for working together to make the beautiful quilt for little Alexander! Each quilt square is such a wonderful addition, clearly filled with love and creativity. We especially like the multitude of colors which bring warmth and fun to the wall of Alex's bedroom.

Peace, the Meyer/Clark Family



CHURCH ADDRESS LISTING UPDATE: A NOTE FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

With the publication of our new church photo directory this past summer, we are aware of misprinted or omitted information and are preparing a new listing to be distributed at the Annual Meeting on January 25. Please review your information and call Carol Martinos, Church Administrator, with any additions or corrections. Thank you!

A NOTE ABOUT PARKING: TREATING OUR OLDER 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 arising from such growth is that parking spaces near the church are 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.

JANUARY 2009 CALENDAR



THURSDAY, JANUARY 1

New Year's Day - Church Office closed

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4

10:30 AM Worship & Church School

11:30 AM Fellowship Hour

12:00 noon Confirmation Class

6:30 PM Senior High Youth Group

TUESDAY, JANUARY 6

1:00 PM Staff Meeting

7:00 PM Church Council

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8

6:30 PM Nominating Committee

7:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11

9:00 AM Pick-up Choir Rehearsal

9:00 AM Mission & Outreach Committee

10:30 AM Worship & Church School

11:30 AM Fellowship Hour

12:00 PM Youth Class Youth Group

MONDAY, JANUARY 12

7:00 PM Body & Soul

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13

1:00 PM Staff Meeting

2:00 PM Faith, Hope & Love Fellowship

7:30 PM Finance & Property Committee

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14

7:00 PM Diaconate

Saturday, January 17

9:00 AM CMS Day of Service (off site)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15

7:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18

9:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal

10:30 AM Worship & Church School

11:30 AM Fellowship Hour

6:30 PM Senior High Youth Group

MONDAY, JANUARY 19

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - Church Office closed

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20

1:00 PM Staff Meeting

2:00 PM Faith, Hope & Love Fellowship

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21

7:00 PM Caring for Creation

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22

6:00 PM Caregivers Unite (RSVP by 12/9)

7:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25

9:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal

10:30 AM Worship & Church School

11:30 AM Annual Meeting and Luncheon

TUESDAY, JANUARY 27

1:00 PM Staff Meeting

2:00 PM The Good Afternoons

THURSDAY, JANUARY 29

6:00 PM Caregivers Unite (RSVP by 1/28)

7:30 PM Chancel 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

Rev. Lael Atkinson, Pastor; Rev. Terence R. Willis, Pastor Emeritus; John Brock, Ministerial Intern; Cindy Lou Benson, Christian Education Director; Terry Halco, Minister of Music; Cathy Meyer, Director of Music; Walter Guertin, Treasurer; Kevin Cassidy, Sexton; Sally Markham, Messenger Editor; Carol Martinos, Administrative Secretary; Janet Coleman, Nursery School Director; Carl McDonald, Acting Youth Minister.

“Chimes Ringing in the Night” Youth Ministry Pageant

