

THE NEWSLETTER

We welcome everyone who welcomes everyone!

Union Congregational Church of Hancock, UCC

February 2014

The view from the parsonage window...

Our spiritual season of Epiphany continues through the secular month of February. Webster's dictionary defines *epiphany* as "a moment in which you suddenly see or understand something in a new or very clear way" and "an illuminating discovery, realization, or disclosure." Those of us who are Christian use the term in a special way to refer to the realization that Jesus of Nazareth was the *christos* or "anointed messenger" from God.

The word *epiphany* is related to other words like perceive, reveal, inspire, realize, discover and create. We experience epiphanies who God is and how God works (and who we are relation to the Whole) through nature, science, work, love, travel, scripture, art, movies, hymns, memories, meditation, prayer, reason, listening to others speak for themselves, and doing things in a way that we've never done them before. Such things open the doors of perception. To celebrate ways that we "get" God, Christ, Spirit, humanity, ourselves and our relation to creation, we have some special church events this month.



of
in

Appreciation Sunday — February 9. In our worship service we will express our thanks to the members rotating off our church boards and committees and install our new constellation of lay leaders. Following worship we will have our **Annual Meeting part 2** to review last year and inaugurate our life together in 2014. Then we'll "celebrate us" as a church community at our annual **Soup and Bread lunch**.

Evolution Sunday — February 16. We'll join mainline churches around the globe in exploring and celebrating the positive inter-relationship between science and spirituality. Historically, what is it about the Christian faith that gave rise to science? — something unique to the western world. Today, how does science give us modern epiphanies about just how awesome God is? The UCC is a world leader in honoring and promoting an Enlightenment-based faith that respects the contributions of and

our need for a scientific worldview. Come and be part of it!

Art Sunday! — February 23. We will worship amid the beauty of artworks of all kinds created by members of our congregation. Art opens our souls and helps us to see: *epiphany!* If you would like to share a few pieces that you have created (any medium), please contact Renata Moise at 422-6854 or wildlandspainter@gmail.com. Hanging and preparation will occur on Saturday the 22nd, and the show will come down after social hour on the 23rd.

Valentine's Dinner and Concert—Wednesday, February 12

At 5:30, the youth of our church will serve a free *St. Valentine's Lasagna Dinner* at the church. Everyone who loves is invited! The dinner is free, but any "tips" given to our young waiters and waitresses will go toward sending our kids to our UCC Maine Conference summer camp at **Pilgrim Lodge!**

Dinner will be followed at 7:00 by a **Concert by Chris Ross**, Hancock's own singer/songwriter (and son of Renata Moise). Chris is nominated for the New England Music Awards' *Songwriter of the Year!* His lyrics and acoustic guitar music are innovative, fun, contemporary and pleasant to listen to. This is a fundraiser for our church—\$8.00. Invite your friends!

"Your light is come!" During Advent, the world was in darkness and we waited and prayed for the coming light. At Christmas, the light was born, as tiny and vulnerable as a baby. Now, during the season of Epiphany, the light grows stronger every day. This light-motif is a symbol that can be interpreted in many different ways as the growing light in nature suggests the moral light in Christ.

In the UCC, we like to say, "Our faith is 2,000 years old, but our thinking is not." Our denomination's 1957 *Constitution* reminds us that we are called "in each new generation to make this historic faith our own in reality of worship, honesty of thought and expression, and purity of heart before God." Being Christian means that we experience Jesus the Christ as our major revelation among many (like the Hebrew prophets, reason, and the current inspiration of the Spirit) as to who God is and how God works. God declared in Christ's resurrection, "I'll never, never stop speaking. Alleluia!" Through the arts, through science, through service to others, and through the inspiration of our youth, God is still speaking. May you have many epiphanies this season!

With you in God's grace,

Dan

Pastor Dan

FREE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT FOR THE COMMUNITY

Did you know that our church has a ministry which provides *free medical equipment* to anyone in need?

For many years, it's been well-known in the Hancock County medical community that Betty and Charles Lewis are the folks to call if you need a hospital bed, wheel chair, walker, cane, crutches, or a commode, etc. They and members of their family have been the custodians of our church's durable medical equipment collection, which goes on loan to a great many of our neighbors in Hancock and surrounding communities.

Betty gets as many as three calls per week from Red Cross, Hospice, Heart, Cancer and other health care advocates and providers in search of medical equipment for their patients. She and Charles keep track of the inventory, keep the equipment clean and organized, and help to arrange transportation if needed so that the equipment can get to those who need it. In many instances, Medicare and health insurance do not cover the cost of these items, and to purchase them is beyond the reach of most individuals who need them.

On behalf of our church, the Lewis's have been quietly providing this service for more than 30 years. If you know someone who could use this assistance, have them call the church at 422-3100 or the Lewis's directly at 422-6257.

To insure the continuation of this vital ministry to our neighbors, the time has come when we need to find a new home for the equipment collection and new volunteers to coordinate its lending operation. The Outreach Committee will be studying this ministry and looking into options for its continuation. If you can help or have suggestions, please call the chair of the committee, Linda King, at 422-6294.

NOTES OF APPRECIATION

Dear Deacons,

Many thanks for the lovely fruit basket that you delivered to me at Christmas time. It was enjoyed very much.

God bless you,
Kathryn Stone

Dear Union Congregational UCC,

Thank you for your recent gift to *Friends in Action*. Every day *Friends in Action* volunteers give rides to medical appointments, exercise classes, physical therapy, adult day programs, the grocery store and food pantries, and help picking up prescriptions. We've recently opened a "coffee house" for seniors in Ellsworth.

Your support helps make all this possible.

Sincerely,

Jo Cooper, executive director

Dear members of Hancock UCC,

Thank you for your donation and support to the *Emmaus Homeless Shelter*. Your generosity has allowed the shelter to assist so many in need. It is a wonderful feeling to see you and others invest in this community project.

Gratefully,

Sister Lucille MacDonald, director

Dear Union Congregational UCC of Hancock,

Our staff, our clients and I thank you for your generous donation to *Open Door Recovery Center*. Your thoughtfulness is much appreciated. We could not continue to serve the community without contributions from concerned people such as you. Because of such support, we continue to set the example for substance abuse counseling excellence nationwide.

With sincere thanks,

Barbara Royal, director