



SUDBURY
United Methodist Church
The Weekly Chronicle

In This Issue

[FROM PASTOR JOEL](#)

[Dates to Keep In Mind](#)

[GIVE](#)

[Thanks](#)

[MUSIC](#)

[Concerns & Celebrations](#)

[LEARN](#)

[Adults](#)

[Church School & Youth](#)

[CONNECT](#)

[SOCIAL JUSTICE](#)

[HEALTH MINISTRIES](#)

[Special Sundays](#)

[Can You Help?](#)

FROM PASTOR JOEL

Dear Friends in Christ,

Last month, while we were celebrating Christmas at Sudbury UMC, I was also reading a book to prepare for this month's 2017 Stewardship Emphasis. Dr. Tom Melzoni gave me *The Genius of Generosity* by Chip Ingram last year. Remember Tom? He's the consultant who coached Sudbury UMC's leaders while we were working on our amazingly successful capital campaign, "Pave the Way." Tom was probably hoping I would read Rev. Ingram's book last fall but I'm really grateful I procrastinated because *The Genius of Generosity* is changing the way I think about stewardship.

For one thing, Rev. Ingram doesn't even mention the word stewardship until he's more than one-third of the way into his book. And what he says is not especially flattering: "Stewardship has a heavier, more serious tone for many people," he writes, "one of obligation and strict limits on spending" (page 34). That's why he prefers the word generosity when he's preaching, teaching, and writing about money and what Christians are intended to do with it. If Rev. Ingram were your pastor, I'm guessing he would call this month's "fun and done" pledge drive our annual Generosity Emphasis.

Chip Ingram learned the "genius of generosity" from a lay person who chaired the church council of the first congregation he served as pastor. John Saville was already in his seventies by the time Rev. Ingram moved into the parsonage at the age of 28. "To be honest," he writes, "I thought he was a little kooky. I was both surprised and intrigued when he took me aside one day and said he wanted to 'cut a deal.' He handed me a checkbook for a pastor's discretionary account with a balance of \$5,000.

"Here's the deal," Mr. Saville said. "God has given me the desire and resources to help people, but I need you to be my eyes, my ears, and my heart. Whenever you see a need that you think I would be excited about and could meet, I want you to use this money. Don't tell anyone where it came from. Just tell them that God paid it.

"I was shocked and sort of overwhelmed. At first I felt a lot of pressure about it - what if I chose to spend the money on the wrong things? After a while, though, it got to be fun. All of a sudden, I felt like Santa Claus 365 days a year. I had hidden resources at my discretion and was constantly asking God how to use them" (page 10).

After a month or two had gone by, Mr. Saville asked Rev. Ingram to join him for a celebratory lunch. He asked his pastor to bring the checkbook and its ledger along with the stories he was most interested to hear. "How did you use my money to help people in the world?" he asked. From the day he became John Saville's steward, Rev. Ingram found himself thinking about his patron every day. What were his charitable interests in the world? What acts of generosity pleased him most? What kind of record-keeping would earn his trust and deepen their unique friendship? When each month's lunch ended, Mr. Saville topped off his pastor's discretionary fund and the process started all over again.

For Chip Ingram, his relationship with John Saville became a snapshot of our relationship with God. Even more than Mr. Saville, God has unlimited resources. But God also needs our eyes and ears and hearts to reach out and help people who need God's generosity. The more we succeed as God's go-betweens, the more God's joy increases and the more fun we have spending the money that God entrusts to us each month on those whose needs are greater than our own.

In other words, filling out a 2017 pledge card for Sudbury UMC is not mostly about "paying the salaries and the bills of a church that is actually a small business." Sometimes that's the way some of us think and speak about the generosity we try to cultivate at Sudbury UMC. No wonder stewardship becomes a dry and dreary word. No wonder we curl ourselves into a protective ball to keep God's hands off our resources! But what would happen if we remembered that the God whose resources we have been entrusted to manage for the blessing of the world is more like a friend than a landlord? What would happen, I wonder, if stewardship became an act of celebration instead of an act of obligation?

See you in church,

Pastor Joel

Dates to Keep in Mind

- January 8: Kids Concert
- January 8: Youth Group
- January 12: Magic Years Luncheon
- January 15: Connexions Concert
- January 16: MLK Memorial Breakfasts; Boston and Natick
- January 18: Cancer Support Group
- January 23: Social Justice Book Group
- January 27-29: Youth Group Retreat to Camp Berea
- January 30: Love Wins-Adult Education Study

This is Stewardship Season!
Come to a gathering January 11 or 15 or 18 to learn what your pledge can do!

GIVE: Stewardship 2017

FUN & DONE! Stewardship Made Simple!

We've heard you. You want a stewardship process that is short, sweet, and simple. So let's have a party! You're invited to ring in the New Year!



Choose from two Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m.:

- January 11 at the home of Jen Benson - 249 Old Sudbury Road, Sudbury
- January 18 at the home of Ernie and Sherry Stonebraker - 181 Randall Road, Stow

Or join us on Sunday, January 15, right after worship in Hawes Hall with nursery and toddler care, activities for the kids, and pizza for all through grade five

Enjoy food and fellowship! See a snapshot of SUMC's generosity! And preview our 2017-operating budget! Make your pledge for 2017!

Or, why not pledge right now? Yes, you can! Here's how: Pledge online by filling out the online Pledge Form: <http://sudbury-umc.org/give>

You do your part and we'll do ours: Stewardship made simple - Fun and Done!

Unidentified Contributions:

At the end of every calendar year, SUMC receives some members' pledge payments in the form of donated stock through the church's account at Fidelity. This year, we have received a few such donations/payments that we are unable to attribute to the appropriate individual or purpose. We need your assistance with these stock donations in order to deposit contributions in the correct account and make sure that year-end statements are correct.

Could anyone who made a donation of stock through SUMC's account at Fidelity in the last few weeks of December, please send Don Glencross an email at nuyankee@comcast.net with the following information:

- Your name;
- The name of the stock donated and approximate # shares or dollar amount;
- How the donation should be attributed (such as): Annual Fund pledge payment; other contribution to the operating budget; PAVE THE WAY pledge payment; additional PAVE THE WAY donation; PAVE THE WAY Plus pledge payment; new PAVE THE WAY Plus contribution; etc.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed. With everyone's help in this, we will be able to be sure that all contributions are used as the donor intended and all donors receive correct year-end statements.

Staff Sends Christmas Thanks

Sudbury UMC's staffers send thanks to our church's members and friends for their many Christmas kindnesses. Your cards, candies, cookies, ornaments, gift certificates, plants,

holiday bonus, volunteered time, words of support and prayers were and are so uplifting and appreciated. Pastor Joel, Jackie Roder, Anthony Harrison, Mike Greb, Rob Hammerton, Kevin Murphy, Alexandra Plotkin, Shetal Kaye, Joe Picorelli, and Phil Lenentine feel grateful and blessed to serve God alongside you. Thank you! God bless you! Happy New Year!

MUSIC

Kids Concert 2, January 8th

On Sunday, January 8, at 12:00 noon, the young musicians of Sudbury UMC will present Kids Concert 2. The last Kids Concert occurred in 2016, when a group of young players gave an informal concert to raise money for hurricane relief at SUMC's sister churches on the Caribbean island of Domenica.

The concert will take place in the sanctuary. Admission is free and open to the public. A freewill collection will be accepted to benefit Open Table and the important work Open Table does in our local area to feed those in need.

Come support our young musicians, admire their growing talents and contribute to this effort to fight hunger among our Metrowest neighbors.

C



onnexions II

On Sunday, January 15, at 3 p.m., Sudbury UMC musicians and friends will present the second concert in the Connexions Series of program year 2016-2017 at Sudbury UMC.

The event will feature works from a wide assortment of various styles including classical, pop, music theater and cabaret. Once again, we have the opportunity to showcase the various talents of church members and guest artists who come to share their music.

If there is inclement winter weather, the concert will be held the following Sunday, January 22nd.

Admission is free and open to the public. A freewill donation will be gratefully accepted to benefit the Organ Fund at Sudbury United Methodist.

More Information?

For more information about either of these events, please call 978 443 4351, OR send e-mail to kevin@sudbury-umc.org.

Prayer Concerns & Celebrations

Prayer Concerns on Sundays, December 25 and January 1

- † Laurie Granger asks our prayers for her brother Jeff. He has been diagnosed at age 56 with stage 4, aggressive oropharyngeal cancer. We ask God to be with Jeff and his doctors as he undergoes treatment.
- † Brad Conant requests prayers for his wife, Mary, who had a fall and cracked her spine and has compressed discs. We pray for relief from pain and healing.
- † Sherry and Ernie Stonebraker request prayers for their friend, Bryan Glynn, who was recently diagnosed with Leukemia. He is also being treated for a detached retina.
- † Andrea Roessler requests prayers for Kathy and Mike Lague. Mike's mother passed away last Saturday at the age of 96.

Prayer Celebrations on Sundays, December 25 and January 1

- † The family of Ken Farmer invites you to join them on Saturday, January 7, at 2:00 p.m. to celebrate his life with thanksgiving to God. Ken passed away at age 85 on December 29, after eight months in nursing home care. Betty and her children: Stuart, Vicki, Dale, Wesley and Dana will miss their beloved Ken; "Pops" will be missed!
- † Dorothy Morgan, a longtime member of our church, died on December 30, surrounded by her family. A memorial service will take place at Sudbury UMC on Sunday, January 8, at 3:30 p.m.
- † We celebrated the 70th wedding anniversary of Lois and Edward Rawson! They are members of SUMC who have relocated.
- † Nancy Hammerton celebrates new beginnings! The first New Year's party was held yesterday, Wednesday, at the home of Trey and Sandy Burns. You should have received an invitation via email. There will be 2 more parties in members' homes and 1 party at SUMC. Please plan on attending one of them!

LEARN

ADULT EDUCATION

Magic Years

Magic Years members and friends are invited to the first event of 2017! Our very own Donna Canfield will be putting on a fantastic program titled "Eating Well - Aging well." With New Year's resolutions on the brain, come and learn about healthy living from a

registered dietician! We will be gathering in Hawes Hall for this luncheon and programming on Thursday, January 12, from noon-2:00 p.m. See you there!

The Upper Room

The Upper Room booklets are available in the narthex. Help yourself to a free copy for your daily devotional readings. Or access it online by clicking here:

<http://devotional.upperroom.org/>

Join the Thursday Bible Study

Sudbury UMC's Thursday Bible study group always welcomes new participants. Meetings take place at 10:00 a.m. on Thursdays at the Panera Bread located at 21 Andrew Avenue in Wayland's Town Center, just two miles from Sudbury UMC! Each week's focus text is the next Sunday's preaching passage.

Remember to bring your Bible and a few bucks for something warm to sip.

We will look ahead to the passages being preached during worship on:

- January 8: Matthew 3:13-17
- January 15: Matthew 14:22-33
- January 22: I Corinthians 1:10-18
- January 29: I Corinthians 1:18-25

Love Wins: A New Adult Study Program

A new kind of Adult Study begins on Jan. 30. Come to the church and experience the class face to face or watch the class 'live' on FaceBook, both starting at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Joel Guillemette will dig into author Rob Bell's "Love Wins" to ask, "Does everyone go to heaven? Is there a hell? Does love win?" The concluding sessions take place on Feb. 13 and 27.

Church School

We're back! This Sunday, January 8, Church School returns with regular age/grade groupings and locations: 3-5 year olds in preschool room 4 in the Sunny Hill wing. 1st-2nd grade, 3rd-5th and 6th-8th in their classrooms below the sanctuary. After a peaceful holiday break, we look forward to gathering for our first session of 2017! After worship, please pick up your children in their classrooms to ensure that everyone makes it back to their families safely. See you in church!

Youth Group

- Youth Group Gathering: January 8
- Camp Berea Retreat: January 27-29

CONNECT

Talk to a Stephen Minister

Stephen Ministers can provide a listening, supportive and confidential presence. Each Sunday after worship a Stephen Minister is available to listen and to pray with you. If you would like to have a Stephen Minister "walk" with you on a regular weekly, every other week basis, please contact Pastor Joel.



No concern is too small to share with a Stephen Minister.

- January 8: Lori Granger
- January 15: Melody Karian
- January 22: Eric Lind
- February 7: Linda Lombardo
- February 14: Gail Smith

The Lenten Booklet 2017

Advent, Christmas, and New Years are over. It's a new year full of new possibilities and opportunities. And much is new around the church. But some things remain the same. Our church's Lenten Booklet was first published in 1978 and has become an annual tradition. We want to continue this tradition in 2017 combining new devotions with devotions from past booklets that remind us of thoughts on life, faith, and scripture that still hold true today.

The Lenten Booklet has a devotion for each day of Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday and ending on Easter (March 5-April 16) --that's 46 devotions written by members and friends of SUMC. This year we are asking for only 23 devotion writers to come forward and agree to write a one-page devotion. Though we have chosen as our theme "Making All Things New," you can share anything you would like. We do need your help!

There's a February 15th deadline for submitting devotions because it takes time to prepare the Lenten Booklet and have it ready by March 1--we're happy to receive your devotion early, though. Sign-up is this Sunday, January 8th in Hawes Hall and the narthex. When you sign up, take an instruction sheet and all will be made clear. Come to Hawes Hall if you have questions or would like to see previous booklets. Two of our editors, Nancy Sweeney and Ann Hamilton, will be there to talk with you. If you won't be in church on Sunday, e-mail Nancy Sweeney at nsweeneyj@aol.com and she will sign you up and send an instruction sheet.

Please prayerfully consider contributing to the 2017 Lenten Booklet. Thanks!

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Join the celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life and legacy

Sign up in Hawes Hall on January 8th with the Social Justice Commission. Two local opportunities include the:

47th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Breakfast -
Boston Convention Center
8 am - 10 am, Monday, January 16th 2017

Tickets (\$50) are available online <http://www.bostonmlkbreakfast.org/>

This annual MLK Memorial Breakfast is the nation's longest-running event dedicated to the memory of Dr. King. The breakfast features engaging speeches, delicious food, live music, and is attended by a diverse gathering of civic, community, and religious leaders from across Massachusetts. Details available on website.

30th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Breakfast -

The Verve Crowne Plaza Hotel, Natick, 8 am - 10 am, Monday, January 16th 2017
Tickets (Adults \$30)/(Youth 13-18: \$10)/(Children 5-12: \$5) available at the door or online https://www.gfccnet.org/store/index.php?manufacturers_id=11&page=1&sort=3d

This year's annual MLK celebration offered by the Greater Framingham Community Church features the keynote address "It's a Matter of Justice" delivered by Elder Nicole S. Mason, Esq. You will also be treated to special music, a hearty breakfast, and lively conversation.

If you have any questions, please contact Moira Lataille (lataille@verizon.net)

We can come together to Heal our Country

The SUMC Social Justice Commission would like to share portions of an article by three of the editors of YES! Magazine.

"If you're like us, this has been the scariest and most disheartening political season in memory, one that has left many of us questioning the direction of our country and the prospects for future generations."

"But while it does matter who is in the White House and on Capitol Hill, we've been looking at a different sort of power, one that we believe can transform our families and classrooms, neighborhoods and cities. It is what we've always done."

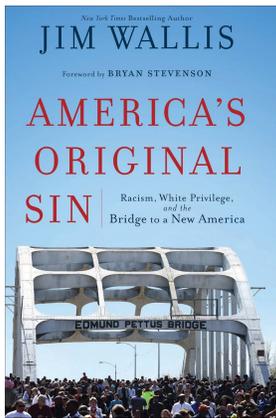
"YES! Magazine began 20 years ago with the belief that regular people were the ones creating solutions to address the overwhelming crises of our time: climate change, accelerating inequality, systemic racism, and a democracy broken by money and greed." "It turns out that we need each other to make change happen." "Change at the local level matters because it often ripples outward."

Social Justice Book Groups

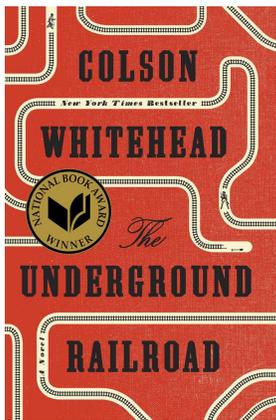
This year the Social Justice commission will lead book discussions on fiction and non-fiction literature dealing with critical social justice issues. Please join us as we hold our first book group meeting in January followed by another in February. We are also asking for book recommendations for future group discussions.

America's Original Sin by Jim Wallis - Monday, January 23rd 7:00 pm

As people of faith, how do we move beyond racial categories to become unified in the "body of Christ"? How do we restructure a justice system that is intrinsically biased against African Americans and Latinos? How do we welcome and treat "the stranger" in our land? This book raises these and other important issues that we look forward to discussing in January.



The Underground Railroad by Colson Whitehead - Monday, February 20th 7:00 pm



As the 2016 National Book Award winner for fiction, the Underground Railroad chronicles a young slave's experiences as she travels north to freedom. Critics agree that "The Underground Railroad is at once a kinetic adventure tale of one woman's ferocious will to escape the horrors of bondage and a shattering, powerful meditation on the history we all share."

Where

Book Groups will meet at 22 Summer St, Sudbury, home of Moira and Leon Lataille. Should you have any questions, feel free to call Moira at 978.443.2568.

Health Ministries

What is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)?

As winter approaches and the days get shorter, many people suffer with a form of depression called seasonal affective disorder (SAD). Although SAD isn't totally understood, it is a real illness with real symptoms that vary in frequency and intensity. Symptoms can include:

- Sleep Problems - Desire to oversleep, disturbed sleep or difficulty staying awake
- Lethargy - A feeling of fatigue and inability to carry out normal routines
- Overeating - Craving sugary or starchy foods
- Social Problems - Irritability and desire to avoid social situations
- Anxiety - Tension and inability to tolerate stress
- Loss of Libido - Decreased interest in sex or physical contact
- Mood Changes - Extremes in mood and/or short periods of hypomania

One of the most effective treatments is light exposure. For mild symptoms, spending time outside and a good brisk walk may be enough. For more severe symptoms a light treatment called phototherapy may be helpful as it suppresses the brain's secretion of melatonin. People who think they may have SAD or any mental health issue should discuss their symptoms with a mental health professional.

How Faith Communities Can Respond

During the darkest nights of the winter, many faith traditions celebrate religious holidays. With SAD, as with all chronic mental illnesses and normal holiday stress, our faith communities can be intentional about finding ways to encourage a healthy winter holiday season that focuses on our faith, our families and our friends.

Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ who will become the "light of the world." The eight-day Jewish celebration of Hanukkah is known as the Festival of Light. It reminds people of the miracle that re-kindled the Temple menorah light at a time of darkness and despair.

People living with SAD do not need to remain in the dark. SAD is a real and common disorder that can be effectively treated.

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
on those who lived in a land of deep shadow a light has shone. -Isaiah 9:2*

Mental Health Ministries: www.MentalHealthMinistries.net

Special Sundays Celebrated by United Methodists

Human Relations Day is Sunday, January 15

United Methodists celebrate six church wide Special Sundays with offerings during the year. Human Relations Day is observed on the Sunday before the birthday observance of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

This special Sunday offering supports the Community Developers program, related to the General Board of Global Ministries. These persons work in racial- and ethnic-minority communities in the United States and Puerto Rico; the United Methodist Voluntary Services Program-UMVS, for short, this program are grassroots organizations that work through youth and young adult volunteers to challenge oppression and injustice; and the Youth Offender Rehabilitation Program.

Other Sundays celebrated include:

- UMCOR Sunday, March 26, 2017
- Native American Ministries, April 30, 2017
- Peace With Justice, June 11, 2017
- World Communion Sunday, October 1, 2017
- United Methodist Student Day, November 26, 2017

Can You Help?

Did you take pictures at Christmas?

Please share any holiday photos. It's so much fun to see them.

Can you help record the service?

Kevin Murphy reports that important elements of our system are now back in their regular places and are ready to make new recordings. If you have done this before, welcome back! If you have never used our gear to help with SUMC audio projects, this would be a good time to get involved and learn a new task or two. SUMC teenagers are encouraged to consider "learning the ropes", as well.

Please let Kevin know if you'd like to help! kevin@sudbury-umc.org



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