



State of the Union



The Monthly Newsletter of Union Congregational Church

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July 2009

From the Pastor's Desk.....

REMEMBERING FRED MORATH

*"As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow Me," He told him, and Matthew got up and followed Him."
Matthew 9:9*

On June 5th, I stood with my wife and her family as Frederic Ramsell Morath slipped into the presence of Jesus. I will forever be grateful to Fred for his eldest daughter Martha, whom he presented to me as my bride twenty four years ago this month.

I have many pleasant and wonderful memories of Fred but the one I choose to share with you this month is one I believe all of us can remember. Fred had a character or attitude that was once described by President Ronald Reagan as, "pistols at dawn, cocktails at seven."

Over the years, Fred and I had many discussions that bordered on arguments on both politics and religion. These two topics are so often divisive and are actually taboo in naval wardrooms because they can lead to acrimony. I learned from Fred that one can disagree profusely and never get nasty or personal. For Fred, it was always "pistols at dawn, cocktails at seven."

This is an attitude he taught me that has helped me in my professional life. That I count as friends people who hold totally opposite views on social issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage, and have friends of quite opposite political and theological persuasions is in no small measure due to my adoption of the maxim, "pistols at dawn, cocktails at seven."

In this day when talk show hosts make sexual aspersions about the teenage children of those politicians who hold opposite political views than their own, and in a world where ones view on a social issue is often held up as an example of one's lack of Christianity, wouldn't it be nice if we all remembered that it can always to be "pistols at dawn, cocktails at seven."

Fred was a gentle man and a gentleman. Let us all work for a more gentle society. One CAN disagree without becoming disagreeable. It can be "pistols at dawn, cocktails at seven" IF we want it to be so. May we want it to be so.



Until August, In Christ, Pastor Jack

**Points to Ponder from
"A Purpose Driven Life"
by Rick Warren**

"It's not about you. The purpose of your life is far greater than your own personal fulfillment, your peace of mind, or even your happiness. It's far greater than your family, your career, or even your wildest dreams and ambitions. If you want to know why you were placed on this planet, you must begin with God. You were born BY His purpose and FOR His purpose.

"The search for the purpose of life has puzzled people for thousands of years. That's because we typically begin at the wrong starting point – ourselves. We ask self-centered questions like What do I want to be? What should I do with my life? What are my goals, my ambitions, my dreams for my future? But focusing on ourselves will never reveal our life's purpose. The Bible says, 'It is God who directs the lives of His creatures; everyone's life is in His power.'

"Contrary to what many popular books, movies, and seminars tell you, you won't discover your life's meaning by looking within yourself. You've probably tried that already. You didn't create yourself, so there is no way you can tell yourself what you were created for!you cannot arrive at your life's purpose by starting with a focus on yourself. You must begin with God, your Creator. You exist only because God wills that you exist. You were made BY God and FOR God – and until you understand that, life will never make sense. It is only in God that we discover our origin, our identity, our meaning, our purpose, our significance, and our destiny. Every other path leads to a dead end.....The Bible says, 'It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, He had His eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose He is working out in everything and everyone.'"

A Purpose Driven Life: Rick Warren, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 2002; Pages 17-18, 20



BAGELS AND BIBLE

This summer, have a bagel and study God's Word Sunday mornings with Pastor Jack. Every Sunday morning ON THE DATES STATED BELOW, we will meet promptly at 9:00 a.m. in the Guild Room for a light breakfast followed by a Bible Study based on selected chapters from Saint Paul. Check it out!

CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE ORIGINAL DATES THAT WERE ANNOUNCED – SEE BELOW

- 6/28 – A Profile of Paul and His Letters
- 7/5 – Romans 8
- 7/12 – Galatians 5
- 8/2 – Ephesians 4
- 8/9 – Colossians 2
- 8/16 – Philemon
- 8/23 – 1 Corinthians 9
- 8/30 – 2 Corinthians 16

WHAT'S NEW IN THE LIBRARY

This month we have been blessed many times over with the following new additions to the Wilson Library:

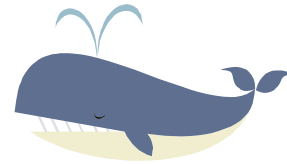
- The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch
- Allison's Journey* by Wanda E. Brunstetter
- A Sister's Hope* by Wanda E. Brunstetter
- The Joy of a Peanuts Christmas* by Charles Schultz
- Chicken Soup for the Surviving Soul* by Jack Canfield
- Prayer* by Philip Yancey
- Unveiling Islam* by Mehet Caner

All excellent additions! Thank you to our donors!



22 Happenings Around Union Congregational Church

1. In the small world department, Dale Freeman put in a mooring for Steve and Pam Beatty at Squantum Yacht Club.
2. The Beattys are friends of the Pastor and several parishioners of the church who also belong to the Yacht Club.
3. Dawn Peterson, Stephanie Swanson's classmate from school, spent five weeks with the Swansons and enjoyed worshipping with us on Sundays.
4. Dawn left in mid June to return to Omaha, Nebraska
5. where she will be getting married to Joe DeMarco in July 25th.
6. We enjoyed having Dawn with us!
7. The Pastor and Deacon Bob Boussy enjoyed watching the "deeply spiritual" movie "Tora, Tora, Tora" with Don Evans and Ollie Levas at Quincy Nursing Home and Rehabilitation Center after church on the 28th.
8. Okay, "Tora, Tora, Tora" is about Pearl Harbor and not spiritual at all, but it is a real guy flick and the boys enjoyed themselves.
9. Don managed the former Cox Auto Dealership in Wollaston.
10. Did anyone buy a car from him?
11. He loves visits.
12. Speaking of cars.....
13. the Pastor's Lincoln still sits, lonely and forlorn, in Maine.
14. He's planning on bringing it down late this summer.
15. Summer Stuff.....
16. 5 for 5: 5 All You Can Eat Spaghetis Suppers held on five Saturday evenings, for 5 bucks.....
17. will be a community outreach program coming in August.
18. Before that: Don't forget the 4th of July Cookout, to be held after church on Sunday, July 5th.
19. We eat well here! Peggy Johnson coordinated an awesome Fathers Day Breakfast on June 21st.
20. June 21st was also Children's Day.
21. Geraniums were given to each child and bouquets of flowers to our teachers, Cassie Swanson and Alison Culkin. A plant was given to Don Young.
22. The Pastor also presented a booklet on whales to each child and he showed them a real whale vertebrae (HUGE!), all an example of God as the awesome creator of all.



July Birthdays - Happy Birthday!

- 2 – Audrey Sullivan
- 8 – Jeanne Benson
- 8 – Alexandra Poole
- 12 – J.T. McNeil
- 13 – Peggy Johnson
- 15 – Becky Ferris
- 17 – Helen Lenane
- 20 – Darlete Aliberti
- 20 – Kristen McKinney
- 21 – Sandra Ketner



July Anniversaries - Happy Anniversary!

- 13 – Jack and Martha Swanson



Sermon Titles for July

Sunday, July 5th

The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
"The Twelve Steps – Part One"

The first six steps of Alcoholics Anonymous set in
their Christian context.

Text: John 1:29-34

Sunday, July 12th

The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
"The Twelve Steps – Part Two "

The second six steps of AA set in their Christian
context.

Text: Matthew 28:16-20

Sunday, July 19th

The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
Guest Preacher – Pastor's Vacation

Sunday, July 26th

The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
Guest Preacher – Pastor's Vacation

The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. We admit that we are powerless over alcohol.....
2. We come to believe that a Power greater than ourselves restores us to sanity.
3. We make a decision to turn our will and our lives over to God as we understand Him.....
4. We make a moral inventory.....
5. We admit to God, ourselves and another person.....our wrongs.....
6. We are ready to have God remove our shortcomings.
7. We humbly ask Him to remove them.
8. We make a list of persons we have harmed andmake amends.....
9. We make amendswhenever possible.

10. We continue to take personal inventory,,,,,,

11. We seek through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understand Him.....

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result....we try to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in our affairs.

GREETINGS

Shalom, dear friends at Union Congregational Church. we are so very thankful for your kind and generous support that helped to make possible the BYG Shfela Israel Campaign that ended last week. A Yeshiva student in his 20's prayed to received Yeshua as his Messiah and he continues to grow in his understanding. Please pray God's strength for him. Abundant blessing, Oded and Bimini, Jews for Jesus

THANK YOU

Dear Friends, Words cannot express my gratitude to all of you at Union for your prayers, thoughts, kind words, flowers, cards, memorial gifts and attendance at the funeral during my dear father's 8 week illness and passing. Thank you so much. You will never know what a strength, encouragement and blessing all of your kindnesses meant to me, to Jack and the girls, to my mother, and to my brother and sisters and other family members. God bless you all. Martha Swanson

*"We must love prayer. It widens the heart to the point of making it capable of containing the gift that God makes of Himself. Ask and seek, and your heart will be widened to welcome Him and to keep Him within itself."
Mother Theresa of Calcutta*

Book Review: *“What’s So Amazing About Grace?”* by Phillip Yancey
Submitted by Lorraine Gill Young



This very engaging title drew me to this Phillip Yancey book – that and the fact that I’ve so enjoyed his other books.

Yancey begins by depicting how very ungraceful our world is – full of strife, hate, jealousies, power-plays, vengeance, and one-up-manship, not to mention disease, war and starvation. So how then does God bring grace to this ungraceful world, and in turn, how do we as God’s agents exercise grace in the face of so much ungrace? Those two questions become the essence of Yancey’s book.

One of the things I love about Yancey’s writing is that he does not shy away from the difficult questions of our faith. Rather, he explores them, looks to what Christian leaders through the years have said on these issues, and tries to come to some understanding. He also looks at some of the moral dilemmas of our day and tries to discern how they may be faced with grace.

As a result of this book, I find myself trying to find the graceful way to deal with the situations before me. I hope I may always do so.

You can find the book in the Wilson Library.

We are eager to have a wide representation from the congregation in the Book Review column. Members are encouraged to submit reviews of books they have enjoyed. Please give them to Don or Lorraine Young, who are coordinating this column, or email them to don@beld.net

The Stooges by Alphabet

Humorous Anecdotes by Letter

J

***“Jiffy Fixers – Immutable Stooges Law #36”** – The last time an item will function properly is the moment before the Stooges decide to repair it. As Jiffy Fixers in *Listen, Judge*, the Stooges don’t balk at repairing a doorbell simply because they are not doorbell specialists; as their sign clearly indicates, they are generalists, and a bargain at that: “Jiffy Fixers – We Repair Anything – It’s Done in a Flash for Very Small Cash.”

***“Joe”** – Troublemaking but talented monkey who is a valued member of the Stooges’ stage act in *A Pain in the Pullman*. Had Joe learned to keep his hands off the toupees of others, there’s no telling how far the stooges could have gone in show business.

*The Official Three Stooges Encyclopedia:
Robert Kurson; Contemporary Book,
1998; Pages 111 – 112*



A CHURCH GARDEN

*First, plant five rows of peas:
perseverance, promptness, preparation,
purity, and perseverance.*

*Next to these, plant three rows of squash:
squash gossip, squash criticism, squash
indifference.*

*No garden is complete without turnips:
Turn up for the meetings, turn up with a
smile, turn up with new ideas, turn up
with determination to make everything
count for something good and worthwhile.*



Men's Column
They Don't Make Em Like
They Used To



Thank goodness” or “what a shame” are equally valid responses to the above statement. A couple of years back, the late John Andre lent me his totally restored 1964 Buick Rivera for Martha and my wedding anniversary. What a beauty that car was! We had a truly magnificent driving experience. John had totally restored it. The 64 Buick is considered one of the finest cars G.M. produced in the 1960's. It had a large V8 engine with dual carburetors, a deep dish steering wheel, bucket seats and power everything. Everywhere we stopped, people would admire it, and I really enjoyed driving it. But it sure didn't drive like my 2003 Taurus.

Yes, I found that my Taurus handled a lot better and was far more responsive and, if I am honest, more road-worthy than the 64 Buick. I discovered this much to my surprise after driving the Buick for a couple of days and then switching back to my Taurus.

This should not have been a surprise. There is 40 years of technology between the two vehicles. The Taurus benefits from four decades of research and development. Modern cars are better in nearly all, if not all, areas. For example, modern cars not only have anti-lock brakes but, since the eighties, front and rear brakes on all cars are independently connected to the master cylinder, making total loss of brakes virtually impossible. Rack and pinion steering, advances in front end assembly and tire manufacture make virtually any car today superior in handling. Cars today are

also much safer than the cars of yesterday and they last far longer. Both of our family cars have well over 100,000 miles on them. Few cars of the sixties and even seventies lasted that long.

Still, that Buick of John's was some car. I believe that, as much as modern cars are safer, better engineered and (truth be told) better built than those of years ago; they all look alike! Gone is the individual character and distinctiveness of brand. In 1964, no two cars looked like. The 64 Buick was “boat-tailed,” the 64 Caddy had fins, the 64 Chevy II was square, the 64 Chevy Impala was big and square with quad tail lights on each side, etc, etc. Today the Camry resembles the Sable which looks like the Lexus only with a bit less trim.

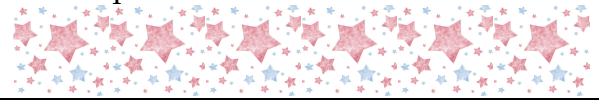
Gone are the cars of old. Thank goodness AND what a shame.

Pastor Jack

Marks Movies
By Mark Goodwin



This month's movie is STAR TREK starring Chris Pine, Zachary Quinto, Karl Urban, and Leonard Nimoy. I saw this movie at the Revere Cinema. The story takes place in the early days of James T. Kirk as he first joins Starfleet Academy. With the help of his new friend, Leonard McCoy, Kirk becomes a recruit aboard the USS Enterprise. After a battle against Romulans from the future, Kirk becomes the new captain of the Enterprise with Spock as his first officer. This was a movie of sci/fi action passed on the 1960's TV series.



PRAYER CORNER – *Please remember these folks in your prayers and please feel free to visit them or send them a card.*

Ellie LaBombard

*845 Quincy Shore
Drive
Quincy, MA 02170*

Mary Ireland

*Bay Path Nursing
Home
308 Kingstown Way
Duxbury, MA 02332*

Joe Casagrande

*Norwell Knoll Rehab
and Nursing Center
329 Washington Street
Norwell, MA 02061*

Don Evans

*Quincy Nursing Home
and
Rehabilitation Center
11 McGrath Highway
Quincy, MA 02169*

Ben Raybuck

*165 Beach Street
Wollaston, MA 02170*

☆Rick Brady

☆The Ministry of Bay
State Community
Services

☆The Quincy Crisis
Center

☆Interfaith Social
Services

Barbara Ingram

*Hannah Dustin Health
Care Center
126 Monument Street,
#115A
Haverhill, MA 01832*

**Our Service Men and
Women Deployed
Throughout the World**

For All Who Suffer in
Mind, Body or Spirit

For All Who Are Mentally
Ill, The Addicted, The
Lost, The Homeless, The
Unemployed Or Under-
Employed.

**And for us all, a continually deepening relationship with God through Jesus Christ,
and for the evidence of that relationship in all that we do.**

Union Congregational Church
136 Rawson Road
Wollaston, MA 02170



In God We Trust



Fred Mouse



Hey, you have heard of flying squirrels, right? Well guess what, last month I was a flying mouse! That's right. I flew off to Milwaukee, Wisconsin to attend the Annual Meeting of our National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. Each year people gather from all over the United States (and some of our Missionaries indeed from around the world) to meet, worship together, hold business meetings, hear Bible Lectures and Lectures on Congregationalism, share meals, and visit tourist attractions. Rev. Martha Swanson attended as delegate for UCC and I snuck into her suitcase when she wasn't looking. When I got to the hotel I hid in the closet. Whenever she went out to NACCC events I very carefully followed her. I (we I guess) had a great time!

The part I liked the best was the big Sunday Worship Service. Every year, all the people (500 – 700 strong), gather together and sing and have Communion and listen to the sermon. It was so exciting to hear all of those people singing together and praising the Lord. They even gather a choir from all the churches. (By the way, I couldn't believe my eyes, as I was hiding in the piano during worship, I discovered a bunch of other church mice had stowed away with their people as well, to come to the meeting. We all got to sing and praise the Lord together, right there in the piano! (We had to be careful to not sit on the strings, that would have wrecked the sound and we would have been discovered). What fun!

Have a great Fourth of July! What a great country we have. Happy birthday America!

Till August, Fred Mouse

GOD

“It is the conviction of Christians that God revealed Himself in history. The Bible is the record of that revelation. It is not primarily a book about men, but about God; its chief value is not that it contains great literature, but that it shows us what God is like and what God has done.....

The God whom the Bible reveals is not an impersonal force, not a vague, remote Absolute whom we might call the Supreme Being, not a mere law of nature, like the principle of gravitation. He is a personal God, One who loves, plans, creates, and reveals Himself. This does not mean that God has a physical body; nor does it mean that His will and emotions and plans are always changing like those of human personalities. No words used to describe human personality can have quite the same sense when applied to God. God is infinite and His personality is not changeable, as our limited human personalities are; His plans and purposes are eternal and His love is unchanging and unlimited.”

“The Holy Scriptures – A Survey”;
Robert C. Dentan; The Seabury Press,
Greenwich, Connecticut, 1956.

Trust in Him, Believe in Him, and
Call Upon Him Each and Every Day.
You Will Be Glad You Did!



Joshua

Remember the childhood game “follow the leader”? The idea was to mimic the antics of the person in front of you in the line of boys and girls winding through the neighborhood. Being a follower was all right, but being leader was the most fun, creating imaginative routes and tasks for everyone else to copy.

In real life, great leaders are rare. Often, men and women are elected or appointed to leadership positions, but then falter or fail to act. Others abuse their power to satisfy their egos, crushing their subjects and squandering resources. But without faithful, ethical, and effective leaders, people wander.

For 40 years, Israel had journeyed a circuitous route through the desert, but not because they were following their leader. Quite the opposite was true – with failing faith, they had refused to obey God and to conquer Canaan. So they wandered. Finally, the new generation was ready to cross the Jordan and possess the land. Having distinguished himself as a man of faith and courage (he and Caleb gave the minority spy report recorded in Numbers 13:30 – 14:9), Joshua was chosen to be Moses’ successor. This book records Joshua’s leadership of the people of God as they finish their march and conquer the promised land.

Joshua was a brilliant military leader and a strong spiritual influence. But the key to his success was his submission to God. When God spoke, Joshua listened and obeyed. Joshua’s obedience served as a model. As a result, Israel remained faithful to God throughout Joshua’s lifetime.

The book of Joshua is divided into two main parts. The first narrates the events surrounding the conquest of Canaan. After crossing the Jordan River on dry ground, the

Israelites camped near the mighty city of Jericho. God commanded the people to conquer Jericho by marching around the city 13 times, blowing trumpets, and shouting. Because they followed God’s unique battle strategy, they won (chapter 6). After the destruction of Jericho, they set out against the small town of Ai. Their first attack was driven back because one of the Israelites (Achan) had sinned (chapter 7). After the men of Israel stoned Achan and his family – purging the community of its sin – the Israelites succeeded in capturing Ai (chapter 8). In their next battle against the Amorites, God even made the sun stand still to aid them in their victory (chapter 10). Finally, after defeating other assorted Canaanites, led by Jabin and his allies (chapter 11), they possessed most of the land.

Part two of the book of Joshua records the assignments and settlement of the captured territory (chapters 13 – 22). The book concludes with Joshua’s farewell address and his death (chapters 23, 24).

Joshua was committed to obeying God, and this book is about obedience. Whether conquering enemies or settling the land, God’s people were required to do it God’s way. In his final message to the people, Joshua underscored the importance of obeying God. “So be very careful to love the Lord your God” (23:11), and “chose for yourselves this day whom you will serve....But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord (24:15). Read Joshua and make a fresh commitment to obey God today. Decide to follow your Lord wherever He leads and whatever it costs.

Life Application Study Bible, New International Version; Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, Wheaton, Illinois, and Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1997; Page 252