



**MESSENGER**  
of the  
**First Congregational  
Church**  
**United Church of Christ**  
**Melrose, Massachusetts**

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

*Rev. Dominic Taranowski, Pastor*

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**VOLUME 92**

**January 15, 2010**

**Number 19**

## **Finding God, Our Starting Assumptions**

Where have you met God today? You have met God, you know. The problem is you didn't realize it. How has God spoken to you today? God has spoken to you, you know. The problem is that you mistook it for something ordinary, usual, something that couldn't possibly be divine.

If you look down at your feet right now, what is beneath them? A floor maybe but ultimately the ground. Is it really just the floor and the ground or do your feet rest on something more, much more--something our forebears in faith called "holy ground"?

So much of our faith development is stymied by our reflex to look at the world around us as a duality. That is, we try to ascertain what God (out there somewhere) would have us do here (in the "real" world). The only reason we ask God to intervene in the world is because our starting assumption is that God is not here to begin with. Why else would we look for God to arrive, come on the scene, be made known, intervene?

I could not have met God today because I've only interacted with people. God could not have spoken to me today because I've only spoken with people. Nothing out of the ordinary has happened to me today, certainly nothing mystical. Really?

I suspect our faith would flourish much more quickly if we jettisoned our starting assumption that there is a strong demarcation between the temporal world in which you are reading this article, and the divine, the realm of God. What if, just if, there is no such demarcation? What if the temporal is divine and the divine temporal?

In our search for God, perhaps we are searching for that which is hidden in plain sight. The power of the incarnation is that God and humanity became one in the person of Jesus Christ. This truth has broad ramifications. The resurrection in particular tells us that the boundaries we would erect between the things we know and the things we don't know may be far less distinct than we think.

We live, right now, in the midst of the divine. Does that mean we have all of the answers? Does that mean we see the big picture (or even the little picture) clearly? Of course not. If we knew and experienced everything in its totality, we would have no reason to

**Sunday, January 17, 2010**

*Renewing the Covenant  
Baptism Sunday*

**8:30 AM – Chancel Choir Rehearsal**

**10:00 AM – WORSHIP**

**and Church School Pre-K – 12**

**11:15 AM – Coffee Hour, Narthex**

**11:15 AM – New Member Class**

**11:15 AM – Fair Debriefing Meeting, Lounge**

*THE FLOWERS are given by Claire and Bob Griffin in  
memory of their parents.*

*THE STEEPLE is lit this week in loving memory of  
Mickala Taylor through a gift given by her aunt, Anne Wing.*

## **DURING THE WEEK**

### **Monday, January 18**

5:00 PM - MLK, Jr. Pot Luck Dinner and program, Narthex

### **Wednesday, January 13**

7:15 PM – Bells Rehearsal, sanctuary

### **Sunday, January 17**

Baptism Sunday

11:15 AM – New Member Class

11:15 AM – Fair 2009 De-briefing meeting

### **The following groups meet here regularly:**

**Boy Scouts** – Tuesdays at 7:00 PM in the basement

**Girl Scouts** – Sundays at 5:30 PM, Rm. 1 and lounge, Mon. at 7 PM, Rm. 7/8, Wed. at 6PM, Rm.7/8, Fridays 2:30 and 5PM, 7/8

**Pre-PAL** – 9 11:30 AM – M, T, Th, Fri, Room 7

**PAL** – 3:00 PM, Room 7/8

**Cub Scouts** – Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays

**Al-Anon** – weekdays at 12 noon, Sunday at 1 & 7 PM – Rm. 8

**Blue of a Kind** – Mondays at 7:00 PM in the Music Room

**S.A.R.P.** – Tuesdays at 6:30 PM, lounge

**A.W.O.L.** – Tuesdays at 7:30 PM, 7/8, lounge, Rm. 1

**Mothers' Group** meets Wednesdays 9-11 AM, lounge, 1, 7/8

**CODA** – Wednesdays at 7:30 PM, lounge

**Vital Cycles** - Thursdays at 7:00 PM, lounge

**O.A.** – Fridays at 7 PM, lounge

**A.A.** – Wednesdays at 7:30 PM, Fridays at 8:00 PM and Saturdays at 3:00 PM – Rm. 8

evolve, to improve, or to progress not only our own lives but this very small piece of a wholly divine universe that we find under our very feet—the world in which we live our daily lives.

May the light of Epiphany reveal new dimensions to the "ordinary" things around you, knowing that God is infused into the fabric of it all.

See you in church,



Scott Boyson (son of Marilyn, car accident), Jennie Way, Marilyn McComas (Essex Park Rehab, Beverly MA), Betty Crane, Kate Watson, Anne Wing, George Burrell, Bud Pendleton, Barbara Jones.



## Youth Mission Trip Update!

### Upcoming Dates:

Feb 7th - immediately after worship - MANDATORY Mission Trip Meeting - parents and youth



**Feb 11th - 6-9 p.m.**

### DOCKSIDE RESTAURANT WAKEFIELD

**FUNDRAISER!** The Mission Trip will receive 25% of the sales that evening!



**Bottle Drive:** Youth are collecting clean bottles and cans to return for deposit. Visit the Mission Trip Table in the Narthex to pick up your bag.



**Spare Change Drive:** Be sure to drop your spare change into the Mission Trip Bucket at the Youth Table!

**Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
MELROSE ANNUAL POTLUCK DINNER  
Monday, January 18 – 5:00 PM  
at First Congregational Church  
Family program 6:30 – 7:30 PM**

All are asked to bring a main dish or a dessert to serve 4-6 people, with ingredients listed (for those who have food allergies).

Family program at 6:30 will include a presentation called "A View from South Africa," by Melrose resident Tug Yourgrau, who will share his experience of growing up in South Africa. The Melrose Martin Luther King Day Choir will also sing.

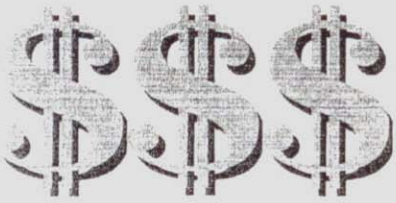
**GIVING ENVELOPES for 2010** are now available in the Narthex. Please be sure to pick them up when you are at church.

**We will have a Fair '09 debrief on January 17th** after church in the Lounge to discuss what we learned and what we can improve. In the meantime, please write down your thoughts while they are fresh in your mind and send them to Nancy Gift ([ngift@mit.edu](mailto:ngift@mit.edu)).



Your observations and suggestions will be compiled and presented at the meeting to give us a jump start. You get extra credit if your items have a category heading, such as: "Cleaning: Make sure the windows are washed in advance of the fair."

DINING FOR DOLLARS AT THE DOCKSIDE  
IN WAKEFIELD



DOCKSIDE  
RESTAURANT & BAR

1099 Main Street ~ Wakefield MA 01880 ~ 781.245.0200  
[www.docksiderestaurants.com](http://www.docksiderestaurants.com)

Fundraising Night Event Ticket

First Congregational Church Youth

Organization to Benefit Mission Trip

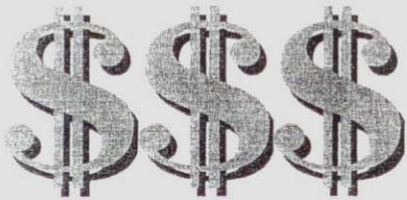
Thurs. Feb 11<sup>th</sup> 6-9 p.m.

Date & Time of Event

PLEASE PRESENT THIS CERTIFICATE TO HAVE 25% OF YOUR CHECK'S  
VALUE DONATED TO THE ORGANIZATION ABOVE.

Valid for dine-in, take-out or delivery. Tickets are not to be distributed in the restaurant or  
within the perimeter of the parking areas. Valid only for date listed above.

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Fundraising Night Event Ticket

First Congregational Church Youth Mission

Organization to Benefit Trip

Thurs. Feb 16<sup>th</sup> 6-9 p.m.

Date & Time of Event

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