



January 2013

Church of the New Jerusalem

# Monthly Newsletter

*A community united by faith in God and love to the neighbor*

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## ***From the Minister***

As providence would have it I'm writing this reflection on the morning of Friday, December 21st 2012 when President Obama has called for a moment of silence to "collectively mourn the loss of far too many promising lives at Sandy Hook Elementary Schools." So in a little while I will make my way up the steep church steps to our bell tower, and ring our New Church Bell, 26 times in honor of the victims at Sandy Hook.

Our bell will resound along with others around the community and country. In the face of such great loss, in the face of such senseless violence, without answers we will stop and pray.

While ministers and rabbis are no longer at the forefront of community debate and dialogue like we once were, in this situation many of us have been called on to answer the question: How can an all loving, all knowing God exist at the same time as these acts of horrific violence? How can a loving God permit such a thing? For many people, the presence of suffering, pain and especially senseless evil rules out for them the possibility of the existence of God.

While of course, there is no "answer," that will satisfy us all I agree I would do it differently if I were God. If I were God I would rule out senseless acts of violence. And also genocide, domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, world hunger, political oppression, school bullying, suicidal depression... What would you add to the list? I'd invite you to make your own;

it is actually quite satisfying to imagine what you might do with that power! Do you think there might ever be an end to the list? The truth is if we are going to give up on God because of the existence of evil, we should have given up on Him a long, long time ago.

Evil has always been present in this world, sadly it is a large part of our human nature. It plays on our emotions eliciting rage, envy, pride, selfishness, domination, harsh judgments against ourselves and others, cruel words against one another. Even the thoughtless way we can behave when we are irritable can have horribly painful effects on ourselves and others.

While there is a huge gap between the gunman's behavior and a sharp remark we may make towards our spouse, from another perspective they are on the same continuum: a failure to live out the Lord's simple command to "love one another as I have loved you." The truth is we are all guilty of disobeying this command.

I believe we have an opportunity right now. We can project all of our own failings onto this one lone gunman in Newtown, we can demonize him, we can be overwhelmed by our fear of him, we can spend our time seeking out ways to protect ourselves from him, or we can seek to do as Jesus taught us and have compassion for him. And at the same time we can have humility and compassion for our own failings.. We can have compassion for the brokenness of the world. When Christ was born into the world he did not come with the sword to right all wrongs,

**The Fryeburg New Church aka The Church of the New Jerusalem**

12 Oxford St. • Fryeburg, ME 04037 • Rev. Sage Currie, Pastor

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*Office Hours: Pastor ~ Wed thru Friday 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Saturdays by appointment*

*Secretary ~ Wed thru Friday 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.*

but he came to heal our wounds, forgive our sins, and love us back into community. Are we not now called to do the same?

As you begin 2013 I'd invite you to take a look at the list of evils you chose to eradicate when you took your turn imagining yourself in the role of God. Perhaps you have been given the healing balm necessary to help in those broken places?

Perhaps your own experiences and wounds, and the compassion you've developed in your lifetime will be just what is needed by others.

May the existence of evil not cause us to question the existence of God, but instead to deepen our commitment to acknowledge and root out evil, to love it into oblivion with God's help.

*In Love to the Lord*

*Rev. Sage*

Office Hours: Wednesday-Friday 8:30am-12:30pm,  
Saturday by appointment

Email: [pastor@fryeburgnewchurch.org](mailto:pastor@fryeburgnewchurch.org)  
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**A Choral Invitational Concert** will be hosted at the Fryeburg Church of the New Jerusalem on Sunday afternoon, January 20, 3 pm, to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Participating choirs include our New Church Choir and other choirs and bell choirs from the Fryeburg area. The public is invited to attend. Posters will go up after Christmas.

## *Worship Schedule*

**Sunday School 9:00 AM**  
**Family Worship 10:00 AM**

## *Worship Calendar*

**1/6/13 Luke 2:21-40** "Jesus presented at the temple," God is with us!

**1/13/13 Luke 2:41-52** "Jesus among the doctors of the law," God is with us!

**1/20/13 Luke 3:1-22** "The baptism of the Lord," God is with us!

**1/27/13 SWEDENBORG SUNDAY**  
"Now it is permitted,"

Please join us for a potluck Swedenborgian Smörgåsbord following the January 27<sup>th</sup> service. Bring your favorite dish to share and enjoy some special presentations with friends and family in celebration of Swedenborg's birthday! (There will be no coffee hour after worship)

### **A note from the office...**

Please help us keep our records current. If you have moved or changed your phone number or e-mail address over the last year, please notify the church at 207-935-3413 or [office@fryeburgnewchurch.org](mailto:office@fryeburgnewchurch.org) so we can update your information.

Also, if you are currently receiving your newsletter by mail and would like to be on our monthly e-mail list, please let us know. You would help us save on mailing and printing costs *and* have your newsletter 2 to 3 days earlier!

# Church Report

## Women's Alliance

### The Trustees

The Trustees' next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, January 8, 2013 at 7:00 pm**. The meetings are open to all, but you should contact the Chair prior to the meeting to get an item on the agenda. Also, please speak to any of the Trustees with your questions, concerns, compliments or complaints. We are here to serve you.

#### Currently Serving Trustees

Cindy Priest, <i>Chair</i>	935-3360
Jon Crowe, <i>Vice Chair</i>	925-1302
Donnette Barnes, <i>Treasurer</i>	935-2130
Scott Ferguson, <i>Secretary</i>	925-3207
Jennifer Richardson	935-4509
Jean Cressy	935-7093
Judy Hatch	935-2223
<i>Women's Alliance Representative:</i>	
Patricia Swett	603-939-2262

### Same Sex Marriages – At FNC?

In November 2012, the citizens of Maine decided that all couples shall be issued marriage licenses without considering the gender(s) of the couple. In other words, "gay" marriages in Maine are now legal. Many gay couples are planning to be married in Maine in the months and years ahead.

The FNC Trustees have recognized that this new law will impact our Church in a new way in the near future. At some point, we will certainly be asked to host same-sex weddings in our sanctuary. We hope to have a consensus policy in place sooner rather than later. We want to hear from you!

Same-sex marriages at the Fryeburg New Church will be on the Trustee's agenda at the next meeting, **Tuesday January 8, at 7:00 pm**. If you have an opinion about this topic, we want to hear about it.

The Trustee meetings are open to church members, so please join us. If you cannot make the meeting, please write us and tell us how you feel. Drop a letter at the office, or send an email to [office@fryeburgnewchurch.org](mailto:office@fryeburgnewchurch.org);

In 2004, the national Convention supported the idea of gay marriage (see related article **Denominational Statement on Same Sex Marriage**.) They also supported the right of local ministers and churches to craft their own policies on this topic.

This is an important issue to discuss. Please read all the info. We look forward to the conversation.

~**FNC Trustees**

There will be NO Women's Alliance meetings in January and February. The next meeting will be on March 18<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon at the FNC, please bring a bag lunch.

2012 Officers for the Women's Alliance are:

President..... Jean Cressy  
Vice-President..... TBA  
Secretary..... Sally Harnden  
Treasurer ..... Patty Swett  
Chaplain..... Betty Baker

### Passages

**Leslie H. Farrin** entered the spiritual world on Saturday, December 8, 2012. Leslie was loved by many and our prayers and condolences go out to his family and friends.

### In the Hospital

**Betty Baker** was recently in the hospital. Well wishes for her quick recovery and return to good health.

### From the Treasurer



Anyone wishing to receive a copy of their contributions for the year 2012 for tax purposes please contact Donnette Barnes.

### Annual Reports

Although the annual report won't come out until later in the year, we are asking that you please forward your reports to the office while 2012 is still fresh in your mind. You can e-mail them to [office@fryeburgnewchurch.org](mailto:office@fryeburgnewchurch.org) or leave a copy for Dawn in the office. Thank you so much for your time and effort.

### Dream Group

Our Dream group will continue to meet on Mondays in January from 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Join us in exploring the messages from the dream world. Please contact Rev. Sage if you plan to attend.

## Welcomers for January

Jan 6 *Open*  
 Jan 13 *Open*  
 Jan 20 Martha Richardson  
 Jan 27 *Open*

## Ushers for January

Jan 6 Tom Barrett & Donnette Barnes  
 Jan 13 Stanley Dolley & Chuck Priest  
 Jan 20 David & Jen Richardson  
 Jan 27 Jean Cressy & Dean Harnden

## Coffee Hour for January

Jan 6 Jenny Huang-Dale  
 Jan 13 Jodie Hesslein  
 Jan 20 Debbie Urgese  
 Jan 27 Jen Richardson

WORSHIP SERVICE ATTENDANCE DECEMBER 2-30, 2012		
Date	Adults	Children
December 2	33	5
December 9	46	4
December 16	41	8
December 23	--	--
December 30	--	--



January flowers

*Jean Cressy*

Calendar for January 2013 (held at our Church unless indicated)			
1	Tue	New Year's Day	
2	Wed	Dinner Bell North @SEAS	5:00 p.m.
3	Thur	Brown Bag Bible study	12:00 noon
6	Sun	Adult Choir Sunday School Family Worship	8:30 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.
7	Mon	Dream Group	8:30 a.m.
9	Wed	Dinner Bell North @SEAS	5:00 p.m.
10	Thur	Brown Bag Bible study	12:00 noon
13	Sun	Adult Choir Sunday School Family Worship	8:30 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.
14	Mon	Dream Group	8:30 a.m.
16	Wed	Rev. Sage @ FHCC Dinner Bell North @SEAS	10:30 a.m. 5:00 p.m.
17	Thur	Brown Bag Bible study	12:00 noon
18	Fri	Rev. Sage @ Maine Council	All day
20	Sun	Adult Choir Sunday School Family Worship <b>Choral Invitational Concert</b>	8:30 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m.
21	Mon	Dream Group	8:30 a.m.
23	Wed	Dinner Bell North @SEAS	5:00 p.m.
24	Thur	Brown Bag Bible study	12:00 noon
27	Sun	<b>Birthday Bank Sunday</b> <b>Food Pantry Sunday</b> Adult Choir Sunday School Family Worship <i>Swedenborg's Birthday</i> <i>Smörgåsbord Potluck after worship</i>	8:30 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.
30	Wed	Rev. Sage on vacation until February 5th	

