



Orchard Covenant Church

95 Berkshire Street
Indian Orchard, MA 01151

The Messenger

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413-543-4204



MESSENGER

John F. Howell, Editor

E-MAIL: johnnlinda@comcast.net

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THE PASTOR'S PAGE

“Full Participation, Equal Sacrifice:”

Orchard Covenant Church exists to follow Jesus by loving God, loving each other and our neighbors, making disciples and blessing our community with a witness of unity in diversity in Jesus' name.

Enclosed in this Messenger is a pledge card and envelope. Ask God what “faith promise” you shall make towards Orchard Covenant’s 2012 ministry budget. Do you trust God to provide for your needs, if you commit yourself to regular and generous giving?

Despite difficult economic times, your faithful giving has enabled Orchard Covenant to grow in ministry. We thank you and thank God! God is faithful, and will be again in 2012, when every person participates in giving at a level of personal sacrifice. We pray for Full Participation, Equal Sacrifice, - not equal giving. Let us put our trust in God to provide what we need to keep proclaiming and praising the name of Jesus. - John Hayden

Inside this issue:

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- ⇒ Take Your PULSE!
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- ⇒ Stewardship Sunday
- ⇒ Thanksgiving Service
Tuesday November 22

Increasing our Understanding of “Stewardship” as “Giving”

For many Christians, the word “stewardship” means “giving money”. However, the bible has a broader view. Biblical stewardship is also known as whole-life giving because God calls us to give from every area of our lives. Consider and reflect on the following passages:

God calls us to be stewards of our talents – read Romans 12:3-8

God calls us to be stewards of our time – read Ephesians 5:15-16

God calls us to be stewards of our treasures – read 1 Chronicles 29:14

God calls us to be stewards of our testimonies – read 1 Peter 3:15

Biblical stewardship recognizes three important facts. **First:** God is the owner of everything - and that includes every part of our lives (Psalm 24:1). **Second:** Our role is to be stewards of God’s resources (Genesis 1:26, 1 Corinthians 4:1-2). **Third:** the goal of Stewardship is to accomplish God’s Mission in the world (Matthew 28:19-20). Simply stated, “**Biblical stewardship recognizes that God’s resources are to be deployed through God’s people to accomplish God’s mission.**” Think about this statement and pray about it as you complete your pledge card.

God has entrusted to the church all the resources needed to accomplish the kingdom mission. If the resources are short, either we have failed to understand the kingdom vision, or we have failed to respond to the need for investing in ministry.

Giving a tithe as the Bible teaches seems like a risky thing to do. But followers of Jesus who have dared to start with a tithe have discovered that money needed for essentials is somehow always there. It has made them grow even more in giving.

As followers of Jesus, God has given us new hearts to replace our “hearts of stone” (Ezekiel 36:26) He has transformed us from people “living to get” into people “living to give.”

“Once our hearts were for getting, for getting our own way ...forgetting God’s love and ownership of all creation.”

Now our hearts are for giving, for giving as God’s Spirit leads Forgiving others as we have been forgiven”

Take time to thank God for the new heart you have been given – and ask God to show you how to invest your gifts in a way that will demonstrate to a lost and hurting world that the heart is for giving.

Prayerfully consider your attitude toward giving and reflecting on the giving love of Jesus when filling out your pledge card for this year’s stewardship commitment.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Nov. 1 - Sandra Brennan
 Nov. 3 - Rae Peterson
 Nov. 3 - David Wapner
 Nov. 10 - Patti Forbes
 Nov. 22 - Bob Garelli
 Nov. 22 - Rich Forbes
 Nov. 24 - Dana Ham
 Nov. 25 – Joshua Pringle
 Nov. 29 - Don Olson
 Nov. 30 - Ann Crooks

ANNIVERSARIES

Nov. 3 - Billy and Sue Wages
 Nov. 13 - Lee and Mary Lou Deshais

[If your date is wrong or your name has been omitted, please contact the editor.]

DATES TO REMEMBER

Oct. 23 – Congregational Meeting
 New members – Nominating committee - Property
 Oct. 30 – PULSE online survey begins
 Nov. 2 – Community Lunch
 Nov. 5 – Women’s Brunch



REMEMBER TO TURN
 YOUR CLOCKS BACK
 ONE HOUR BEFORE
 YOU GO TO BED ON
 SATURDAY,
 NOVEMBER 5!

Nov. 6 – All Saints Sunday- Reception for new members
 Nov. 8 – ACTS Family Night at Friendlys
 Nov. 13 – Cookies and Love
 Nov. 13 – “Food Shower” for Survival Center
 Nov. 19 – Men’s Fellowship Breakfast
 Nov. 20 – Stewardship Sunday
Bring your pledge cards and soup cans.
 Nov. 22 -Thanksgiving Eve Service at 7:00 pm,
 Nov.25—27 - Thanksgiving at the Pines
 Nov. 27 – Advent Begins

Stay after the service to help to decorate the Sanctuary.

THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE and Pie Fellowship



Take time to be thankful! This is our chance to join in fellowship with our sisters and brothers from the Covenant Church of Springfield as our guests. We will pray and sing and share together, and a joint choir will fill the sanctuary with praise. Then we’ll eat pie together in our community hall. Come, and bring friends and family! **Tuesday, November 22 at 7:00 pm.**

FOOD SHOWER

On November 13, Holly Farrar, the new director of the Survival Center, will visit us in morning worship. Let’s fill the chancel with groceries and “shower” her with food to fill the pantry shelves! Cash and checks are also greatly needed and appreciated as well as chickens and turkeys.

Calling All Bakers for Cookies and Love

Once again we will be thanking the agencies that serve our Indian Orchard community by baking cookies and enclosing notes of encouragement. This year we have chosen the Thanksgiving season to show our love which seems very appropriate. **November 13th** is the Sunday to bring your home-baked cookies to church where they will be packed and distributed. Please do not donate store bought cookies but you could use dough that’s already prepared. You can imagine the surprise and delight to teachers, police officers, librarians, etc. when they are presented with a bowl of these homemade goodies. It is a small token when we consider how much investment they are making into our community.

The Men’s Connection

Date: Saturday, November 19
Time: 8:30 to 9:30 am
at the
Orchard Covenant Church
Breakfast will be served.

SUNDAY NIGHT SUPPERS

Pastor Nancy and Wally Ebner will be hosting “Second and Fourth Sunday” Supper Fellowships this fall at their home, to which all are invited to sign up. They will be on the second and fourth **Sundays at 5:30 p.m.** They would like to fill their table with eight to ten people and you may sign up as a single person, or with family, or invite a friend to come with you. Children are welcome. The dates for these suppers are **November 13 and 27.** Wally has made sign-up sheets that are in the Community Hall.

WHY PLEDGE CARDS?

Our Council is planning a budget of approximately \$150,000 for 2012. We need each person, or giving unit, in church, to participate in our financial ministry if we are to continue paying our staff and other ministry expenses. The pledge card helps us as givers, to challenge ourselves to greater levels of regular and generous giving – of our time, talents, and treasures.

“Giving is a spiritual practice in which we offer our time, talents, and treasures to God. People are born to give. That’s because we are created in God’s image. Our Creator is a loving giver. “Freely you have received; freely give.”

WOMEN'S BRUNCH

On Saturday, November 5, at 10:00 a.m., we will have a very special women's brunch. Come and eat some delicious food, and hear our wonderful speaker, **Mandy Adendorff!**

Mandy is known for her breathtaking paintings of faith and her powerful speaking ministry. She was raised in apartheid South Africa, a nation torn by violence and racial conflict. At age 15, Mandy, a Jewish girl, had a life changing encounter with the Messiah. She received her degree specializing in Art Education and Biblical studies in Johannesburg, South Africa. In 1993, her Live Painting ministry began in South Africa. Mandy began her ministry to a teenage generation broken by racial injustice and violence. She used live paintings to open minds and hearts before opening her mouth to speak God's Hope. She has been painting and preaching with passion to young and old for nearly twenty years.

We are so excited to have Mandy speak to us, with words and through her painting, as she shares God's message.

All women are invited! **Please RSVP to Toni Wapner, 599-1411.** There is no fee; a free will offering will be taken to benefit Mandy's ministry.

BENEVOLENCE FUND

Have you heard of the "Benevolence Fund" at church? This fund is made up entirely of donations from our congregation, and was created to help those among us who have urgent needs.

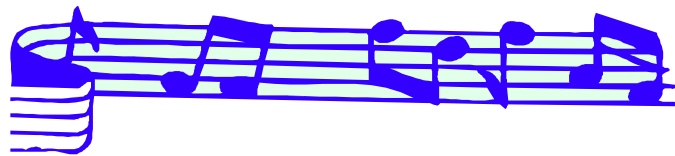
In the past, this fund has been used to help pay a utility bill, purchase heating oil, or help to pay a medical bill. It may be used to help purchase food for a hungry family. It allows us to do "acts of kindness" for friends in need.

The balance in this fund fluctuates over the year, and presently is very low. Your donations to the Benevolence Fund are tax deductible, and should be above and beyond your giving to the General Fund. If God leads you to do so, please give generously and be sure to clearly mark your donation to the "Benevolence Fund."

What are all these Soup Cans for ?

From Oct 23 to November 20, fill a "Covenant World Relief" soup can with coins, cash and checks, to help the "poorest of the poor" on the planet, through relief and development projects. Pick up a can at church or a lid and label, to put on your own soup can. Return them on **November 20**, our Stewardship Celebration Sunday.

SING UNTO THE LORD!



Willing voices needed to join our choir. But hurry, there are only a few seats left. Please contact June Foster (783-7898) if you are interested or join us on any **Wednesday at 7:00 pm** at church. Women are particularly needed and welcome.

We're going to take our PULSE!

When you go to the doctor's office, a nurse usually takes your pulse and blood pressure before the doctor comes in. It is a quick and easy way to get a general read on the patient's health. Even though everybody is different, the results are compared to a standardized set of criteria for what constitutes good health.

According to the Apostle Paul, the church is like a human body (Romans 12:4-5). It stands to reason then that every living church has a pulse. Taking the pulse of a church provides a general read on the health and vitality of that unique body of believers.

PULSE is an online survey administered by our denomination, the Evangelical Covenant Church. We hope every attendee in our congregation will complete it during the two weeks, from October 30 to November 13. Everyone who has an email will receive the PULSE survey on October 30. You may "take your PULSE" at home. Those with no computer may take your PULSE at church.

The PULSE survey is an important part of our growth in vitality as a congregation. When we receive our report, we will also receive recommendations for next steps in healthy missional ministry. And that is our prayer...to be a healthy missional church. By "healthy" we mean pursuing Christ. By "missional" we mean pursuing Christ's priorities in the world.



NEW CHURCH ROOF!

We have been working with our insurance company and Aspen Contracting regarding hail damage from the July 25 microburst. We have been approved for a **NEW ROOF!** Hear more at our October 23 congregational meeting.

In addition, Aspen Contracting will sponsor a free neighborhood cookout at Orchard Covenant, tentatively set for November 5, in the afternoon. God is GOOD!