



*No matter who you are or
where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome at the
Glen Ridge Congregational Church*

Glen Ridge Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

Newsletter

January 2012

195 Ridgewood Avenue • Glen Ridge, New Jersey 07028 • (973) 743-5596

On the web at www.glenridgecong.org

From the Minister

The Rev. Dr. Joseph David Stinson



“We covenant with God and one another to be the church of Jesus Christ, loving God and our neighbors.”

So begins our church’s covenant, the promise we make and renew when we have new members join us and at our annual meetings. I am thinking about it today as we start a new year, the 124th anniversary of our congregation’s founding in 1888.

We covenant means that we make this promise because we want to. We choose to be a church. We make our covenant *with God and one another*. God is as much a party to our agreement as the ministers, church school teachers, choir members, council leadership. We make a promise to each other and to God *to be the church*.

What is a church? Calvin said it is a gathered group of people among which the Gospel is preached and the sacraments are rightly administered. Mention of preaching and sacraments implies a learned ministry but also a receptive congregation. The church is not a building. The building is the outpost from which we operate as a church, a meeting place, but not the church. We are the church. This church,

according to our covenant, is also *the church of Jesus Christ*. As many of the founding documents of our congregation and denomination (including Ephesians 5:23 and Colossians 1:18) put it, Jesus is the head of our church. He is the boss. We work for him. Everything we do ought to be in accordance with his purpose and for his glory.

The first line of our covenant also echoes the Great Commandments of Jesus: to be the church of Jesus Christ, *loving God and our neighbors*. How do we love God? We attend his worship, live by his commandments, make sure our lives are models of godly behavior. But more than God, we also love neighbors. In fact as we love neighbors we love Christ in that person, from the least to the greatest, (Matthew 25:34-40). As Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan teaches neighbors are not just our own kind but include strangers and people we don’t normally associate with. In loving all people we find a way to love God and be the church of Jesus Christ. In the new year, let’s be that kind of church!

Welcome 2012! ~J.D. Stinson

From the Associate Minister **The Rev. Cynthia F. Reynolds**



During this week between Christmas and New Year I've always had a tendency to look back over the past year in preparation for moving ahead in the New Year. This year I'm feeling especially grateful for so much and while I usually don't make New Year's Resolutions, I've decided that in the coming year I'm going to do my very best to live in an attitude of gratitude (expression thanks to my sisters at Integrity). When I'm able to do that on a regular basis I've found my life changes in wonderful ways: let's all make a resolution to live in that attitude!

I'm so very grateful for:

The companions and homemakers who are taking such good care of my father so he can remain at home.

All of the knitters: Pam Figlar, Jane O'Brien, Susan Griffith, Marie Zolcinski who made beautiful scarves for each of our Integrity House women at the December Bread for the Journey. All of our cooks: Tyra Brown, Al and Lorraine Brown, Lynne Palmer, Jennifer Agarwal, Marty Lacey, Mike Brown, Ann Waugh, and Beth Ege who have faithfully prepared lunches for our Bread for the Journey women each month.

For all the wonderful people who took stars from our Star Tree and made Christmas so special for 6 families served by MEND.

For those of you who have slipped me gift cards or cash "to be given to someone who needs it." Because of your help we have been able to provide food and other help to a number of families. Thank you!

For all those of you who have signed up to volunteer during our week hosting families served by IHN.

For all of the new faces in the congregation alongside so many familiar faces during worship each week. We are blessed by the presence of all of you!

While we miss the physical presence of so many people who died this year, I am grateful for the great cloud of witnesses who surround us: Sid Metro, Ken Van Pelt, Bob Runge, Betty Bishop, and June Marck. I am grateful for having had each of these in my life.

And I am grateful for the birth of Meadow Mercy McAleer – my newest great niece (doesn't that make me sound old!) But the circle of life does continue and that's a real gift.

Please, take a few moments to reflect on your many blessings and thank God for them! Let's live in an attitude of gratitude! Happy New Year!

See you in worship,

Peace and blessings,
Cindy



Thomas Mustachio
Minister of Music



TO OUR CHOIRS
for your outstanding work in December, and all year long – Chancel, Cantorei,

Carol, Cherub and Joyful Noise Choirs; Carillon and Chapel Bellringers – you each helped make our worship services glorious.

TO OUR SOLOISTS

Our section leader-soloists really provide invaluable leadership to each section and do amazing solo work throughout the year. Special thanks to Karen Momary, Genya Muzyczka and Bruce Turner for their beautiful work throughout this Holiday season...to the Brown family for their wonderful music at our *Longest* Night service...to Bob Hodgson for a very special Christmas morning gift in *Gesu Bambino* by Pietro Yon.

TO THE CONGREGATION

Thank you for your wonderful support of our choirs and music ministry through your excellent attendance and response to our Christmas Concert!

DID YOU KNOW?

Nearly 500 people attended *Welcome Christmas!* on December 11!

PART-TIME CHOIR OPPORTUNITIES

Yes, you *can* join one of our Adult Choirs on a short-term basis! **The Glen Ridge Choral Society** consists of our Chancel Choir and guests just like you – folks who'd like to take part in the Community Concerts, but are not ready to commit to weekly Sunday mornings. Rehearsals begin next Thursday Jan 12 (8-9 p.m.) We will be preparing for the Spring Concert on April 15 – the world premiere of *Requiem* by Sean O'Boyle. **Carillon Bellringers** need folks who can serve as substitute ringers for rehearsals and occasional services. You do need to be able to read music; you do not need to be able to sing! Our **Chancel Choir** also has a special need for tenors and basses on a regular basis.

WISH LIST

While supporting our church budget is of paramount importance, the budget doesn't cover specialty items. There are instruments and equipment that we will only be able to acquire through your generous support. A copy of our Wish list is posted on the bulletin board outside the Music Room. If you would like to receive a copy, have questions, or would like to make a special gift, please speak with Tom Mustachio. Thank you!



CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

Marty Lacey *Church School Coordinator*



A new year brings new thoughts, new resolutions and new ideas.

Our Church School Staff is guided by our curriculum, *The Mustard Seed*, but every teacher brings their own faith and creativity to their students.

Our younger children enjoy learning bible stories by hearing them read and also doing craft projects related to the topics.

When children are in Third Grade they are presented with their own Good News Bible.

The lesson's theme in the upper grades is related to the student's everyday life so class discussions are timely and interesting.

Special class activities such as Seder dinners (modified), making friendship bracelets, leading the game of Bible Jeopardy in the Chapel, filling boxes for people serving our country overseas and helping set up for our IHN guests are some examples of how the students learn to *live their faith*.

Coming to Church School on Sunday morning is always important but conflicts do arise. We have tried offering various options for those that miss class. I am always available to talk with anyone that would like to know what was taught and discussed in the class they had to miss.

DO YOU REMEMBER OUR ANIMAL CRACKER CLUB LAST YEAR?? We met for six weeks on Mondays and followed a Heifer Project curriculum. ANYONE INTERESTED IN A NEW CLUB?? This time is will be MANNA MAGIC.

Again it will run for six weeks and depending on feedback from those of you that are interested it will be on Monday or Tuesday afternoon after school. MANNA MAGIC will include "hands-on "mission projects", with of course, snacks, games and story time. Let me hear from you!! (4yrs – 4th grade) (5th and upper welcome as counselors) Cost- \$5 towards supplies

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YES, I AM INTERESTED IN JOINING THE MANNA MAGIC CLUB

Name:

Address:

Telephone #

E-mail address

I prefer Monday afternoon _____

I prefer Tuesday afternoon _____

(send to Marty Lacey, 195 Ridgewood Ave GR or E-mail marty.lacey@glenridgecong.org)

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LOOKING AHEAD

January: Arrival of Three Kings

IHN Guests

Manna Magic Club to begin

February: Children's Chapel

Church School Annual Meeting

Lenten Journey/Workshop

Confirmand Scripture Interpretations

Nathanial Johns' Interpretation of Psalm 95:1-7A

In this passage, the writer is saying that since God is our maker and does everything for our benefit, we should praise him. God is everywhere and we should always give thanks for that. To praise God, we should sing for joy, we should bow down and worship him, and we should kneel before him. We should always try to act in a way that pleases God. There are so many ways to praise and please God. Every day I have opportunities to praise God and treat other people like God treats us, with love and care. I can be friendly to a kid having a hard time in school. I can help others who are in need. I can be a good role model. I believe the most important way to praise God is to recognize that God is constantly giving goodness to us and to let that goodness pass through me to everyone I meet in my life

Chaz Burnett's interpretation of 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

This passage tells us of the Lord's faithfulness. Paul is writing to the Corinthians reminding them that through God's grace, daily blessings are received. To me, this means that through a close relationship with Christ Jesus, we will be protected and will be rich in all things. This passage encourages me to always trust in God.

Harlan Schade's Interpretation of Psalm 126

This passage is a prayer of thanksgiving from the Jews. They are thanking God for freeing them from Babylon. The author speaks of the joy that his people have after being returned to Jerusalem. The author is also asking God to help them in the future, so that they may be strong again. To me this passage means to always be thankful for what we have; we are all very fortunate to have God there when we need Him. He is able to bring us good fortune and help us lead good lives as Christians.

Sydney Carey's interpretation of Romans 16:25-27

In this passage Paul is revealing God's prophecy of Jesus. God is saying that something big is going to happen and that Jesus is coming. God wants us to stay strong and trust Him. He wants everybody to have faith in him and only him. If we do as he wants, he will protect and save us from anything. God is the source of all our blessings. We should give praise to him! God bless everyone in this joyous season.

Bethel Love Soup Kitchen

The January dates are the 5th and the 19th. Please call Emily Kopec at egroverkopec@gmail.com to volunteer. It is a great experience.



Wonderful holiday celebrations were enjoyed by our sixteen S.C.E.E.P. students, tutors and coordinators. As this is the last year this group of children will be at GRCC (S.C.E.E.P. program ends when students enter 6th grade although we do try and keep in touch as they progress through the grades) we wanted this year to be very special.

* On December 8th the students were surprised with news of a very special event. After enjoying holiday punch and snacks, each student was given a red T-shirt with the logo **To Read is to Succeed** on the front and a book-worm (designed by Jackie Hughes) with all their names on the back. The plan for their special gift was then explained. Thanks to the Lou Provost Memorial Fund (Lou was a devoted S.C.E.E.P. tutor) the students went to the Watchung Book Store for a lovely presentation about books and received a gift bag with a book from the shop, plus a book that S.C.E.E.P. had chosen for them. Then every child was given the opportunity to choose their own book to add to their bag. Lou Provost was an avid reader and would have loved seeing how excited the children were. The celebration continued with a trip around the corner for pizza. All of those chaperoning will never forget the sight of all 16 students sitting at the pizza tables while waiting for their food, reading their books with very big smiles on their faces.

* On December 15th, once again the Stinson family welcomed the S.C.E.E.P. group to their home. After some singing, reading and enjoying the Christmas decorations they gathered around the table for cocoa, krispie treats, cookies, jello jigglers and other snacks. This visit with the Stinsons at Christmas time is always a S.C.E.E.P. favorite and mentioned by the alumni when we get together.

Nancy Bigelow, Lillian Ashenfelter
Jean Lancaster and Marty Lacey -
S.C.E.E.P. Coordinators



Yoga

Yoga for the new year will start a new session on January 2 from 7-

8:30pm. Come join our group to enjoy the benefits of yoga. For more information, call Janet Dickinson @ 973 748-1509. Happy New Year.



Pilgrim Nursery School's registration for primary enrollment in the 2012-2013 year is on January 10-12 for Church members and current families. Regular enrollment is January 17-19. Take advantage of the early registration!!!

The 66th Glen Ridge Antiques Show

As a new year begins, the Women's Association turns its thoughts to our annual Antiques Show on February 3 & 4.

Planning has been in the works since last summer, but in January the work of our volunteers begins. We can use help in all areas, especially the kitchen.

To volunteer contact:

Norma Batastini at 973-746-2936 or

G_Batastini@msn.com

Jackie Ogilvie at 973-429-3651 or

jackieogilvie@hotmail.com

The show has become a major winter event in our church life for two important reasons. The first is that the monies earned go to benevolences through our Women's Association. Our goal is to raise \$15,000 for mission. This year our special beneficiary will be Big Brothers Big Sisters of Morris, Bergen, Passaic, Sussex, Inc. This organization helps children realize their potential and helps build their futures. The program provides one-to-one relationships built on trust and friendship that can blossom into a future of unlimited potential. They nurture children and strengthen communities.

The second reason the show has endured is that it brings us all together (at least 125 volunteers) for three days to work together for a worthy cause. We get to see those we might not see on a regular basis and catch up with family news. We get to enjoy good meals or a cup of tea with an old friend. We have some good laughs, some lively conversations and occasional

frustrations. We have the good feeling of a job well done when the show is over.

Sponsor letters went out in December. Please return your donations in a timely fashion so we can include your name in the Show Book.

Be a part of the 66th Glen Ridge Antiques Show, February 3 & 4, 2012.

Visit our website at

www.glenridgeantiques.com or on

Facebook.

ANNUAL REPORTS ARE DUE

Annual reports are due in the office, preferably by e-mail or document form. All reports with waiting financials are due on January 17th.



Budget Meeting

The Church Council has scheduled a special meeting on Wednesday, January 18, starting at 8:00pm to discuss the state of our church's financial position.



Women's Association Winter Brunch

Please plan to join us on Jan. 21 at 10am. Come warm your spirits with fellowship and good food. We will warm the spirits of others as we make handcrafted Valentines for our friends near and far.

From the Ministry of Outreach and Mission

This year the Ministry of Outreach and Mission had the honor of disbursing dollars to our denomination and to a variety of agencies who serve our neighbors in need. We are always open to suggestions from members of the congregation – please don't hesitate to be in touch with any member of MOM. Our expenses this year:

UCC OCWM:	\$ 29,000.00
UCC- New Jersey Assn	3,324.00
SCEEP	5,000.00
YSOP/YPS trip	500.00
IHN supplies	25.65
IHN Home match	500.00
Hurricane Irene response	900.00
CROP match	345.00
UNICEF match	145.00
Glen Ridge Ambulance	1,000.00
MEND	1,000.00
Discretionary Fund	1,000.00
Integrity Bate program	500.00
Babyland	500.00
Covenant House	500.00
CASA	500.00

Special gifts and offerings for the year included:

One Great Hour of Sharing	\$2,273.90
Neighbors in Need	1,045.00
Strengthen the Church	304.00
Japan Earthquake Receipts	552.00
Tornado relief	415.00
Food pantry receipts	154.17
Blanket receipts	25.00

MOM and this congregation also offered countless hours to our neighbors at the Bethel Love food distribution and soup kitchen. Of special note are the faithful donations of cookies we always take with us when we serve dinner. Thanks to Phyllis Connolly, Linda Kerr, and Carol Kroener for their baking skills! The guests at the dinners always enjoy the homemade goodies!

We provided over 100 gifts to families served by the MEND pantries in Bloomfield and in Newark on our Star Tree. Thank you all so much!

And babies served by the MEND pantries will benefit from the donations of diapers, lotions, wipes, and clothing our children brought to the manger on Christmas Eve.

We also introduced the congregation to CASA. The mission of **Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)** is to promote the welfare of foster children in Essex County who have been removed from their homes due to parental abuse, neglect, or abandonment. There is always a need for volunteers – ask Linda Seyffarth or Pam Flippin about this!

There is much to be done to help our brothers and sisters near and far – we are so blessed – may we find new ways to share our blessings with others!

Thank you for your generosity!



BLOOMFIELD DR. KING OBSERVANCE

Our church is invited to attend the service Monday, Jan 16th, at 4pm, at the New Light Baptist Church, 89 Dewey St, (off Broughton Ave, between Bay and Watchung), Bloomfield.

In The Life of the Church

Lorna Giles and Ken Armstead, formerly of GR, now of Martha's Vineyard, report the college studies of daughter Emelia, a freshman at Syracuse and Melora is a senior at Northeastern in Boston. The family spent Thanksgiving in North Carolina with Ken's dad who is now 90. Writes Lorna, "Hope we'll be able to catch one of your sermons in person someday soon." And they did, the next Sunday, Dec. 11th!

SCEEP News

Congratulations to Michael Carey who recently joined the Board of Directors for PCCI-SCEEP in Newark.

January 1st Brunch

Chef Jesse Stinson with the assistance of Gloria Johnson and Marty Lacey served brunch after church to 55 appreciative folks on the first day of the new year. Thank you!

The Origin of Bell Sunday

Several of us in coffee hour discussed how old a tradition Bell Sunday is at Glen Ridge Congregational. The next week I looked through annual reports, files of newsletters and old church bulletins. The first *written* evidence I found is for 1979 when the Rev. John McFadden was minister. Muriel Robinson was the minister of music but the tradition does not seem to have originated with her. It may have come from the church school or John McFadden. It was a very low key thing at the start--no warnings in the newsletters to bring bells, etc. The 1979 4th Sunday of Advent bulletin just asks the congregation to ring bells during the singing of *Joy to the World* but not in other carols. The tradition certainly picked up steam in the 1980s when David Messineo was the minister of music. If correct, Bell Sunday had its 32nd anniversary this past Dec. 18th
~D. Stinson



Interfaith
Hospitality
Network


A Community Response for Homeless Families

OUR IHN guests will arrive on January 8 – sign up to volunteer to greet, prepare meals, or stay overnight. Join us on Jan. 15 after church for a lunch with our guests hosted by Parish Life on their last day with us.



Pledge Followup

As of January 1st, we have 123 pledges and \$394,000 for the 2012 budget. This is 10 less pledges and \$30,000 less than last year at this same time. The Ministry of Stewardship is trying to get 200 pledges for the year. Have you made your commitment to support the church's ministry and mission this year? If so, thank you. If not, please do. We need everyone on board.



January

1.....	Sylvia Caldwell
1.....	Ken Underwood
1.....	Mary Meeker
1.....	John Raab
1.....	Wendy Petracca
1.....	Jim Ashenfelter
1.....	Kathee Cousins
1.....	Debbie Cusick
1.....	Jim Watson
1.....	Evan Petracca
2.....	Jeremy Mitchell
3.....	Kim DiStefano
4.....	Tyra Brown
6.....	Alden Schade
9.....	Joan Weinman
10.....	Gurly Niewood
12.....	Lisa Dickinson
12.....	Debbie Heinzen
13.....	Brenner Bodell
14.....	Lorna Giles

14.....	Meredith Batastini
14.....	Elizabeth Starnes
15.....	Marty Lacey
15.....	Megan Downey
16.....	Genya Muzyczka
16.....	Jan Spoerl
17.....	Lynne Oliver
18.....	Tom Watson
18.....	Cyndi Stinson
20.....	Jack Allen
22.....	Tim Delorm
23.....	Horace Ashenfelter
23.....	Victoria Mitchell
25.....	Nat Testa
25.....	Andrew Downey
26.....	Joan Donnelly
27.....	Rebecca Mitchell
27.....	Brendan Fletcher
28.....	Alwyn Cooper
29.....	Anna Gardiner
30.....	Emma Hinchliffe
31.....	Lizann Coleman
31.....	Carol Harpster

We seem to have several birthdays that are listed as on the first of January. If this or any other date is incorrect, please let the office know so we can correct it in our database. Or if we don't have you listed, please let us know.

WORSHIP WITH US

CHAPEL COMMUNION SERVICES
at 8:15 a.m. on January 8, 15, 22, 29

JANUARY 8**Epiphany**

Worship

Mark 1:7-11

10:15 A.M.

Mr. Stinson: *"Why Baptism?"*

Music by the Chancel Choir

JANUARY 15

Worship

1 Samuel 3

10:15 A.M.

Mr. Stinson: *"The Call of Samuel"*

Music by the Chancel Choir

JANUARY 22

Worship

Mark 1:14-20

10:15 A.M.

Ms Reynolds: *"Moving Forward"*

Music by the Chancel Choir & Joyful Noise Choir

JANUARY 29**FABULOUS FIFTH: Dixieland!**

Worship

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

10:15 A.M.

Mr. Stinson: *"A Prophet Like Me"*

Music by the Chancel Choir, Carillon Bellringers & Cantorei



At home

Joan Hayes, Bob Kansky, Irene Stevens Heun, Karen Augis, James Hollander, Susan Booth, Phyllis Domenic, Scott Spoerl, Sandra Lefkovits, Mary Keller, Jim O'Brien, Barbara Underwood, Bill Wood, Fred Worth.

In extended care facilities

Bill Luddecke (Van Dyk), Ed Warren (Stuart FL), Marilea Schlobohm (Beaufort, SC), Don Olson (Job Haines), Lucy Force (Sunrise, Woodcliff Lake).

Friends & family of our church

Meghann Marturano, Patti (Arlene Baldino's sister in law), Kady Zumwalt, Jeff Domenic, Freeman Reynolds, Jean Sparks, Theodora Wilcox, Ginnie Moriarty, Lynn Scott, Jon Adler, Xavier Ross, Marie O'Grady, Roger Keller, Cheryl Vivona, Becky Bodnar, Courtney Connolly, Barbara Martindale, Grace Uliano, Eloy &

Ofelia Hernandez, Andrei Padlowski, JC Egbert, Stephen Strickland, Len Calvin, Andrea Row, Bob Sherman, Helen Brabham, George Boltnew, Anna Withington, Jill Reintjes, Dan Glitzer, Sue Potter, Merrill Roberts, Joan and Frank Lytle, Barbara Acosta, Thomas Bright, Jim O'Brien, Sr., Amanda Oliver, Jean and Barry Frere, Jim Marturano, Elizabeth Knox, Pat Vigliotti, Paula Newman, Frank Pescatore, Mary Embree, Jeff Glock, Bill Phillips, and UCC Missionaries Jon and Dawn Barnes. Our friends at Back Bay Mission in Biloxi. The service men and women in harm's way.

**Friends and Family members we lost
in December**

Cindy Reynolds' beloved aunt, Eleanor Payne, died January 2 in New York State.

Simon Bowen, son of former member, Brian Bowen's son, died in England, unexpectedly, on December 29.