

A weekly collection of news, reflections and announcements from the
 Congregational Church of West Medford
 an Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



PASTORAL REFLECTION

"There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores."

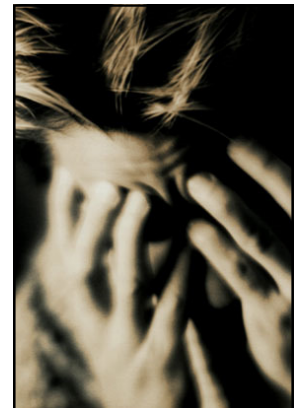
—Luke 16:19-21

Regrets—I've Had a Few

A nurse specializing in care of the terminally ill has recorded the most common regrets of the dying. Interestingly, there's no mention of missed project deadlines, skipped parachuting opportunities or even about one choice of life partner (the many jokes we have heard notwithstanding). *You know the one about the woman who placed an ad on Craig's list, "Husband wanted." The next day, she received hundreds of emails saying the same thing: "You can have mine."*

The top five regrets discovered by nurse include:

5. *I wish that I had let myself be happier.* People admit to fearing change in their lives, so they pretend that they are content. In fact, they wish they had laughed more and allowed themselves to be sillier.
4. *I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.* People feel badly that they were so caught up in their own lives that important friendships slip away.
3. *I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.* Many people suppress their feelings in order to keep peace with others.
2. *I wish I hadn't worked so hard.* This regret was expressed by every male patient....every male patient.
1. *I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.* This is the most common regret of all. "Most people had not honored even a half of their dreams," says Ware, "and had to die knowing that it was due to choices they had made, or not made."



You might imagine that the rude, rich man in Jesus' parable (Luke 16:19—31) has a few regrets when he finds himself in Hades suffering in death. As he observes the reversal of circumstance offered the poor man Lazarus who is carried away by angels to sit with Abraham you can hear the nameless rich man (who commentators have called Dives which is Latin for 'rich') say to himself, *I wished that I had cared for the people around me.* There was Lazarus lying at his gate, covered with sores and the rich man stepped over or around him. Every single day, the rich man missed a chance to help Lazarus by simply giving him the leftovers from his table.

Continued on next page

The text suggests that his second regret might have been *I wish that I had listened to Moses and the prophets*. The rich man realizes in death that he had not paid attention to the word of God as it came through Moses, "you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18). He had not heeded the prophet Isaiah, who commanded, "share your bread with the hungry ... bring the homeless poor into your house" (Isaiah 58:7).

And like in our contemporary experience, his biggest regret might have been the same: *I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me*. Every day, the rich man ignored poor Lazarus, fully aware of the teachings of Moses and the prophets. But he didn't have the courage to live a life of integrity, one in which his actions were in line with what he observed and what he believed.

And like in our contemporary experience, the rich man probably fell into a trap set by his own consumption and the culture of those who have (read the 1%) who blame those who have not (the 99%) for their poverty—possibly even suggesting that Lazarus must be lazy or morally deficient. And maybe, sitting around the table overflowing with too much food and drink, some of which would go to waste, with his like-minded and equally situated colleagues and friends, empowered by a "prosperity theology" they would say, "God rewards goodness and punishes wickedness--it's always been that way! So dress lavishly and eat sumptuously. You deserve it!"

These are some pretty BIG regrets. *I wish that I had cared for the people around me. I wish that I had listened to Moses, the prophets and Jesus. I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, in which my actions were in line with my beliefs.*

Friends, we all have regrets, and we will have regrets when it is our time to meet our Maker (so to speak) for none of us is perfect. But with the guidance of our faith, we can live a life that keeps our egos right sized and in turn keeps our regrets right sized. If the rich man had just shared some of his food he would have experienced the transformative power of caring for another. If the rich man had woven the lessons of scripture and faith into his decision making, he might have given more and taken less. If he sought courage through prayer and meditation and his relationship with God—me might have resisted the status quo and the culture of consumption and found himself living in line with his values and beliefs.

The choices we make as individuals can make a big difference. Hunger in America might not be eliminated without government intervention, but the hungry person or persons on our street corner can be fed, a sandwich at a time. Our educational excellence needs the investment of the whole society, but the kid across the street whose single parent is working and who spends too much time alone can benefit from some of your time invested in a volunteer role.

You can live a life of integrity, true yourself and true to your beliefs and all it takes is to make one right choice at a time. And Jesus will tell you, the result is a life you won't regret.

Rev. Wendy Miller Olapade (revwdmiller@comcast.net)





In Our Prayers

Concerns: We pray for the Briggs family at the death of Jack's Aunt Milly; the terrorist situation in a mall in Kenya and for all those affected by violence; for Thelma T. who is improving and hopes to return home soon; all those in Colorado who have been affected by the floods; the people of Syria especially the refugees; our world leaders that they might find a peaceful path.

We continue to pray for our church's Crossroads process and future; for the environment; for President Obama and Congress regarding our present times of strife—may God's intentions prevail as they make decisions.

We celebrate joys: two upcoming weddings of Abby and Nathaniel and Jessica and Casey; praise God for the organ being repaired; birthday blessings for Rev. Wendy and Jenna N.

We continue to pray for Lorna S. still hopeful for full recovery; Dick S's friend Ed with Lou Gerig's Disease; Diane P's friend's Paul and Joe in treatment for cancer; Eva W. recovering at home and June L. receiving care at home. We remember fallen soldiers and Veterans and those serving in our military. We lift up all of the children of our congregation and those we bless in Bright Stars.

Please send prayer requests to office@medfordchurch.org by noon each Wednesday

OUR CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastoral Care Concerns: "Deacon of the Month" for September is Brenda Briggs. Please let us know if there is someone who could use a visit, phone call, card, or prayer. The Deacons (aka: Spiritual Life) rely on your input about the well being and needs of our members and friends.

Empty your Pockets in the Pennies from Heaven Jar:

The "Pennies from Heaven Jar" will be in the Narthex for you to empty your pockets of the loose change you may have. This jar is just one way to help support the church in a very easy way. The jar easily takes coins and paper money.

Happy Upcoming September Birthdays

Patrick Coughlin	September 25
Joy Roberts	September 29
Joe Luongo	September 30



Fellowship Café: As it has been through the summer months, our fellowship time will remain a simple affair through October 20. Basic snacks will available and volunteers will only bring cold drinks, set-up and clean-up. Beginning October 27, we have our regular fellowship time—with volunteers bringing light snacks and coffee being served. Volunteers are being sought now for November. If you are not on a Committee and have not had an opportunity to do coffee hour lately, dates are available in November for non-committee member participation. Please let Diane (office@medfordchurch.org) know when you would like to help out.

Altar Flowers Always Welcomed: Please contact Brenda Briggs bgbriggs51@gmail.com (or the church office@medfordchurch.org) to make arrangements to schedule a Sunday to bring flowers or order them in honor or memory of a loved one.

Worship Volunteers Always Welcome: We are always looking for folk to participate in worship as ushers and readers. The Spiritual Life Committee recruits readers. Kathy Williams is the contact at this time. (kathypricewilliams@yahoo.com)



If you would like to usher, please see Rev. Wendy to find out more or ask any questions. You are also welcome to call the church office to volunteer. Our church works better when we all pitch in and participate! Your help is appreciated.

Reminder to all users of Barnes chapel. Please do not unplug the refrigerator.

Several times in the past month the plug has been pulled over the weekend and food is spoiled. We have added a power strip to insure you have the outlets you need to do fellowship



The Gift of Bread: The Spiritual Life Committee is looking for volunteers to bake a simple loaf of gluten free bread for our monthly celebration of Holy Communion (on the first Sunday of the month). The recipe is very simple (and uses a gluten free pizza dough product). Spiritual Life can provide the bread making mix if you can provide the loving care. No kneading involved. Contact Rev. Wendy.

An Invitation

Hope Central Church and
the Metropolitan Boston Association of the MACUCC
joyously invite you to

The Ordination of Nanette Pitt Savides

to the Christian Ministry of Word and Sacrament.

Sunday, October 13th, 2013 at 5:30 p.m.

Hope Central Church,

85 Seaverns Avenue, Jamaica Plain, Boston

Pick-up choir - all welcome to sing - 4:30 p.m.

Reception following the service.

RSVP & more info

www.thesavides.com/nanette/ordination



MISSION AND OUTREACH

Please save the date—and save some food!

“Medford Gives Thanks”

Monday, November 25, 7:00 – 8:00 PM.

Community Food Drive and Thanks Giving

Sponsored by the Medford Interfaith Clergy Group
to benefit the Community Cupboard Food Pantry (@ UU Church Medford)

Event will be held at
Grace Episcopal Church, 160 High Street, Medford

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Any nonperishable food item that has not reached expiration is very welcome. Other things that are especially prized: diapers, Ensure, mayonnaise, catsup, Spam, pet food, toilet paper, shampoo, toothpaste, ramen noodles, Progresso soup, cooking oil, dishwashing liquid, laundry detergent, coffee  
Monetary donations are always welcome too and checks should be made out to the Community Cupboard Food Pantry.

### **Join in the CCWM Boston Urban Outreach In-Service Project**

**Friday, November 8, 5 pm--Saturday, November 9, 3 pm - RSVP Please**

Once again, we will participate in an overnight mission event to learn about and to help relieve homeless and hunger in Boston. *Day only options available.* During the event we will: have dinner with and hear directly from those who have experienced homelessness; share time together preparing meals and sandwiches; participate in conversation, games and music before a sleepover at a church in Charlestown. The next day we'll distribute the sandwiches we've made at Boston Common, and then head to the Boston Rescue Mission to make and serve lunch to the homeless and hungry there. *(note to those who have helped before: This year we will be helping at Boston Rescue Mission in downtown Boston instead of Pilgrim Church because that is where the need is at this time).*

We hope that everyone can make this wonderful event! WE also hope that you might invite friends and neighbors who are interested in the kind of spiritual growth that comes from mission work. The costs of the event will be fully covered by our Outreach Mission fund, but we need to know now how many spaces to reserve.

**Please RSVP to Susan D'Arcy Fuller ( [susandarcy@hotmail.com](mailto:susandarcy@hotmail.com) ) indicating how many from your family will attend, and please indicate if you plan to sleep overnight at the church in Charlestown. Children 12 and up are welcome with an adult chaperone. Note that our confirmation class will be required to participate as they are able. Thank you!**



## FROM OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

**Young Champions of America:** is the largest multi-sport recreation organization in the United States. We are dedicated to providing high quality, affordable programs for boys and girls, ages 5-15. For over 30 years, Young Champions has engaged in the instruction of sports and recreation for the enhancement of youth in America. Students achieve advancement and recognition with each session they attend. All students are invited to participate in our regional competitions where everyone goes home a champion!



With over 20 years of experience, our successful cheerleading program has become the leader in the cheer industry. All students have the opportunity to qualify for and perform at the Young Champions National Cheerleading Competition. Participants gain a sense of team spirit, improved self-esteem, and readiness for high school cheer squad tryouts. In our program, we teach cheerleading and pom-pom techniques, jumps, stunts, cheers, chants, dance steps and voice projection. Students have the opportunity to advance from Jr. Stars to Stars to Jr. All Stars to Pro All Stars to Elite. Coaches choreograph a competition routine which all students learn and practice throughout the session in preparation for our Cheer Competition. Family and friends are invited to attend all our events. Students compete for awards and all participants go home with a competition trophy! Youth ages 4 to 15 are invited to enroll in the Young Champions Cheer program.

Cheerleading classes meet once a week. September 26-, 2013 Sign up at The Congregational Church of W. Medford at 5:15 pm, Thursday, in Fellowship Hall, classes for various age groups. Fun, team participation, beginners to experienced. Just \$7 a class

**Medford Family Network:** Help others and help yourself!



SWAP DAY, Sunday, September 29, 2013, 3:00pm--4:30 pm

Temple Shalom Auditorium, 475 Winthrop St, Medford.

Suggested Donation of \$1 per family at the door. You do not need to donate anything in order to take items for your family.

Donations for the following accepted:

- \*Clothing for infants, toddlers, kids, tweens and teens.
- \*Gently used & clean toys, books, music, and movies
- \*Baby equipment
- \*Maternity wear (No other adult clothing lease)

Contact Tamar Sigal at [rtslegel@comcast.net](mailto:rtslegel@comcast.net) or call the Medford Family Network at 781-393-2106

Please be thoughtful and only come if you live or work in Medford. Take what you need for your family and leave some for your neighbors. Thanks

**Medford Public Library Hosts All About the Japanese Flute** with Elizabeth Reian Bennett  
 Tuesday, October 15 at 7:00 PM. Elizabeth Bennett has been attending our church and she has invited us to her performance. In this performance and talk, teacher and musician Elizabeth Reian Bennett will introduce the shakuhachi, a Japanese end-blow flute. She will discuss its construction, how it is played, and the culture in which it is rooted. This will be followed by a performance of pieces from the early days of the wandering monks, the later ensemble repertory, and a composition written for her by local composer John McDonald. There will be a break for questions at the end. Reian Bennett is the first woman to be certified a Grand Master of the shakuhachi, which she has studied with Living National Treasure Aoki Reibo for over 30 years. This program is supported in part by the Medford Arts Council and by the Friends of Medford Public Library.

**Tufts Community Day  
 Co-sponsored with  
 Medford and Somerville**

All are invited to a day of education, art, and family entertainment. All activities, including lunch, are free of charge.

Tufts University Academic Quad  
 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
 Sunday, September 29.


Highlights of the day include:

- \* Complimentary lunch and refreshments
- \* Exhibits, activities, and resource information presented by Tufts departments/organizations and by Medford and Somerville community groups
- \* Tips on safety and fire prevention by police and fire departments
- \* Music and dance performances by student groups
- \* Pumpkin painting, crafts, face painting, and other activities for children

Community Day is free and open to the public.

Community Day will be held rain or shine.


[http://communityrelations.tufts.edu/  
 communityday/](http://communityrelations.tufts.edu/communityday/)

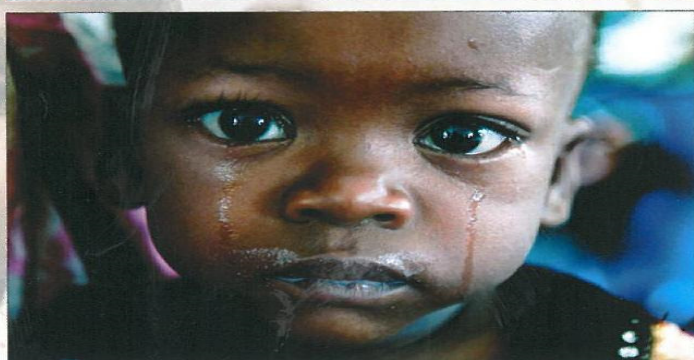


**FACE OF HOPE**  
**International USA**  
 building hope for underprivileged families

**WALDEN UNIVERSITY**  
*A higher degree. A higher purpose.*

**Global Days of Service 2013**  
 HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY





# Fundraiser Walk and Exhibition

Sponsored by: Walden University

## WALK & DONATE TO FEED AN ORPHAN

**Join Us  
 to Make a  
 Difference**

**October 5, 2013  
 9:30 AM to 1:00 PM**

**Medford Square  
 & Playstead Park**

The general public, local business community, residents of Medford and neighboring cities are all invited to participate and support Face of Hope's mission of building hope and dignity for all, and making the world a better place to live in.

## NEWS AND EVENTS FROM THE UCC

**Join Rev. Wendy for MACUCC Super Saturday. Registration is now open. Saturday, October 26, 2013.** Come spend the day! Enjoy a variety of workshop offerings, marketplace and networking. Tri-County Regional Vocational High School, 147 Pond Street, Franklin, MA. Keynote Speaker: The Rev. James Moos, Nominee for Election as Executive Minister of Wider Church Ministries, UCC and Senior Pastor of Bismark (ND) UCC.

Here are some of the workshop titles which may pique your interest:

- Whole Church Evaluations
- Discipleship: A Model of Church for the 21st Century
- Practical Ideas for Youth Ministry
- Money Matters: Our Faith and Our Finances
- Worship with a Twist
- Divestment from Fossil Fuel Companies – Update & What's Next
- The Spirit Moves (yoga and Christian worship)
- Faith - Grow it, Deepen it, and Live it Through a Holistic Approach to Adult and Intergenerational Faith Formation
- Faith Formation Family Style: Equipping Parents
- Transforming Stewardship into Joyful Celebration (Jena Roy is presenting this one!)
- Called to Care Ministry (Rev. Wendy is presenting this one!)



For details, workshop descriptions and more about registering—<http://www.macucc.org/events/detail/1165>

### **Celebration IX: Together We Can—March 28-30, 2014, Portland, Maine**

*"How wonderful it is for God's people to live in harmony"*—Ps 133:1 A weekend of spiritual renewal where together we can build community, form friendships, participate in workshops and make a joyful noise through all the land. Registration is now open. The United Church of Christ Women Leaders of New England sponsor this event every four years and in 2014 it will be held in Portland Main at the Holiday Inn-by-the-Bay. Workshops, keynote speakers such as Maren Tirabassi, Nancy Taylor, Mary Luti and other fabulous women church leaders, music, Forums, Bible Study and a Marketplace. <http://www.uccwomenscelebration.org/>

