

The SPIRE
Park Avenue Congregational Church
The United Church of Christ
Arlington, Massachusetts

The Rev. Dr. William Albright, Pastor

February, 2010

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner

Come have pancakes for dinner at church on Tuesday, February 16, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. in Parish Hall. Pancakes, bacon, sausage and fruit will be served. \$5/adult, \$3/child with a \$15 max per family.

Invite your friends or family to come and enjoy an fun evening out at PACC. Let us do the cooking for them. We'll have a Mardi Gras craft project for the kids.

Shrove Tuesday is the day before Ash Wednesday and traditionally is the day when fats and oils are used up before the simpler days of Lent.

If you'd like to help with food preparation, serving or clean-up, please speak to Barbara Wagner, Betty Rich, or Kate Lindheim.

Ash Wednesday Service February 17

Our Ash Wednesday service will be February 17 at 7:30 p.m. It will include hymns, prayers, scripture readings, a brief meditation, and the "imposition of ashes" for those who wish. Traditionally, the ashes used in the service are made from palm leaves from last Palm Sunday which are burned, crushed, and mixed with olive oil. The ashes have a twofold meaning: a visible "confession" of our need for forgiveness, as in "sackcloth and ashes," and the recognition of our mortal and finite nature as human beings, as in "ashes to ashes and dust to dust." We hope you will join us for this time of reflection.

Trumpet and Organ Concert Sunday, February 7

see inside for details

Christian Education News

Sunday School

Materials to help families observe Lent at home will be on the table in the narthex on February 14. There will be devotional calendars and booklets for adults, booklets for families and tabletop resources. See the February Sunday School newsletter, on the bulletin board in the Sunday School hallway and emailed home, for more information about ways to observe Lent at home.

On February 21, we'll have our Sunday School Lent service. We'll gather together briefly in Parish Hall at the beginning of Sunday School to talk and learn about what Lent is through songs, prayer, Bible readings and an activity.

Confirmation

Our Confirmation group will meet on February 7 and 28 at 11:45 a.m. in the Fireplace Room.

Youth Groups

The Youth Groups will sell valentines in Parish Hall during coffee hour on February 7. Valentines are \$1 and include postage. Proceeds benefit the Youth Fund.

Youth Group 1 will meet on February 21 from 4-5:30 in the Nicoll Room. Youth Group 2 will meet on February 28 from 4-5:30 in the Nicoll Room. See the February Sunday School newsletter for details.

Kennedy Library topic for PACC-Men

PACC-Men will meet on Tuesday, February 2, to hear Tom Putnam's presentation on the Kennedy Library. Tom has worked there for the past ten years, first as Director of Education and now as Director. He will share stories from his experience over the past decade and provide an overview of the presidential library system and the collections housed at the Kennedy Library. All men are welcome to join us in the Fireplace Room at 7:30 p.m. If you have questions, speak with Mike Rich.

Sarah's Circle to discuss *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* will be the topic when Sarah's Circle meets on Saturday, February 13, at 10 a.m. in the Fireplace Room. Those who wish to meditate may come at 9:30 a.m. According to a review on Amazon, this "must be as close to a perfect novel as anyone has written in English. It concerns itself with only essential things the way the Bible does. It is almost a dark rendering of the Beatitudes." If you have questions, contact Merrith Sabo-Jones.

Summary of the Annual Meeting

The Treasurer's Report for 2009 shows a surplus (income over expenses) of \$3,500. The General Fund is still a negative \$3,000.

The membership approved a balanced budget for 2010. The budget for pledges is an optimistic \$152,000. Total fundraising is budgeted at \$16,000, which will require diligence. It was noted that the fundraising coordinators asked for and received approval from Council of Deacons to have raffles. On the expense side, there will not be any increase in staff salaries, and the outreach budget is reduced.

Robert Willey was elected treasurer, and Ken Miller and Tim Durning were elected Assistant Treasurers.

The Congregation voted to ratify the Council of Deacons' election of officers: Michael Rich, Moderator; Don Cohn, Vice Moderator; Valerie Censabella, Clerk; Kathy Richardson, Financial Secretary; Norm Niven, Collector; Linda Cohn and Judy Miller, Assistant Collectors. The moderator noted that Auditor and Historian positions are vacant waiting appropriate ministry action (job description, etc.)

The Congregation voted to ratify Betty Gitlin-Rich and Diane Wells as fundraising coordinators.

The congregation voted to ratify the members of the Merger Study Group: Bill Albright, Don Cohn, Linda Cohn, Tim Durning, Gary Kane, Kate Lindheim, Doug Record, Mike Rich, Kathy Richardson, and Barbara Wagner. A question was asked concerning permitting others to be added to group membership. The moderator explained that the group thought it was better not to increase its size but noted that the meetings are open and all are welcome to attend.

Tim Durning presented Ken Miller with a gift of appreciation for his efforts over the years as Treasurer. He received a standing ovation. Linda Cohn, on behalf of the Council of Deacons, thanked outgoing deacons Beverly Miller and Jeanne Woodin.

Capital Campaign pledges exceed \$320,000; \$94,000 has been received.

Merger Study Group Update

The Merger Study Group (MSG), which was formed in November by a vote of the Council of Deacons and ratified by PACC's membership at the Annual Meeting on January 24, has been gathering information to study the possibility of a merger with Pleasant Street Congregational Church (PSCC). This group's mandate is to study the question, not to negotiate a merger. At least two congregational votes must occur for a

merger to take place. First, the congregation would vote whether or not to enter into good faith negotiations with PSCC. If we vote to enter into negotiations, there would then be a second vote whether or not to accept negotiated terms and actually merge.

In addition to attending the meetings summarized below, members of the group have read several reports about mergers. Some of these were academic papers and some were written by members of PSCC to capture the gist of interviews with leaders of other churches in the area which have merged in recent years.

After two listening sessions with the congregation in November and December, the MSG and the Council met in December with the Rev. Wendy Vander Hart, Associate Conference Minister for the Metropolitan Boston Association of the Massachusetts Conference of the UCC, to learn what resources the Conference has available for congregations considering mergers. She encouraged PACC to consider a visioning process to determine our mission and purpose and where the Holy Spirit is leading us. This process could be completed together with PSCC. She recognized PSCC's tight time frame might not work for PACC. She believes it is appropriate that we try to be responsive to PSCC, or to what she called "the knock on the door", by giving careful consideration to their question about merger.

On January 5th, a meeting was held at PACC with PSCC's Merger Action Team and Council as well as PACC's MSG and Council. They provided us with their framework and model of a merger which we are sharing with the PACC congregation at two conversations scheduled for Tuesday, January 26th, at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, January 31st, after the church service. Subsequent to that January 5th meeting, we also received information from a real estate appraisal completed on PSCC's building. Because of our recent capital campaign and the improvements planned for our building, PSCC understands that a combined congregation—IF we were to be interested in merging—would be located in PACC's building. The status of their building is one of many variables to consider in determining our interest in a merger. The information they have given us about this and their finances will also be shared during the congregational conversations.

We hope that all members and friends will attend one of these conversations. If you are not able to attend either one, please contact a member of the MSG (Bill Albright, Don Cohn, Linda Cohn, Tim Durning, Gary Kane, Kate Lindheim, Doug Record, Mike Rich, Kathy Richardson and Barbara Wagner) or email the entire group to arrange a conversation at another time.

Capital Campaign Implementation update

The Chapel renovation project is moving along. We have bids from two contractors and will soon sign a contract with one of them and get the work started. At first you won't see any dramatic changes because we need to do some preparatory work: creating storage space for A Place to Grow to replace what they're losing behind the Chapel wall and putting a keypad combination lock on the Paul Revere Road door to provide access for the day care families.

Additionally, Jeffrey Brody and others knowledgeable about the organ are interviewing companies qualified to perform the anticipated work on the console. The timing of that work has not been determined, but, given the untimely death of our long-time organ technician, it is important to find a successor soon.

Deacons' ministry assignments for 2010

Administration: Don Cohn and Doug Record

Christian Education: Barbara Wagner

Fellowship and Care: Margaret Bell, Hong Chin, and Lauren Evans

Finance and Property: Gary Kane and Jeff Steinheider

Membership: Anita Clarke, Scott Jones and Anne Kelly Contini

Mission and Justice: Valerie Censabella and Karen Friedman

Worship and Music: Linda Cohn

The e-mail address for the deacons reaches all of the deacons plus Bill Albright, Kate Lindheim, and Kathy Richardson.

Storm cancellation procedure

At its January meeting the Council of Deacons more clearly defined the procedure regarding cancellation of church services due to weather. If there is a snow emergency in Arlington, prohibiting on-street parking, there will not be a worship service. If the weather is bad but there is no snow emergency, a decision will be made by 8 a.m. whether or not there will be a service; that will be announced via email and posted on the web site.

Cancellations should be posted on the three network TV stations (channels 4, 5 and 7) as well as WBZ radio, 1030 am. We also will attempt to post an announcement on the church web site and on the answering machine message. Power outages could affect our ability to access some or all of these systems. Of course, you should not attempt to come to church whenever you feel that conditions are unsafe.

2009/2010 PACC Concert Series

For the Benefit of the Music Program is pleased to present

Trumpet and Organ Concert

Christopher J. O'Hara, trumpet, **Mark Engelhardt**, organ

Mr. O'Hara, the founder of the Synergy Brass Quintet, has performed extensively throughout the United States, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, and the Federation of Russia and with distinguished artists including the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, The Boston Pops, and Natalie Cole.

Mr. Engelhardt, founder and director of the Choir School at Grace Church in Salem, Massachusetts, has been heard in concert throughout the United States, including Trinity Church, Wall Street, and Columbia University in New York City and the parish Church of S. Mary Redcliffe in England.

In the Sanctuary of the
Park Avenue Congregational Church
50 Paul Revere Road, Arlington MA

Sunday, February 7, 2010 at 3:00 PM

In advance: Adults - \$15, Seniors/Students - \$10

At the door: Adults - \$20, Seniors/Students - \$12

Please join us for a Post-Concert Reception in the Parish Hall

for more information check our website at pacc-ucc.org

or call the church office at 781-643-8680

Easter Festival Choir Rehearsals Starting

Do you like to sing but don't have the time to be part the choir each Sunday? Do you have a friend who likes to sing? Would you like to try out the choir without a long term commitment? Consider joining and/or bringing a friend with you to be part of our Festival Choir for Easter. This year we will be singing Mozart's *Alleluia* and Randall Thompson's *Alleluia*.

Our rehearsals are at 7:30 PM on Thursdays in the Nicoll Room. We will work on the Easter Music at the start of the evening and then the Festival Choir can leave when we turn to the music for Sunday. We hope to see you on Thursdays between now and Easter, April 4. If you have any questions you can talk to Jeffrey Brody or Doug Record.

What's Happening at PACC

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|------|---------|------------|--|
| Tue. | Feb. 2 | 7:30 p.m. | PACC-Men in the Fireplace Room |
| Wed. | Feb. 3 | 7:30 p.m. | Merger Study Group in the Fireplace Room |
| Thu. | Feb. 4 | 11:00 a.m. | Women's Guild in the Parish Hall |
| | | 7:30 p.m. | Choir rehearsal in the Nicoll Room |
| Sun. | Feb. 7 | 10:00 a.m. | Worship service with Communion, installation of Deacons |
| | | 11:30 a.m. | Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall |
| | | 11:45 a.m. | Youth Choir rehearsal in the Sanctuary |
| | | 11:45 a.m. | Confirmation Class in the Fireplace Room |
| | | 3:00 p.m. | Trumpet & Organ Concert |
| Mon. | Feb. 8 | 7:30 p.m. | Council of Deacons in the Nicoll Room |
| Tue. | Feb. 9 | 7:30 p.m. | Merger Study Group in the Fireplace Room |
| Wed. | Feb. 10 | 10:00 a.m. | Staff meeting in the Fireplace Room |
| | | 7:30 p.m. | Evening Bible Group in the Fireplace Room |
| Thu. | Feb. 11 | 7:30 p.m. | Choir rehearsal in the Nicoll Room |
| Sat. | Feb. 13 | 9:30 a.m. | Sarah's Circle in the Fireplace Room |
| Sun. | Feb. 14 | 10:00 a.m. | Worship service |
| | | 11:15 a.m. | Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall |
| | | 11:45 a.m. | Youth Choir rehearsal in the Nicoll Room |
| Mon. | Feb. 15 | | <i>Presidents' Day</i> ; office closed |
| | | 7:30 p.m. | Membership Ministry at the Record/Stark home, 15 Bellevue Rd., Arlington |

- Tue. Feb. 16 5:30 p.m. Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner in the Parish Hall
 Wed. Feb. 17 7:30 p.m. Ash Wednesday worship service in the Sanctuary
 Thu. Feb. 18 7:30 p.m. Choir rehearsal in the Nicoll Room
 Sun. Feb. 21 9:20 a.m. Youth Choir rehearsal in the Sanctuary
 10:00 a.m. Worship service, the Rev. Wendy Vander Hart, guest
 preacher; Sunday School Lenten service
 11:15 a.m. Communion in the Sanctuary
 11:15 a.m. Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall
 4:00 p.m. Youth Group 1 in the Nicoll Room
 Tue. Feb. 23 Deadline for March *Spire*
 Wed. Feb. 24 7:30 p.m. Book discussion in the Fireplace Room
 Thu. Feb. 25 7:30 p.m. Choir rehearsal in the Nicoll Room
 Sun. Feb. 28 10:00 a.m. Worship service
 11:15 a.m. Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall
 11:45 a.m. Confirmation Class in the Fireplace Room
 4:00 p.m. Youth Group 2 in the Nicoll Room

coming later in the year

- Sun. Mar. 28 8:30 a.m. Pancake breakfast in the Parish Hall
 10:00 a.m. Palm Sunday worship service
 3:00 p.m. David Cangelosi in Concert
 Thu. Apr. 1 7:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday worship service in the Sanctuary
 Sun. Apr. 4 10:00 a.m. Easter Sunday worship service
 Sat. Apr. 24 9 am- 2 pm Rummage Sale
 Sat. May 8 10 am-4pm Craft Fair
 Sun. May 16 10:00 a.m. Worship service includes Confirmation

Message from the Fundraising Co-Coordinators

As newly installed Fundraising Co-Coordinators we would like to ask you what you think. Have you had ideas of things that might be fun as well as make PACC some money? Did you always want to take on a small project without being stuck with no support or all the responsibility? Tell us your ideas and we will see what we can do to make them work. We cannot take on every project ourselves but we can help you get it done or help find someone who will and head you in the right direction! Please tell us your ideas! We are open to any and all suggestions!

In the meantime, there are events that will need to be staffed through the year, such as the Rummage Sale, the Holiday Fair, as well as others and we would like to have you join us in a group who is willing to take on new projects or help "staff" the regulars. Let us know who you are so that we can develop a working group and get some new events or expansions of established events going forward!

You can contact us by email or phone (Betty Rich, Diane Wells). We look forward to talking with you about your ideas!

Betty and Diane

Orange and Grapefruit Fundraiser - order by Sunday, February 28

Delicious Florida oranges and grapefruit only hours from the tree can be yours! Look for an order form in church later this month or notify the office that you would like one sent to you. The fruit will be temple oranges (easy for peeling), and pink grapefruit. Pick-up of orders will be Saturday, March 6, at Jill Lewis's house. Volunteers needed to help unload the truck and help with contacting folks that day. Call Jill or email, or see her after church to order or volunteer. Orders must be received by 5 p.m. Sunday, February 28.

GoodSearch – another way to help PACC

If you begin your internet searches at GoodSearch.com (www.goodsearch.com) and enter Park Avenue Congregational Church in field labeled "Who do you Goodsearch for?", a small amount of money is credited to our church. We recently received a check for \$21 thanks to friends who have done this.

THE RUMMAGE SALE . . . it will be here before you know it . . .

Is it too early to start thinking about the Rummage Sale? No! This is a great time of year to clean out those closets, cupboards and drawers and start putting aside items for the sale. We are seeking all manner of household goods, clean and in good condition, clothes that have been gently worn, and books, linens, jewelry, pretty much anything around your house that you no longer use but that somebody else might. We don't want junk, things that don't work or are grubby. We also do not want TVs or computers and can only handle small items of furniture. The "if one medium size woman can pick it up by herself" rule is a good one to apply. If she can, we want it; if she can't, we don't. But remember, for those items that are too large (or too fragile or for whatever reason are not suitable for the sale,) information may be sent to The Marketplace, a printed list of available merchandise (contact the church office,) and we can try to sell them there.

The sale will be **SATURDAY, APRIL 24, from 9 to 2**. Along with donations of your things, we are also seeking donations of your time, energy and good humor. So, please plan to join us! We also need lots of help sorting and pricing the Thursday and Friday before the sale. This is a huge undertaking and simply can't be done without a lot of church support.

Please mark your calendars now and plan to help us on this fun fundraiser! If you have any questions or want to be among the first to volunteer, please call Judy Miller. Thanks!!

Exploring Boston's Congregational Roots

The Congregational Library is sponsoring a series about Boston's Congregational past conducted by Donna La Rue, a local church historian, gravestone researcher, and expert tour guide. She has planned a presentation on the history of the city's thirteen Congregational churches, discussing their known buildings, worship practices and music, as well as their ministers' and congregants' homesites and gravestones. Donna will also tell their stories about their neighbors: the Baptist, Quaker, Anglican, Presbyterian, Huguenot, (secret) Catholic, and later Unitarian, Universalist, and Swedenborgian congregations of the pre-Revolutionary period.

- February 10 – Illustrated lecture about Congregational Boston in the colonial era
- April 14 – Walking tour of the Congregational North End of Boston

They are open to the public and will begin at noon at the Congregational Library, 14 Beacon Street, Boston. There is no cost for the lecture. The walking tour requires advance registration and \$5.00/person.

Mission and Justice Matters

Haiti Relief

Based on strong support from the PACC community, \$800 from PACC's Outreach Fund has been donated to UCC/One Great Hour of Sharing for direct relief to the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. A heartfelt thank you to members of the PACC community who sent in individual donations - the total amount of donations received to date is \$3195. It is not too late to contribute. Please make your checks payable to PACC and note on the memo line "OGHS – Haiti." Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Note that a new tax relief law allows people who contributed in 2010 to charities providing earthquake relief in Haiti to take a tax deduction for the contribution on their 2009 tax return. Certain requirements apply:

- Only contributions made after Jan. 11, 2010, and before March 1, 2010, are eligible.
- The contributions must be made specifically for the relief of victims in areas affected by the Jan. 12 earthquake in Haiti.
- You may deduct these contributions on either your 2009 or 2010 returns, but not both.
- You must itemize your deductions on Schedule A; those claiming the standard deduction, including all short-form filers, are not eligible.

Mission and Justice Survey

Recognizing that PACC's priorities for mission and justice efforts may have evolved over time, the Mission and Justice Ministry welcome input from the PACC community with respect to what our outreach priorities should be. This will help us focus our efforts and plan activities, as well as plan our annual giving and the designation of Capital Campaign outreach funds. There are forms in the Narthex or contact the office to ask that one be sent to you. We hope you will consider it thoughtfully and respond by February 14.

Stand Against Racism

In order to explore whether there is interest in having a Stand Against Racism event, the Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC) is holding an exploratory meeting/gathering on Wednesday, February 3rd, at 7:30 p.m. at the Whittemore Robbins House, 670R Massachusetts Ave. The Anti-Racism Working Group of our Mission & Justice Ministry encourages you to attend to show your support and help organize an event that will show that Arlington is a place that proudly Stands Against Racism. Jill Lewis is the AHRC contact person for the Stand; contact her at if you have questions, comments or RSVPs.