As we move into a New Year, I offer you these words from the gifted British hymn writer Brian Wren. Although written in 1978, the words speak as if they were written for us as we move into a world forever changed by the shooting on December 14.

Wren’s hymn acknowledges both deep pain and the longing to move on. We know that in dealing with such a complex situation, no two people will respond in exactly the same way. Remarkably, within days of the shooting, one of the 9-year-old survivors was encouraging people to begin healing. At the same time, other people can’t imagine that they will ever begin to heal.

Some people want to be surrounded by family and friends in their sorrow; other people need to have time alone. Some people are grateful for lovingly prepared meals; others can hardly think of eating. Some people need to talk through their pain; others crave silence. Some people will move through these days with immense poise and grace; all of us will be less than perfect in what we say and do. We will all do our best. There are some things we can know:

- There is no one right or wrong way to feel or act.
- An extra measure of kindness is called for as we try to understand what each of us needs.
- Our communities will survive and recover and somehow heal.

In our church we will sing these following words together in Worship on January 6. I offer them here and pray you will find in them a bit of comfort or peace.

Blessings for new hope in the New Year,
- Pastor Bonnie

>This is a day of new beginnings,
  time to remember and move on,
  time to believe what love is bringing,
  laying to rest the pain that’s gone.
For by the life and death of Jesus, 
God’s mighty Spirit, now as then, 
can make for us a world of difference, 
as faith and hope are born again.

Then let us, with the Spirit’s daring, 
step from the past and leave behind 
our disappointment, guilt and grieving, 
seeking new paths and sure to find.

Christ is alive, and goes before us 
to show and share what love can do. 
This is a day of new beginnings; 
our God is making all things new.

In faith we gather round the table 
to taste and share what love can do. 
This is a day of new beginnings; 
our God is making all things new.

Search Committee

The Search Committee continues to receive profiles; the count is now up to 28. Due to the holidays, the Search Committee decided to limit their meetings to only one in December, and then pick up the pace in the New Year.

It is anticipated that a number of the profiles will be reviewed at the December meeting with the objective of being able to indicate whether the Committee wishes to pursue further action with a candidate, or to send them a thank-you letter.
December was most definitely a splendid month! North Church certainly knows how to celebrate Christ’s birthday. Thank you, Mark, and our wonderful choir for producing such magnificent music throughout the month. It pleases me to tell you all that the Music Committee has decided to have the choir sing every Sunday, beginning January 6. It is an extreme commitment on the part of each member of the choir, attending choir rehearsals at 8:30 am each and every Sunday morning. On behalf of the Deacons and the members of North Church, thank you, choir, for your dedication.

The Deacons assisted Pastor Bonnie in bringing Communion to several homebound members of the church the week before Christmas. Traditionally we do this at Christmas and again at Easter. If anyone wishes to be added to the list of members who receive communion at home, or knows of someone who would, please contact the church office.

We have received several requests from members to bring back the silver cross and Communion service, as well as the silver offering plates. We have searched it out, polished it up and will begin using it in January. This does not mean we will no longer use the brass, for it will be brought out every once in a while for variation. Hope you all like the change. To all, a very Blessed New Year!

**Christmas Cards to our Heroes**

Thank you to all of those who signed Christmas cards and wrote personal notes to our military Heroes. A total of 7 boxes filled with over 1,300 Christmas cards were sent to Staff Sergeant Daniel Fauset (the Gransky’s son-in-law) and the 1,300 Marines he is serving with in Afghanistan. The Women’s Fellowship Evening Group began this mission project with a “Christmas in July” gathering. **Thank you again for helping us reach our goal!**
Did you use your credit cards over the holidays? For most folks, the answer is a resounding “YES” as the January bills start rolling in! Many of us use cards that earn points, nights, or miles, and sometimes we don’t even know how many points we have, don’t know what to do with them all, or need to use them before they expire. Why not use them to make or fulfill a pledge to help the Parsonage Project?

Most point programs offer ways to cash in points, nights, or air miles and get gift cards to popular retailers. With all of the heavy structural and mechanical work now completed, it’s time to start the finishing work, and that means lots of trips Lowes and Home Depot! So check your upcoming credit card statements and see how many points you racked up this holiday season. Then, please consider redeeming some of those points for Home Depot or Lowes gift cards and donate them to the Parsonage Project. You’ll get a receipt for the full face value, and you’ll help us meet our goal of completing this project in time for our next minister and family.

Music Notes
By John Wick

The big news from the Music Committee is that the Chancel Choir will return to regular weekly singing during worship. We have had some new singers join and the attendance has been stronger. Not all can make it every Sunday, but we all love to sing and think we can sustain a regular strong choir on a weekly basis. We are, however, still looking for new singers.

The committee also feels that "special music" such as we have in summertime would be welcome in the regular year, and so is soliciting the church family for those who would like to do something vocal, instrumental, solo or small ensemble for a Sunday or two. Please contact me or Mark if you have an idea you want to share.

Music brings an added emotional aspect to worship—for those who listen, but especially for those who perform it. We find a special spiritual connection. I encourage you to experience it through one of our choirs.
North Church

Worship, Church School & Nursery: 10:00 a.m.

1/6 Celebration of Worship
   *Communion Sunday*
   “Look Up!”

1/13 Celebration of Worship
   “Come Up Out of the Water and Breathe”

1/20 Celebration of Worship
   “Another Ho-Hum Miracle”

1/27 Celebration of Worship
   “A Hometown Boy Makes Good”

Committee Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Meeting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/3</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Women’s Fellowship</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/3 &amp; 1/31</td>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Diaconate</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/13</td>
<td>11:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Christian Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/24</td>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Church Council</td>
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Music Rehearsals

Chancel Choir, Sundays 1/6, 13, 20 & 27 8:30 a.m.

African Drumming
Learn to drum and play in church when Rev. Evalyn Wakhusama is here on February 3. Lessons will be in the Sanctuary after church on January 13, 20 & 27. All ages welcome.
January Calendar

Other Meetings

Monday 1/7, 1/14, 1/21 & 1/28:
- Dr. Westerberg         12:00 p.m.
- Men’s Bible Study                      7:00 p.m.
- Boy Scouts            7:30 p.m.
- Woodbury/Bethlehem Parents
  Connection                                7:30 p.m.

Tuesday 1/1, 1/8, 1/15, 1/22 & 1/29:
- NA            7:30 p.m.

Tuesday 1/8, 1/15, 1/22 & 1/29:
- Let’s Pretend          4:00 p.m.

Tuesday 1/8 & 22: Women’s Bible Study
- Kathrine Rutledge’s Home

Tuesday 1/22:       Woodbury Hill Condo 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday 1/2, 1/16 & 1/30:
- Brownie Troop 64008     6:00 p.m.

Wednesday 1/9 & 1/23:
- Knitting                          10:00 a.m.

Wednesday 1/9:
- Wdby Juniorettes    7:00 p.m.

Thursday 1/3, 1/10, 1/17, 1/24 & 1/31:
- ACT 1            4:00 p.m.

Thursday 1/17:    Women’s Fellowship
- Luncheon                                12:00 p.m.

Friday, 1/4, 1/11, 1/18 & 1/25:
- AA                        8:00 p.m.

Saturday 1/5, 1/12, 1/19 & 1/26:
- Young Peoples AA         7:30 p.m.
January Luncheon:

The Women’s Fellowship of North Congregational Church of Woodbury will host speaker Ginni Garis who will give an informal presentation titled “Growing up in Norway” on Thursday, January 17th. Ginni will share her experiences with stories and photos of her extraordinary childhood. Come hear her depiction of what it was like growing up during WWII, her education experience during her formative years, and her recollection of the wonderful food and traditions enjoyed in Norway a generation ago.

The program is preceded by a sandwich luncheon at noon. Due to limited seating, reservations are required. Please call Linda Coad at 203-264-8151 to reserve your seat. (Please note that the luncheon snow date is January 24, without program). Please be sure to bring your own sandwich. The fellowship asks for a $1.00 donation for tea, coffee and dessert which is provided. We hope to see you there!

January Evening Group:

The Women’s Fellowship Evening Group will be meeting on National Hat Day, Tuesday, January 15, at 6:00 p.m. at the home of Beverly Carlone.

Please wear your favorite hat/headgear and come and enjoy a potluck dinner with wonderful fellowship. The group will be planning its next mission project.

Please call Beverly and say you will come, 203-263-0728. Rides will be provided if needed.
What a wonderful outpouring of giving our North Church family extended during our *Holiday Program of Giving*. Bless you for taking the time during this busy season to open your heart in giving your time, talent, and treasure!

Through your generous donations to the Community Services Council of Woodbury and to the Woodbury Food Bank, our community families feasted on all the “Holiday Fixings” which graced their tables on Thanksgiving and Christmas. Thank you to Cindy Feda, Pat Gage, Marcia and Paul Hinckley, Cindi Hughes, Cris and Blaine Schaefer, and Martha Wortman for taking time from their hectic schedules to volunteer at the Food Bank during the month of December. Also, a special thank you to Cindi Hughes for coordinating the volunteers and delivering our donations weekly throughout the year. How the hearts of our community parents were warmed by your generous donations of gift cards. Your gift cards allowed our community parents to experience the “hustle and bustle” of the Christmas season while making their children’s wishes come true.

Thank you to everyone who joined in adopting a family from Safe Haven, an emergency shelter for victims of domestic violence. How blessed Patty, our adopted mom, felt as she watched the excitement of her three children open all their wonderful gifts. Envision the delighted faces of Gavin, Olivia, and Christopher at the sight of their Christmas stockings overflowing with surprises and all the wonderful presents under their Christmas tree! God bless you for providing joy and hope for this struggling family.

*May the light of the Lord shine in your heart and may peace be with you throughout the New Year!*

*The Outreach Committee*

Beverly Carlone     Terri Clark     Marge Hubbard  
Cindi Hughes     Cathy McMullin     Peg Tester
"January," the beginning of a new year and more fun with our lessons. I would like to thank all who helped to make our pageant a success. There is always excitement and hustling but we seem to pull it together and make the magic happen. Thanks again to all involved and to the children. "Good Job".

This month in the Workshop Rotation we will be working on the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Come and join us as we travel through the workshops to find out what happened to Lot’s wife.

The Pre-K class will be learning of the love God has for them in the story "God Loves Me," and how God made the world we live in, and that He made a time for everything in the stories "God Made the World" and "God Made a Time." They will also be making some fun crafts to go along with the stories.

K-1 classes will work on the stories of "Jonah and The Big Fish," "A Blind Man Can See," and "Jesus Walks On Water." They will also be working on some fun crafts to go along with these stories.

There will be no Sunday School on January 20 due to the long weekend for Martin Luther King Day.

We have a new Mission Project starting in January. Pastor Bonnie told me about a church in Bridgeport that needs our help. They are asking for help in rounding up some socks, mittens, gloves, hats, scarves and even boots that are in good shape to help them through the winter. I have put together a pile of socks and mittens from my house and will be buying some items to chip in. Let’s see how much we can gather together! You can ask your families and friends to help also. We will be collecting items through the month of January. So please take the time to gather some things and bring them in to Sunday School.

Thanks and God Bless.
The Stewardship figures for pledges during calendar year 2013 show that (surprise!) the year will again be challenging. So far, we have received 99 pledge cards totaling $90,990, a decline of just more than 13% over pledges received last year. But there is hope, at least on my part, that once the financial issues facing us are clarified, members will again show strong commitment to sustaining North Church.

With all that we have faced in 2012, we must continue to show that even small pebbles supporting the rock we know as North Church do make a difference.

God Bless, and Happy New Year!

A very special thank you to everyone who made goodies for our Christmas Tea. As always, they were delicious and enjoyed by all!