



# The Beacon

**First Congregational Church of Millbury, United Church of Christ**

Our Mission: To welcome and inspire ALL through faith, love,  
and fellowship according to Christ's example.

**Volume 34 Issue 1 • January 2022**

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Dear Friends,

As January begins, we emerge from the darkest time of the year. The sun climbs higher in the sky, and each day the light lasts a little longer. For the church, the first season of the New Year is the season of Epiphany. The Bible texts recommended for Epiphany speak of the light of God that comes into our lives with the birth of Jesus: “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you...the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you” (Isaiah 60: 1 – 2).


As followers of Jesus, you and I see in him the glorious light of God. God's light helps us to see our way in a world that is sometimes overshadowed by problems. God's light gives us hope that God will be with us always, in good times and bad. As followers of Jesus, we are called to shine with God's light and to share that light with others. One boy experienced that light in a way that gave him tremendous hope.

The boy lived in an isolated house on a hill. It was a bleak and lonely place for a young man. But one thing fascinated him. Each night, he would look into the darkness and see a light. The light was far away on a hilltop, but this sign of life gave him hope. One day he decided to go in search of it. The search was a long and lonely walk. It was already dark before he reached the outskirts of a town. Tired and hungry, he knocked at the first door he came to, and explained his search for the mysterious light that had always given him hope.

“I know it!” replied the woman who answered the door. “It gives me hope as well.” And she pointed back in the direction from which he had come. There, on the horizon, was a single light shining. A sign of life in the darkness. The light was from his own house (Brian Woodcock and Jan Sutch Pickard, *Advent Readings from Iona*, Wild Goose Publishing, 2000).

As you and I head into 2022, how might we offer God's light of hope? Could we visit a friend in a nursing home? Could we write a letter to someone we haven't seen for a while (yes, with pen, paper, envelope, and stamp)? Could we cook a meal for someone who's lost a loved one recently? Who knows? We might be a way for the glory of God to shine for others.

Yours in Christ,  
**Pastor Elva**



*Birthdays  
to  
Celebrate*

4<sup>th</sup> Neal Riley  
7<sup>th</sup> Philip Nyberg

**Deacons Fund**

On Communion Sunday at First Church, the first Sunday of the month, the Deacons take a special offering for the Deacons Fund, which is a fund to provide assistance to members in need. Envelopes marked DEACONS FUND are in your bulletin. Donations may also be made using the envelope any other Sunday.

Thank you for your generosity.

**Remember our shut-ins with a note or a card.....**

- Mr. Jay Stockwell**  
110 Hartness Road  
Sutton, MA 01590
- Chris Rudge**  
8 Carlstrom Lane  
Millbury, Ma 01527
- Kathleen (Chase) Rozenas**  
102 Hayden Pond Road  
Dudley, MA 01571
- Beverly Stockwell**  
8 Colonial Drive Apt C  
Millbury, MA 01527
- Mrs. Kay Lachance**  
32 Davis Rd.  
Millbury, MA 01527




**Prayers & Concerns**

- † Our Community
- † Our Country
- † Our World
- † All Military Men and Women
- † All First Responders
- † Our Church and our Ministry in Millbury and beyond
- † All who are suffering from COVID 19 and their families
- † Health care workers and essential workers, providing care and support for those with COVID 19.
- † Christine Hamer's brother Bill, in a long term care facility in Pennsylvania
- † Elizabeth Armstrong, Pastor Elva's sister in law, in treatment for multiple myeloma.

**SNOW CANCELLATION**  
**From Pastor Elva**

If a Sunday worship service has to be cancelled because of inclement weather, notice will be put on the answering machine message and will be posted on Channel 5 (ABC WCVB-TV).



**And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.**

**-Colossians 3:17 (ESV)**

## The Ministry of Encouragement

*For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you. - Philemon 7*

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Boer republics were waging war in South Africa with the armies of the British Empire. During one protracted siege in the city of Ladysmith, a woeful citizen began wandering the streets, certain that doom was imminent, speaking demoralizing words to the soldiers. He never fired a shot for the enemy, but his discouragement was ultimately deemed a chargeable offense. When brought before a court-martial judge, he was found guilty and sentenced to a year's imprisonment.

Discouraging others, it seemed, was against the law.

Most of us would probably be a little nervous if discouragement were actually declared illegal. But I do believe one of the most needed ministries in the church today is the ministry of encouragement. Even the apostle Paul frequently made reference to other people who had helped him in his ministry; he treasured their friendship and support. They were a "comfort" to him (Col. 4:11), translated from the Greek *paregoria* from which we get our word "paregoric," a medicine that soothes an upset stomach. Encouragers soothe and comfort our hearts, giving us new hope, energy, and confidence. We all want to be on the receiving end of encouragement. But we need to be on the giving end, as well. Thirtysome times in the New Testament, we read of things we are to do for "one another." Be kind to one another, Love one another. Among them is the exhortation to "encourage one another" (Heb. 3:13 NASB). When we represent the "God of endurance and encouragement" in this way (Rom. 15:5), we actually become a channel of His grace to others.

*Who had refreshed your heart with their love and encouragement? How could God use you today to refresh the hearts of His people?*

~ The Quiet Place, Daily Devotional Readings  
By Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth, 2012  
Moody Publishers

## THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who participated in our White Gift Service. Elmwood St. School staff were so thankful for the gifts for "our" family.

Amy Peterson, Mary Mousseau and myself provided 2 bags of crochet/knit hats and mittens for the children in need of warmth at Elmwood St. School.

Thank you also to everyone for providing Gorette's gift cards for our seniors in need this holiday season.

My husband Michael gets turkeys every year from his company St. Gobain. This year Michael delivered 2 turkeys to Rhodes St. for their holiday meal and 2 turkeys to Elmwood St. School for 2 families in need of a holiday meal.

I truly appreciate everyone's generosity and thoughtfulness.

With Gratitude,  
Deanna Murray



First Congregational Church  
of Millbury, UCC  
148 West Main Street  
Millbury, MA 01527

Address Correction Requested

*The Beacon*

**January**



Worship and Church School: 10:00 a.m.  
Church Phone: 508-865-9737  
Email: [Millbury1stChurch@gmail.com](mailto:Millbury1stChurch@gmail.com)  
Web: <http://millburyfirstchurch.com>



**Resolve to  
make a  
difference  
in someone's life!**



To add an event, please  
email  
[Millbury1stchurch@gmail.com](mailto:Millbury1stchurch@gmail.com)

Remember to check us out  
on Facebook. See all the  
photos. It's a great way to  
introduce your friends to our  
Friendly Church on the Hill.

## The Beacon

Deadline for February  
newsletter is January 16th.  
The BEACON is distributed by  
email or first class mail. It can  
also be downloaded from the  
church website. Copies are  
available at the back of the  
sanctuary.



**2022**