



*Photo by Eleanore Kruger*

# **NASHUA PRESBYTERIAN FLYER JANUARY 2009**

***Nashua Presbyterian Church  
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## ***FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK...***

Dear Members and Friends,

The infrastructure of our nation: roads, bridges, electrical grids, natural gas, water systems, communications, and other technical structures, are nearly hidden in the background of our lives. It is easy to take them for granted and forget the ways in which they make life better and make some parts of our lives even possible.

The ice storm in December helped to illustrate how important this infrastructure can be. Tree branches breaking under the weight of the ice brought down power lines, which in turn blew out substations, and within hours most of us were without power. For some folks the power outage was for only a few days, but for others it lingered for over a week. For many people during that time, it was impossible to cook, take a shower, or even keep warm. At first it seemed like a fun challenge, but as it lingered, it simply became exhausting.

2008 was a very difficult year for our country and for the world. Our economy went through (and is still going through) an extremely difficult time. Starting with high risk mortgages that suddenly began to collapse, to a sudden lack of funds at our banks and quickly leading to a precipitous drop in the value of stocks, we all knew we were heading into hard times. The unemployment rate has increased to levels not seen since the early 1980's. And though the price of gasoline decreased radically at the pumps, it doesn't help if you have no money to pay for it. For many people in our country and across the world it was not a good year.

I studied both Art History and Economics in college and often found myself in disagreement with my economics professors who strongly believed Adam Smith's particular assertion of the "Invisible Hand," which stated that in a free market, an individual pursuing his or her own self-interest also promoted the good of the community. Though there is a basic sense to this argument, it seemed to me to lack in its understanding of the human condition.

It was not until seminary when I began to study theologians that my objections became clear. John Calvin (the theological founder of the Presbyterian Church) both in his writings and his public debates spoke about the human condition. Calvin believed that human beings had a strong tendency to do what is wrong and often what is radically wrong. He believed that it is only when we turn our wills over to God that we can do what is right. It made sense to me and also helped me understand the place of faith in our world. God does have a plan, and when we seek God's vision for our lives, our community and world can be a joyful place.

Sadly, I am afraid, we have seen what happens when greed and concern only for individual well being becomes the way in which we relate to the world. The mortgage crises that brought our financial system to its knees came from many people seeing a way to make some fast money. It did not stop with those who promoted these high risk mortgages and those who either took them because they didn't understand or others who thought they too should cash in on the ever increasing housing market. Rather it went right up the line to Wall Street brokers who packaged these mortgages into salable entities and then pushed them hard – each receiving incredible commissions. Money seemed to be flowing everywhere.

It was as if we had hit a feeding frenzy of greed and excess! Exactly Calvin's fear of what happens when we no longer understand ourselves or our place in this world! And though we might be able to better regulate the markets, each of us knows only too well that an enterprising individual or group of people can work their way around any regulations you might choose to put in place.

Our religious institutions need to help us understand what it means to live as people of faith in whatever time we are in and what ever challenges we face. Another part of the infrastructure of any civilization is its faith and the knowledge of that faith. Sadly, I believe that as we become wealthier and more comfortable we begin to forget who created us and who gave us life. And we begin to forget what God requires of us.

Think what a difference it would have made if early in the mortgage crisis, brokers said, "Wait a minute here, I know this is wrong, even if I am making a fortune." Or if the Wall Street broker had been more concerned with the integrity of these bundled mortgages instead of how much commission could be made selling them. But we stopped worshiping at the Altar of God and rather had begun to worship wealth and power – something that happens time and again in the Bible.

It is our faith, and knowledge of what God requires of us, that helps each and every one of us find our way in this very complicated world filled with many difficult choices. And though the ice storm in December brought with it some great difficulties it also brought some true blessings. As I spoke with different members of the church about how they were doing, I heard many heartening reports.

"The storm has helped bring our family back together. We don't have any television to watch so we are talking to each other and just doing more things together in general. There is this wonderful feeling about caring about each other that has been seeping into the house after the power went out."

From another member I heard: "I couldn't make church on Sunday because I had a houseful of my co-workers staying with me, because I have heat and they don't. And I fixed breakfast for all eight of them Sunday morning."

I heard reports of members checking on each other and those in their neighborhood around them. I heard about people sharing what they had and spending more time caring for each other and their community. That is what I believe God is calling us to do.

Without a question infrastructure such as electricity and running water is important for the well being of our community, I believe that the infrastructure of our faith is even more important. Micah 6:8 says "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" Let us take the time to learn our faith that we may be underpinned by the hope of the one who created us and sustains us through all our days!

In Christ,

Pastor Markman

## MEDITATION BY BILL ODOM...

### 2 Corinthians 5

#### New Bodies

*For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies.<sup>[a]</sup> While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life. God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit.*

*So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. For we live by believing and not by seeing. Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord. So whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please him. For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body.*

Compassion for the Travolta family, Raspberry's for Scientology

As many of you may have read... John Travolta's 16 year old son died this past Jan. 2.

I especially feel bad for the Travolta family because some years ago, John gave up his catholic ancestry for L Ron Hubbard's book on Dianetics (Scientology). Jesus promised redemption for those who believe on him for eternal life ... all you have to do is believe. L Ron Hubbard's flock believes we are all descendants of a space alien race. Trading Jesus for ancient aliens sounds kind of funny,, but not when you bury your kid and start to wonder where they have gone.

Bereaved parents who believe in Jesus know that their children have left the tent and gone on to be with Christ. I can't say the same for Ron Hubbard's flock.



### FROM THE CHOIR DIRECTOR...

Hello Everyone:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who worked to make the Christmas Cantata so successful.

Thanks to all of the **CHOIR MEMBERS** for their hard work; to **CHRIS** for playing the trumpet; to **SUE** for her work during practice; the **BURKS** for the loan of their Bose portable system; to **CATHY** for keeping us all on top of the schedule and for having the white stoles cleaned; and to the **PASTOR and SESSION** for giving me the opportunity to direct the choir.

We have lots of good things planned for the new year, including an **Easter cantata**. Furthermore, if you have any ideas to improve the Music Ministry here at Nashua Presbyterian, I would welcome

your suggestions. I have a mailbox in the office, and you can drop off any items there or email me at the address below.

The choir has need of another music stand; if any of you have one at home you are not using, could we borrow it? If you have any Christian music (sheet music, books, tapes, CDs) that you want to donate to the church, let me (or Sue, Darnall, or Pastor) know.

In Christ,

nina b darisse

Choir director

[nbdarisse@comcast.net](mailto:nbdarisse@comcast.net)

## ***FROM THE SESSION...***

Notes from Session meeting on December 16, 2008

**Clerk of Session:** The Session did the annual review of the rolls and placed some members on the inactive list after conferring with them. They will be notified of the action.

### **Dates to remember:**

- An informational meeting will be held at the Windham Church on **January 24** regarding the proposed changes to the Constitution of the PCUSA. These changes will be voted on at the March Presbytery meeting. One of the proposed changes regards the ordination standards and has been a controversial issue in the local and national churches.
- The Presbytery of Northern New England will meet at our church on **March 14**.
- The Annual Meeting of the Congregation of the Nashua Presbyterian Church will be convened on **January 25, 2009** after services.
- Session approved a wellness seminar to be sponsored by Ramsay on **February 8**, with profits going to the church, if the way be clear.

**Finance Committee:** Henry Voorhis moved that we spend the remaining mission money in our 2008 budget by giving \$250.00 each to the Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter, and Habitat For Humanity, and the remainder to the Presbytery of Northern New England. Session approved.

**Building and Grounds:** Stu Ramsay reported that there are now two heaters in the building in case of emergency. Two Eagle Scout projects have been started: a walking trail and a meditation area. A third project is still under discussion.

**Mission Review:** This Committee is fine tuning a Congregational Survey and will be announcing a date for its completion soon.

**New Member Development:** A new member's class is in the planning stage for January.

## ***FROM THE BOOK SALE LADIES...***

**BOOK AND MUSIC SALE:** Browse the books displayed on the shelves in the narthex. You will find video tapes and some music tapes on the lowest shelf. All are available at bargain prices.

## ***PNNE NEWS AND WISH LIST...***

**WINTER BLUES GRIEF SERVICE**, Thursday, January 22nd, 6:30-7:30 pm is offered by Pastoral Counseling Services, Brookside Congregational Church, Temple Adath Yeshurun, and Goodwin Funeral Home. This Service provides an opportunity for people dealing with loss to reflect and cope with their grief through readings, stories, lighting candles, and conversation. *This special event will be held at Brookside Congregational Church Chapel, 2013 Elm St., Manchester, NH, is open to the public and is free to attend. Light refreshments will be served.*

**LAPTOP NEEDED:** The Presbytery needs a **LAPTOP COMPUTER** capable of multi-media for use in presentations. This primarily involves playing DVD videos. Most computers produced in the past few years running Windows XP can do this. Also, we need a **PROJECTOR** for use with the computer. If you have either of these that you can donate to the Presbytery, please contact Cliff Creel at [Click Here](#) or 603-471-0179

**BLOG** - Want to chat about the state of the church, struggles or joys in faith, what's working in your congregation, what's exciting you, or just ask a question? YOU are invited to participate and initiate or respond. Go to [www.pnne.wordpress.com](http://www.pnne.wordpress.com) and start!

## ***FOR THE WOMEN...***

Gentle reminders that:

- The knitting machine stands ready for action in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday school room.
- Sarah Puglisi and Marilyn Burks would like to hear from **YOU** about the kinds of activities you would enjoy pursuing this winter. We are available for shared week-day lunches, stitching, knitting, quilting banners, Bible study, just good old fashioned get-togethers, monthly dinners out with the girls...**WHAT IS YOUR INTEREST?** We need to hear your input!
- We will be hosting the Presbytery on March 14<sup>th</sup>...we will need many hands and lots of ideas about what to serve for a continental breakfast, and a substantial lunch. Many of the delegates will have driven long distances early in the morning, and will be late getting home for supper so these meals are very welcome. Each delegate will contribute \$5.00 to defray the cost of the noon meal, but the breakfast will be our gift; both meals are our responsibility to prepare and serve. We last hosted a Presbytery event on December 7, 1996. Please let Rita Kirk or Marilyn Burks know if you will be willing to cook and/or help to serve the meals. **MEN** will be welcomed to help out with this task, too! The more hands, the lighter the work!

## ***FROM THE EDITOR...***

Our experience on Sunday, January 11, 2009, leads me to think that we really need to have a firm policy for notifying our congregation (both members and friends) that we are cancelling or changing the time of a service of worship. Today we tried to contact everyone by e-mail announcement or by phone if we did not have an e-mail address to use. We found that some members do not see e-mail at home, or do not look at their e-mail on weekends. We also observed that WMUR (Channel 9, the NH ABC affiliate station) does not always have its scrolling cancellations running, and we have had difficulty in the past getting our cancellation posted there. We need to know your preference for notification. Please let me know by word or by e-mail as quickly as possible (before the next big storm!). My e-mail address is: [mzdburks@comcast.net](mailto:mzdburks@comcast.net). My phone # is: (603) 595-7061.

Persons named at bottom of a day are celebrating birthdays. A family named at the bottom of a day is celebrating an anniversary.

## January 2009

| Sunday  | Monday  | Tuesday   | Wednesday                    | Thursday   | Friday                         | Saturday  |
|---|---|---|------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|
|   |   |   |                              | 1<br><b>HAPPY NEW YEAR!</b>  | 2                              | 3<br><br><b>Stu Ramsay</b>  |
| 4<br>COMMUNION<br>PREP: Burks<br>SERVE: Burks<br>LECTOR: J. Gaylord<br>Finance Com. Meet'g<br>after Worship | 5<br><br>Daisy Scouts 4-5:30  | 6   | 7<br><br><b>Nicholas Fay</b> | 8<br>T.O.P.S. 9-11<br><br><b>Choir Practice<br/>7-8</b>                    | 9                              | 10  |
| 11<br>LECTOR: A. Moyer<br>Committee Reports<br>Due<br><br><b>Robert Eachus</b>                              | 12<br><br>Daisy Scouts 4-5:30   | 13<br><b>Finance Com. Meets<br/>@ Bostick's 7:00 PM</b><br><br><b>Eric Markman<br/>Tom Woodward</b> | 14<br><br>Girl Scouts 5:30-8 | 15<br>T.O.P.S. 9-11<br><br><b>Choir Practice<br/>7-8</b>                   | 16                             | 17  |
| 18<br>LECTOR: M. Burks<br><b>Slides of Elayne<br/>Peloquin's Mission<br/>Trip to TX after<br/>worship</b>   | 19<br>Martin Luther King's<br>Birthday Observed<br><br>Daisy Scouts 4-5:30<br>Girl Scouts Ceremony<br>6-8 | 20<br><br><b>SESSION MEETING<br/>7-9</b>  | 21                           | 22<br>T.O.P.S. 9-11<br><br><b>Choir Practice<br/>7-8</b>                   | 23<br><br><b>Janet Gaylord</b> | 24<br><b>PNNE meeting on<br/>Constitutional<br/>Amendments at<br/>Windom, NH PC<br/>10-12</b> |
| 25<br>LECTOR: B. Andrews<br><br><b>ANNUAL MEETING<br/>after Worship</b>                                     | 26<br><br>Daisy Scouts 4-5:30   | 27  | 28                           | 29<br>T.O.P.S. 9-11<br><br><b>Choir Practice<br/>7-8<br/>Doug Harrison</b> | 30<br><br><b>Liz Fay</b>       | 31  |