

THE TOWER

SEPTEMBER 2012

VOLUME 37, NUMBER 1



*Celebrating 125 Years in Service to the LORD
1887 - 2012*

Park Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Worshiping in Davis Chapel

111 Park Avenue
Worcester, MA 01609

Telephone: 508-752-2468

E-mail: parkchurchucc@juno.com

Website: www.parkcongregationalchurch.org



www.facebook.com/ParkCongregationalChurch

The Rev. Dr. Gary R. Shahinian, Minister

Telephone: 508-756-5667

Cell: 508-451-8785

Fax: 508-753-7354

E-mail: shahinian.bogosian@juno.com

A NOTE FROM THE MINISTER

“The Importance of Our Church Anniversary”



The members and friends of Park Congregational Church will be capping off the yearlong celebration of our 125th anniversary with a festive banquet on Sunday afternoon, September 23, at 1:30pm at Wachusett Country Club in West Boylston.

It has been a wonderful year in our church's life as we have marked our anniversary in important ways: a joyous worship service in February in which many area clergy and local politicians participated and congratulated us on reaching this special milestone, a splendid concert in April featuring voice and instruments, and a Scottish Tea in April featuring an outstanding performance of Mary, Queen of Scots, celebrating the Scottish ancestry of many Park Church members, both past and present. And now we are anticipating climaxing our anniversary year with a celebratory banquet!

This anniversary year has reminded us of our church's identity, which is very important as we go forward into the future. We have been made aware of our church's roots. What are they and what do they mean for us today?

First, Park Congregational Church began as the first “Children's Church” in the country. We are all very proud of that distinction. Thousands of children have attended Sunday School classes at Park Church over the past 125 years and have been taught that God loves them in Jesus Christ. Though many did not remain in the church as adults, this solid foundation of Christian education served them their entire lives. Every so often I meet people who are no longer connected to Park Church who tell me that they attended Sunday School or Boy Scouts at the old church building on the corner of Russell St. and Elm St. when they were younger and the fond memories they have of those days.

This legacy of ministering to children is not only part of our institutional memory, but helps define the way we approach ministry today as we recognize that our youth and children are not only the *future* of our congregation, but they are important participants of our congregation *now*.

We have chosen as our anniversary theme, “Our Past Has Inspired Our Future,” and we see this in action not only in our ministry to youth and children, but also in their

ministry to the congregation and the wider community. Our youth and children participate in Youth Group, serve as Youth Deacons, attend Sunday School, host church suppers, financially support our NEADS dog, “Benny,” attend our annual Lenten Series and monthly Movie Matinee, take part in Vacation Bible Camp, frequently participate in worship services, sing in Children’s Choir, and minister to the homeless of Worcester Fellowship and the elderly of the Odd Fellows Nursing Home.

Our church also has roots in the ecumenical movement, especially with our former pastor, the Reverend Dr. Myron Fowell, who was the first Executive Secretary of what later came to be called the Worcester County Ecumenical Council. We continue that commitment to cooperation with those of other Christian denominations in the many associations we have with First Baptist Church, in whose building we reside, our partnership with Wesley United Methodist Church in hosting the annual Vacation Bible Camp, our participation in Worcester Interfaith, and our support of the Massachusetts Council of Churches, among several other ways in which we collaborate with churches of other denomination on various ventures.

Park Church has also had a legacy of commitment to missions. Our former pastor, the Reverend Dr. “Joe” Beach, began his ministry as a missionary to the surviving Armenians of Turkey, Syria, and Soviet Armenia whose lives were devastated following the Genocide of the Armenians by the Ottoman Turks between 1915-1923. Today we carry on that commitment to missions with our financial support of our Sunday School’s NEADS dog, Benny, who is being used by a New Hampshire pastor in her daily ministry to schools, hospitals, and the elderly, to the homeless ministry of Worcester Fellowship, our support of the Heifer Project, and our association with the Worcester Area Mission Society, among other missions that we support. I am in the process of arranging to bring the Reverend Dr. Peter Makari, the United Church of Christ Global Ministries Area Executive for the Middle East, to come to Worcester on Sunday afternoon, February 10, 2013, to speak on the UCC’s mission work among the Palestinians.

Yes, “Our Past has Inspired Our Future.” Our past has provided a strong foundation for us as Park Congregational Church for thinking about who we are and where we’re going. Let us continue the conversation that has been renewed this anniversary year about how and where God desires for us to minister.

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor Gary



If you were one of the 64 people who sent me cards . . . if you were one of the people who rescued Pastor Gary from starvation . . . if you were one of the people who called or one of the many prayers offered for the healing of my broken arm, I thank you so very much! The love and caring from all of my church family and friends truly was a blessing. May God pass this blessing back to all of you.

With love . . . Miss Linda . . . aka “*Miss Stumble Foot*”

THANK YOU SO MUCH PASTOR GARY, LINDA, AND PARK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Bob and I wish to thank you for welcoming us to your church services. We found them to be of great spiritual strength. Needless to say, Jennifer enjoys singing at church, as well as the nursing home, and we appreciate that her voice is used for God's honor and glory.

Again, thank you for welcoming us to your church services.

Sincerely,
Bob and Lorraine Betlow
(parents of Jennifer Nodelman)



Miss Linda would like to thank all those who helped in any way to make this year's Vacation Bible Camp a tremendous success with 128 campers and youth in attendance. Though impossible to list the names of all the leaders and helpers, adult and youth, suffice to say it was our BEST YEAR EVER! God bless you for caring for His children.

THANK YOU PARK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

. . . for your gift. It was so thoughtful of you. Celebrating the 50th year of my ordination has been an event in my life of a grateful ministry. My thanks to Park Church for the gift and kind remembrances.

Peace and God Bless,
Martin Perry
"2012"

THANK YOU PARK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH FAMILY

. . . for your "Get Well" cards, telephone calls, visits, and prayers during Fran's recent surgery. He looks forward to coming home from the hospital and attending church once again.

Fran and Daphne Spear

THANK YOU FRIENDS AT PARK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

. . . for your donation to Worcester Fellowship. We are so grateful! Your support is very much appreciated. Our ministry for the homeless and at-risk of Worcester continues because of you! Again, we thank you for your kind donation and ask that you please keep us in your prayers as you are kept in ours.

Eleanor Latham,
Administrative Director, Worcester Fellowship

* * * * *



If you have not sent in your reservation for the **125th Park Church Anniversary Banquet** to be held at Wachusett Country Club on Sunday afternoon, September 23, at 1:30pm, this is your last chance! Call Miss Linda today at 508-753-7354. It is going to be a day to celebrate and remember forever!

* * * * *

FLOWERS ARE NEEDED FOR THE ALTAR ON SEPTEMBER 30

CONGRATULATIONS TO KIMBERLY TONEY AND DENNIS PELKEY ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THEIR ENGAGEMENT!!!

Dennis proposed to Kimberly on her birthday, July 1, and surprised her with a gorgeous diamond ring! The happy couple plans to marry on Saturday, September 21, 2013 in the sanctuary of First Baptist Church.

OUR SYMPATHIES AS A CONGREGATION ARE EXTENDED TO THE FAMILIES OF GLORIA TASHJIAN AND WAYNE NEWLANDS ON THEIR RECENT PASSING

Gloria went to be with her Lord on June 23, 2012. Let us keep in our prayers her sister, Emily, with whom she lived. Wayne went to be with his Savior on August 18, 2012. Let us keep his mother, Doris, and his children, Michelle, Michael, and Keith in our prayers.

* * * * *



**ON WELCOME BACK SUNDAY,
SEPTEMBER 9, WE WILL FEATURE FOR
MOVIE MATINEE THE DOCUMENTARY,
*BUDRUS***

In a small Palestinian town on the West Bank, nonviolent protests against the Israeli occupation are led by a 15-year-old girl, Iltezam Morrar, whose fearlessness galvanizes the entire village. The film will start at 11:30am in the Roy Room. Please bring your own lunch. The movie is suitable for youth, but not small children.

* * * * *

BIBLE STUDY BEGINS AGAIN ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, AT 7:00PM

We are continuing our study of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship*. There is still time for new members to join as we are only 1/3 through the book.

THE CHILDREN'S TOWER
September 2012



"Our Past Has Inspired Our Future"

Dear Children,

I bet you think you know what I am going to talk about today. What else but our Park Church's 125th Anniversary! We've been celebrating all year long! Big banquet in a couple of weeks! Lots and lots to talk about. You think FOR SURE I will be going on and on about how "Our Past Has Inspired Our Future." Well, maybe yes, maybe no.

It is a hot Sunday morning and I am sitting in the Chapel. I am looking around and though I am sure they could be staying home, as there is no Sunday School, I see Laura and Sarah Harris sitting in one of the pews with their Mom. Another Sunday, I see Joshua Lindquist hustling out to get the candle lighter to be the "on the spot" Acolyte, although the assigned Acolyte schedule does not start again until September 9. And, had Josh not gotten to it first, Samantha Proulx was ready to go! No Sunday School. Still at church!

This Sunday is a rainy one, definitely a "sleep in" Sunday. Well, it is hard to sleep when you are Josep Rose turning pages for his Dad as David plays a beautiful prelude as the morning service is about to start. Wait, is that James Rose turning the pages? Oh, that was another week! New Sunday, same scene . . . Janelle Lindquist being an Acolyte? How come? She's Youth Group and they are too old to Acolyte, right? Wrong! She sees the need and answers God's call to serve. This Sunday it's Aurora Lewis. Yes, Aurora who is just going on the Acolyte list this month as she is one of our newer Sunday School children. But, with the help of her good friend Justin Rose, who introduced her to our church family, she walks down the aisle serenely and brings the candles to life! Arrives Jessica Baronas for Sunday worship on a sunny morning in August like a breath of fresh air and with a big smile and a "Hi Miss Linda" that sounds like music to my ears!

Hah! Fooled you, eh? You thought I was going to talk about how "Our Past Has Inspired Our Future." Well, maybe you WERE right after all. Your past has inspired your future. Your past learning of faith in Jesus Christ and His church has brought you to where you are on your journey of faith. Your future will be shaped not only by the past, but will lead you to your future and your further spiritual growth and in service to our LORD and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Celebrating your past, present and future . . . *your friend, Linda*



MAY WE NEVER FORGET



Park Congregational Church
111 Park Avenue
Worcester MA 01609