



MISSION OF BELLEVILLE CHURCH

Centered in the inclusive love of Jesus Christ, we seek to be a welcoming, affirming, and healing congregation. Led by the Holy Spirit, we are inspired to grow and be renewed through our worship, fellowship, Scripture study and the sharing of our gifts. Strengthened by God's love and guidance, we strive to serve with compassion those in need, both near and far.

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Dear Friends,

We have just had two back to back snowstorms, bringing close to 4 feet, which can easily bring up questions of "natural theology!" People joke with me about using a "direct line" to ask God to stop all this snow! In a recent sermon, I found comfort in the words of Jesus that imply a certain amount of randomness in the universe, whether in the chaos of storms, or of diseases. Jesus notes that some tower fell on a group of Galileans and that people often try to connect such a disaster to the behavior of those killed..... they try to place blame or guilt upon the victims. He says a clear "No" to that approach! Similarly when they ask about the man born blind and who was to blame, Jesus again says "No" to the kind of question they are asking. His implication is that there is random suffering in the universe, not connected to any bad behavior..... perhaps it is a way of saying that death and disease are just part of the creation! (Yes, we all would have created the world differently if we were God!)

As with larger trials and disasters, snowstorms CAN bring out the best in people. People find that we can't control "mother nature," and we begin to admit our need for help from neighbors or from city services. The truth of our limits and vulnerability is inescapable..... some people call it the "lie of self-sufficiency!"



LENT starts in the middle of February, Wednesday the 18th, and we will start a book study on Thursday the 19th at 6pm and Sundays at 11:30. I've recommended two interfaith books that I'd like to use; *The Faith Club* by Idliby, Oliver, and Warner, and *Sacred Ground* by Eboo Patel. Given the current conflicts and crises, I think it is simply imperative that we become better acquainted with Islam and Judaism. We can start with these two books, and bring in any other readings that may give greater interfaith understanding or work toward peace.

The lie of self-sufficiency is closely connected to the lie of isolationism. Robert Frost may have been right to say that good fences make good neighbors, but he was not talking about walls to isolate and segregate; for the latter, Ronald Reagan was right to say "Tear down that wall!" Many Muslims, Jews and Christians are trying to do just that! Interfaith encounter groups do exist and have had some success in understanding and respecting one another. We all trace our roots back to Abraham! Lent often means self-examination, and what better place to start than examining our own stereotypes and prejudices when we think of Jews or Muslims. Hope you can find a copy of these books and join in the discussion. We always read a bit out loud, so even if you can't get a book right off, feel free to join in! May February be safe for!

Yours in Christ's service,
Ross

2015 CALENDAR



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10am Worship 11:15 Youth Choir rehearsal	2 4:15pm Girl Scout Troop #76218 7pm CODA	3 3:15 Dragonfly Swim Team	4 9- 12 Thrift Shop	5 3:15 Dragonfly Swim Team 6pm Bible Study 7pm Choir practice	6	7 9- 12 Thrift Shop 9am 3MB Fencing
8 10am Worship 11:15 Youth Choir rehearsal	9 7pm CODA	10 3:15 Dragonfly Swim Team 6pm Men's Fellowship Supper	11 9- 12 Thrift Shop 8:15am Worship & Education 7pm Stewardship & Finance 5:30pm Girl Scout Troop #75336	12 3:15 Dragonfly Swim Team 6pm Bible Study 7pm Choir practice	13	14 9- 12 Thrift Shop 9am 3MB Fencing 
15 10am Worship 11:15 Youth Choir rehearsal	16 4:15pm Girl Scout Troop #76218 7pm CODA	17 3:15 Dragonfly Swim Team 7pm Executive Board	18 9- 12 Thrift Shop 	19 3:15 Dragonfly Swim Team 6pm Lenten Book Study 7pm Choir practice	20	21 9- 12 Thrift Shop 9am 3MB Fencing 7pm Game Night
22 10am Worship 11:15 Youth Choir rehearsal 11:30 Lenten Book Study	23 7pm CODA	24 3:15 Dragonfly Swim Team	25 9-12 Thrift Shop 5:30pm Girl Scout Troop #75336 6pm Men's Fellowship Dinner	26 3:15 Dragonfly Swim Team 6pm Bible Study 7pm Choir practice	27	28 9-12 Thrift Shop 9am 3MB Fencing



February

- 3 Peggy Utterback*
- 4 Robert Gould*
- 5 Jane Thomas*
- 12 E.J. Dean*
- 13 Emery Rice*
- 15 Dorothy Williamson*
- 15 Marion Spark*
- 16 Nancy Brown*
- 24 Luke Gandolfi*
- 27 Anna May Guyette*
- 28 Jamie Gandolfi*
- Marge Killam*
- Pam Ellis*

March

- 9 Cathie Gould*
- 13 Gail Gandolfi*
- 15 Hunter Anderson*
- 17 Carter Jan*
- 19 Barbara Colten*
- 21 Diana Bondar*
- 23 Steven Locke*
- 28 Diane Crofts*



Flatbread Fundraiser

On Tuesday, February 24th from 5-9 PM, there will be a fundraiser at Flatbread's in Amesbury to support the Belleville Roots Music Concert Series. A percentage of each pizza sold will help to support the Series. There will be a raffle, too. Please come and support the Series and invite your family and friends to come, too!! Thanks for your support.



Saturday, February 21st at 7PM

Come join the fun in the Bannister Room. Bring your favorite game and a snack to share.

Beverages will be provided.

Hosted by Fellowship and Outreach.



Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center

Extra Mile on Sunday, February 15th

The Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center has been in existence since 1982 and has offices located in both Newburyport and Amesbury.

The goal/mission of the agency is to empower members of our community to live free from fear, intimidation and the threat of abuse by providing support, advocacy and education. The agency provides a 24 hour emergency hotline, crisis counseling, legal representation, children's trauma services, art therapy, emergency and transitional housing. The agency partners with law enforcement, the courts, clergy, counselors and health care workers to help people victimized by domestic violence.

Belleville Church Thrift Shop



The thrift shop is open every Wednesday and Saturday 9am – noon.
Come by and see what's new!

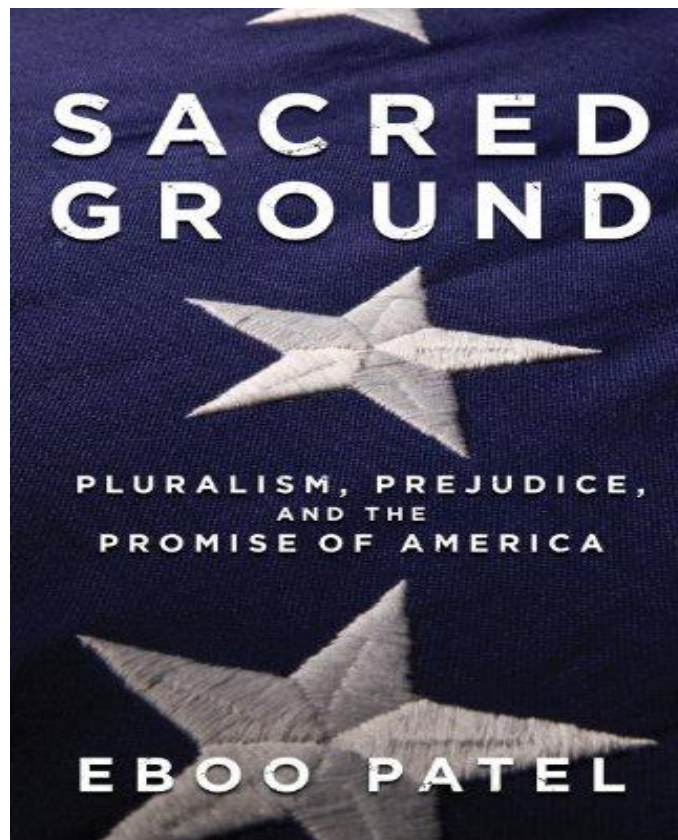
Come, lend your voice!!



Choir rehearsal, Thursday evenings at 7pm in the Stage Room, all are welcome.

Youth choir rehearsal, 11:15 Sunday mornings after worship.

Join us for our 2015 Lenten Book series beginning Thursday, February 19 at 6pm and continuing on Sunday, February 22 after worship. There are two books to choose from – “Sacred Ground” and “The Faith Club”.



There is no better time to stand up for your values than when they are under attack.

In the decade following the attacks of 9/11, suspicion and animosity toward American Muslims has increased rather than subsided. Alarmist, hateful rhetoric once relegated to the fringes of political discourse has now become frighteningly mainstream, with pundits and politicians routinely invoking the specter of Islam as a menacing, deeply anti-American force.

In *Sacred Ground*, author and renowned interfaith leader Eboo Patel says this prejudice is not just a problem for Muslims but a challenge to the very idea of America. Patel shows us that Americans from George Washington to Martin Luther King Jr. have been “interfaith leaders,” illustrating how the forces of pluralism in America have time and again defeated the forces of prejudice. And now a new generation needs to rise up and confront the anti-Muslim prejudice of our era. To this end, Patel offers a primer in the art and science of interfaith work, bringing to life the growing body of research on how faith can be a bridge of cooperation rather than a barrier of division and sharing stories from the frontlines of interfaith activism.

Patel asks us to share in his vision of a better America—a robustly pluralistic country in which our commonalities are more important than our differences, and in which difference enriches, rather than threatens, our religious traditions. Pluralism, Patel boldly argues, is at the heart of the American project, and this visionary book will inspire Americans of all faiths to make this country a place where diverse traditions can thrive side by side.

“Millions of Americans crave a way to have interfaith conversation but have no idea where to begin. This book is a great place to start. The authors have set a path that many more will want to follow.”

—Bruce Feiler, author of *Walking the Bible* and *Where God Was Born*

+ THE
A Muslim, A Christian, A Jew—
★ FAITH
Three Women Search for Understanding
☾ CLUB



Special Features Inside:

- How to Start a Faith Club
- Reading Group Guide
- Q&A with the Authors

RANYA IDLIBY, SUZANNE OLIVER,
AND PRISCILLA WARNER

A second book has been added entitled “The Faith Club” A Muslim, A Christian, A Jew – Three women search for understanding by Ranya Idliby, Suzanne Oliver & Priscilla Warner.

A groundbreaking book about Americans search for faith and mutual respect – “the Faith Club” interweaves the stories of three women, their three religions, and their urgent quest to understand one another.

Men's

Fellowship Dinner



Wednesday, February 25th, 2015 at 6pm

Bob Hughes will share his story/experience of a near-death experience and its aftermath.

**It will be sure to spark other memories or experiences about the spiritual world
(sometimes experiences of loss can be opportunities for the spiritual part of our lives.)**



COMING MARCH 20TH, 2015

**BELLEVILLE SPRING VARIETY SHOW
Friday, March 20, 7:30 pm, Stage Room**

Calling all actors, comedians, dancers, musicians, artists, of all ages! FUN is always a good thing, and having an audience that is kind and forgiving is the best! So dust off old tap shoes, get out an old costume, find some favorite skit or song that you heard once and would like to do! People are already volunteering, and we will need volunteers to help with the room set up and refreshments as well. Contact Ross Varney (978-462-4899) or Martha Kelleher (978-352-8390) if you want to participate in the acts or the decor and refreshments.



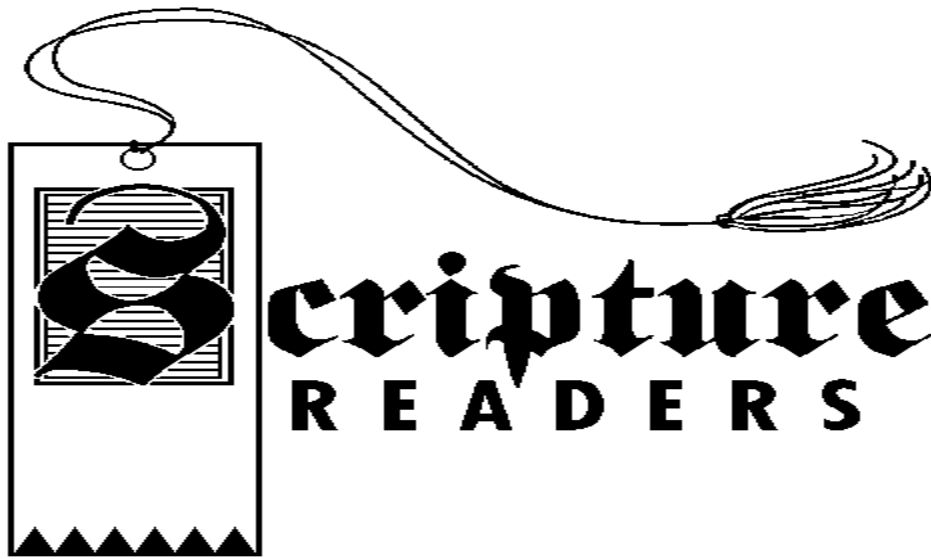
Communion is the first Sunday of each month

February

- 1 Shirley Locke & Mardee Beuparlant
- 8 Sue Heersink & Gail Gandolfi
- 15 Jean Kirkpatrick & Carolyn Kyle
- 22 Anna Guyette & Kathy Raywood

March

- 1 Chapel Allard & Andrea Samuelson
- 8 Nicole Samuelson & Michelle Anderson
- 15 Gail Gandolfi & Jean Kirkpatrick
- 22 Shirley Locke & Norma Dean
- 29 Gail Gandolfi & Hans Erwich



February

- 1 Peggy Utterback
- 8 Lisa Krallis
- 15 Ben Heersink
- 22 Emery Rice

March

- 1 Sue Heersink
- 8 Hunter Anderson
- 15 Chapel Allard
- 22 Annika Ellis
- 29 Barbara Colten



JANUARY

- 4 Sue Heersink, Dorothy Williamson & Carolyn Kyle
- 11 Nancy Canali, Gail Gandolfi & Jane Thomas
- 18 Shirley Locke, Karen Conway & Marcia Samuelson
- 25 Mary Lou Tyler, Diane Crofts & Jennifer Allard

FEBRUARY

- 1 Sue Wolfendale, Anna Guyette & Jean Hanson
- 8 Dian Crofts, Pam Ellis & Lisa Krallis
- 15 NO COFFEE HOUR
- 22 Janet Woodman, Irene Bradford & Jean Kirkpatrick



Belleville Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

300 High Street

Newburyport, MA 01950

978-465-7734

bcchurch@worldpath.net

bellevillechurch.org

Church Staff & Contact Information

Pastor Ross Varney 978-462-4899
Office hours: Tuesday 11 AM - Noon;
Wednesday & Thursday 10:30 AM - Noon;
or by appointment, suggested Wed/Thur.
evenings
Please call to assure the pastor is available.

Church Office 978-465-7734
Valerie Gates, Office Administrator
Office hours: Tuesday, Thursday and
Friday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Church Email: bcchurch@worldpath.net
Website: www.bellevillechurch.org

Andrea DeGiovanni, Music Director

Bob Locke, Sexton

Newsletter Submissions

Do you have an article that you would like to include in
the monthly newsletter?

If so, please submit your article to the church office by the
20th of each month.

Thank you!

Church Officers

Moderator: Jean Hansen
Clerk: William Silsby
Treasurer: Mary Lou Tyler
Memorial Fund Treasurer: Kelly
Burke-Anderson
Auditor: Kathy Raywood
Members-at-Large (Ex. Board)

Contact Persons

Board of Fellowship & Outreach:
Diane Crofts
Board of Worship & Education:
Kelly Burke-Anderson
Board of Stewardship & Finance:
Hans Erwich, Jim Samuelson
UCC Delegate: Emery Rice

Sunday School Coordinator

Pam Ellis

Flower Coordinator

Shirley Locke

Hospitality Coordinator

Audrey Clarkson