



*Jesus said "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28*



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Michael Bancewicz, *Acting Editor*  
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**GOALS AND OUR LIFE AS A CHURCH**

- ❖ Seeking to be guided by love of God, love of others, being in community, seeking to be of service.
- ❖ Church services and classes being vital and central.
- ❖ Nurturing teamwork and community throughout the church.
- ❖ The church welcoming diversity of people working together as one.
- ❖ Developing a pervasive spirit of caring in the church community.
- ❖ The church developing as welcoming of all generations (from children to senior).
- ❖ Concerted efforts to involve young people more fully in the life of the church. Perhaps with aid from adults, having leadership emerge from young people. Involvement of young people in service projects in the community.
- ❖ Strengthening of programs for seniors, drawing on resources both within and outside the church.
- ❖ Developing processes for ministry preparation.
- ❖ Growth of participation from the congregation in the church activities.

**HISTORY OF THE CHURCH**

*New Jerusalem Church*

*Circa 1845*

The foundation of the Boston Society of the New Jerusalem (BSNJ) can be traced back to 1784 and the Green Dragon Tavern in Boston. It was then and there that admirers of, and those interested in learning more about, Emanuel Swedenborg first met to hear a lecture on Swedenborg by James Glen. In 1818, twelve people, some of whom were among the early "Green Dragon Tavern crowd," organized a Swedenborgian Church in the city. Chartered in 1823, the Boston Society of the New Jerusalem, Inc. is the first Swedenborgian Church established in Massachusetts. Members of the Church met at several locations before finally settling in 1845 at its present location atop Beacon Hill. The location inspired the name by which many today know the society: the Church on the Hill (Swedenborgian). Through the years, noted BSNJ members include Timothy Harrington Carter, publisher, and founder of the Old Corner Book Store; Sampson Reed, writer and mentor of Ralph Waldo Emerson; Lydia Maria Child, author, social activist and abolitionist; Warren Felt Evans, writer and healer;

Theophilus Parsons, dean of Harvard Law School; Otis Clapp, apothecary, publisher, member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, co-founder of The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.), Boston University, and founder of The Home for Little Wanderers; Theophilus P. Chandler, architect; Clarence Barron, financier, editor of the *Wall Street Journal*, and president of Dow Jones; George James Webb, hymnologist; and The Honorable Malcolm Nichols, Mayor of Boston. A beautiful Gothic Revival structure served the membership until the 1960s when it was replaced with a new Church building and an eighteen story high-rise apartment. Today, the main sanctuary of the Church is accessible from Bowdoin Street. The Church has also served as a place of worship and gatherings for the local Muslim Community and other faith-based communities. The Church has organizes and runs many programs to meet the needs of the Church community and larger surrounding neighborhood.

Use of the Church facility is offered to human service and outreach organizations.

## MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR PASTOR



Dear Members and Friends of the Church on the Hill:

We can think back to Christmas, to Jesus being born with us. We can be ready for new beginnings and rebirths in our lives as we enter a new year. We can remember themes of epiphany, such as light coming in darkness, following a star, and bringing gifts.

In December we passed through the shortest days, and days are now getting longer. While there is increasing light, we may sometimes face harsh cold. Some of us have memories of last January, a very harsh month filled with snow, ice, and cold. Whatever this January brings, we can go forward in our lives and in our learning from and sharing with others.

January and other winter months have a beauty. An example is a way I was able to see a tree that had shed its leaves. The trunk and all the many branches of very different sizes were there to see and were beautiful in a very different way from the tree when full of leaves. This left me with the thought of each season and time having its own beauty.

We are entering a new year in our church. This gives you an opportunity to consider your connection with the church and with others in the church. May this new year bring much growth for you!

Love and Best Wishes to Each of You,

Ted

## Today ...

*I*woke up early today, excited over all I get to do before the clock strikes midnight. I have responsibilities to fulfill today. I am important. My job is to choose what kind of day I am going to have.

~Today I can complain because the weather is rainy or I can be thankful that the grass is getting watered for free.

~Today I can feel sad that I don't have more money or I can be glad that my finances encourage me to plan my purchases wisely and guide me away from waste.

~ Today I can grumble about my health or I can rejoice that I am alive.

~Today I can lament over all that my parents didn't give me when I was growing up or I can feel grateful that they allowed me to be born.

~Today I can cry because roses have thorns or I can celebrate that thorns have roses.

~Today I can mourn my lack of friends or I can excitedly embark upon a quest to discover new relationships.

~ Today I can whine because I have to go to work or I can shout for joy because I have a job to do.

~ Today I can complain because I have to go to school or eagerly open my mind and fill it with rich new tidbits of knowledge.

~Today I can murmur dejectedly because I have to do housework or I can feel honored because the Lord has provided shelter for my mind, body and soul.

~Today stretches ahead of me, waiting to be shaped. And here I am, the sculptor who gets to do the shaping.

What today will be like is up to me. I get to choose what kind of day I will have!

- Author Unknown



## Lighting the Way Home

Rabbi Victor H.  
Reinstein

On the shortest day of the year, darkness then descending into the longest night, there is an annual gathering in a church near the Boston Common to remember and to mourn. It is an interfaith memorial service for homeless people who have died in Massachusetts during the past year. Always held on December 21<sup>st</sup>, words on the cover of the program underscore the symbolic power of the date, “*The longest night of the year... The longest night to be un-housed!*”

I have participated in this community of mourners for several years. The immediate mourners, the family of the deceased, are the homeless themselves, gathered in the pews. I have often felt embarrassed here, to be welcomed into this community of the living and the dead. It is not only an embarrassment for what I have, seen in the

*Unlike in past years, sitting among the mourners this year, amidst the members of this holy congregation, my own tears came in a way they hadn't in other years.*

immediate disparity, for instance, simply in the clothes I wear. I am humbled and embarrassed, rather, for what they have and give to me. There is a deep bond and sense of community among them, a gift freely shared, as powerful as any connection among people I have seen. Unlike in past years, sitting among the mourners this year, amidst the members of this holy congregation, my own tears came in a way they hadn't in other years.

Among them, I could see their faces now, the intensity of their gaze as they listened to one of their own speak. My eyes kept returning to a man across the aisle from me, his appearance, I'm sure, belying his age. His face was striking, soft and hard at the same time, furrowed lines in weathered skin, graying hair to his shoulders, a bushy beard also streaked with gray, a beard both handsome and scruffy. I watched him as a child began to sing with a voice so haunting, accompanied by his father on piano, a bond so strong. The man across the aisle leaned

forward, with shoulders hunched, and began to sob. I turned away as my own eyes welled, so as not to intrude. Later, I learned that his wife had died a year ago, the two of them having lived together on the streets for so long.

*I confess that I hadn't thought before about couples living their married lives upon the streets, without a home, without a bed in which to make love.*

I confess that I hadn't thought before about couples living their married lives upon the streets, without a home, without a bed in which to make love. This was a street poet's loving lament, tender and biting, the voice of a woman as she looked up toward her husband while reading from her poem, “I Love Being Homeless.” Of a young couple caught in the street's inexorable grip, with voice choking, Mike, an organizer of the service, told of the couple's death together only two weeks before. These people his congregation, his holy work among them, in tears he added that fortunately their baby was not with them at the time.

All along the lower edge of the u-shaped balcony that surrounds the simple church, and along the floor at the base of the walls, there are cardboard tombstones, each with a first name and a last initial, unless it is for John or Jane Doe, the homeless and unknown. A man came up to speak, “people call me Shaggy, but my real name is David.” He looked around at all the tombstones and said, “All these people who passed away, a lot of them are my friends.” The names that were upon each cardboard “stone,” so many of David's friends, were read individually as a candle was lit for each one. By the end,

there was an undulating field of light at the front of the sanctuary, the light of so many souls flickering. I too was given a piece of paper with names to read. I felt a special bond with those names, and with the people who were called by them. I kept looking up at the cardboard markers to see if I could find them, Juarez S., Robert C., Gerald F., John N., Lorraine S., Richard S., Leonard M., Jeffery O., James W., the



names by which each was welcomed into this world and by which they now were remembered. God's candle is the human soul, *ner Hashem nishmat adam*, and so for each of these,

God's light diminished now in this world, however many candles we would light. Coming during the week of Chanukkah, a time for raising up light, the Torah portion was *Parashat Miketz* (Gen. 41:1-44:17). Concerned primarily with the unfolding story in all of its drama of Yosef and his brothers, the portion begins with reference to the final two years of Yosef's imprisonment: *vay'hi miketz shna'tayim yamim/it came to pass at the end of two full years*. Looking to the book of Job, the rabbis make a startling connection with this verse that would seem to be but an introduction. Chapter 28 of Job begins with a description of miners going down into the earth, bringing light to guide them in the midst of deep darkness. Speaking of each miner, the text says, *keytz sam la'choshech/each one puts an end to darkness*. Playing on the words *keytz and miketz*, both referring to an end in the passing of time, the verse from Job comes to speak to each one of us with its powerful reminder, *each one puts an end to darkness*.

It is not enough to reach out to the homeless only to mourn. On these long winter nights, it is for each of us to help put an end to darkness, together lighting the way home. From the same church where the memorial service is held, Mike leads people out to

find the hidden homeless, those who don't go to shelters and are wary of contact, bringing socks and hats and gloves to them, hoping their names won't be upon those cardboard markers next year. Until we bring a more just and equitable society, we need to go out into the night with Mike and bring warmth and caring to those who could freeze to death in the meantime.

Painfully aware that it is not enough to mourn, neither is it enough to meet the immediate needs of the currently un-housed. If we would see the time when everyone has a place to live, it means challenging and changing the nature of a society in which so many are left out in the cold to varying degrees. During the memorial service, a sign was referred to that had been on the medical tent at Occupy Boston, "Let the raid begin, we want to go home...." Giving ironic voice to those in the tent encampment who had nowhere else to go, that sign was also a reminder of how far we have to go until we all come home.

Prefacing my own words of prayer with the hope that our mourning would be a call to action, I offered an adaptation of the Jewish memorial prayer, *El Molei Rachamim*, chanting first in Hebrew, then reading in English (see below). As it is the miners in the Book of Job, not God, who bring light into the depths of darkness, only we can transform our words of prayer into action and bring the light of a new day, when none shall die for want of such basic human rights as food, clothing, shelter, and health care. When that time comes, we shall again gather on the shortest day of the year, unafraid of the longest night, and celebrate the holy community of the once un-housed.

### **Memorial Prayer for the Homeless**

O God, exalted and full of compassion, grant perfect peace in Your sheltering Presence, among the holy and pure, to the souls of all those whom we remember today, who have gone to their eternal home. Welcome them home, please, with open arms. Show to them the love and acceptance denied to them in life. Knowing that You have given us the resources, help us to create a just society in which everyone has a place to call home. (*con't on p. 6*)

*BEGINNING A NEW YEAR  
(A New Years Message)  
Rev. Dr. Ted Klein*

As we begin a new year, we can look back on the year that has passed. We can consider how our life is interconnected with lives of others, how the year that has passed has been for others and for us. There is a chance to reflect on what we are bringing into the new year. What hopes and dreams do we have? What challenges do we face? What might be some ways to walk forward with others in this new year? As we begin a new year, life continues to go on. Each moment brings opportunities to grow and learn.

Sometimes people speak about making new years resolutions, perhaps identifying ways they seek to have their lives change. A resolution could be seen as a way of making a new beginning. At any time we can seek a new beginning in an area or areas of our lives. The beginning of a year is in many ways a natural place to seek and explore new beginnings in our lives.

God continually seeks for each of us to enter into the new beginnings of rebirth. Beginning this new year, we can explore parts of our lives where rebirth is needed. Some images of rebirth in the Bible are being born again, being born of the Spirit, being born from above (John 3: 6-7). Rebirth can happen only through God's Spirit and Grace, it is from above rather than something we can make happen. Yet rebirth can only happen with our cooperation, working with God and living a life of love and caring for others. The beginning of a new year is a good time for reflecting on what in our lives needs to undergo the change of rebirth.

As we enter this year, rebirths can happen in large ways and in small ways. Perhaps a rebirth will happen as we listen to a person in a new way, open to God's leading and ways we can understand the person better. Perhaps, with God's help, we can undergo a rebirth as we face a change that is frightening and find ways to accept it and go forward. Perhaps a rebirth will come through not dwelling on what can take us on a negative path and instead giving our attention to what good we can contribute to bringing out of a situation.

**CLOSING PRAYER**

God, help us to see where rebirths are needed in our lives as we enter a new year. We think of the many connections of our lives with other lives. Help us be willing to change and undergo rebirth, ready to go forward and grow in caring and love, contributing to lives of others. Help us, this new year, to be ready to learn and grow. Amen.

*(Memorial Prayer continued from page 5)*

In Your embrace of their souls, please show to them the meaning their lives held for You. Be a mirror, God, in which they may see Your image in their eternal selves. Please forgive us for not seeing Your image in them, and help us to open our eyes to the holiness of every single life. Master of mercy, we beseech You, remember all the worthy and righteous deeds that they performed in the land of the living, deeds of infinite meaning in Your eyes, however small, whether for family and friends, whether on the streets or in shelters, for each other and for others. May their souls be bound up in the bond of life. You are their portion. May they rest in peace. Let us say: Amen.

*Annual Winter  
Member's Meeting*

**Sunday, February 12 ~12:30 PM**

**DOOR PRIZES!**

**MUSIC!**

**PRE-SUPER BOWL!**

**SURPRISES!**

*Hope to see you there!*

Last Month's "who's who" answers...

From left to right and  
top to bottom:

1. Linus
2. Tiny Tim
3. Kermit the Frog
4. Frosty the Snowman
5. Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer
6. Ralphie
7. Cousin Eddie
8. Kris Kringle (Edmund Gwenn)
9. Buddy the Elf (Will Ferrel)
10. The Grinch
11. The Rat King
12. George Bailey (Jimmy Stewart)



Hint: They are all from Holiday movies, television, or stage.

*Preach the gospel all the time.  
If necessary, use words.*

*-Saint Francis*

From the Editor:  
*Michael Bancewicz*

*Welcome 2012*

*Greetings Everyone and Happy New Year!*

In 2011 we explored many new endeavors and forged more partnerships in our mission to be of service to the community both locally and globally. With this we have celebrated some new successes. The future year is very exciting with the abundance of ideas and plans to carve-out yet more inroads in ecumenical/missionary good works.

Normally when someone submits an article for the newsletter, we like to keep it between 500 - 1000 words. When Rabbi Victor Reinstein sent me his reflection from the 22nd Annual Homeless Memorial Service "*Lighting the Way Home*", which he is printing in his own newsletter, I asked him for permission to print it in ours. His reflection concludes with a prayer, all of which is printed in its entirety.

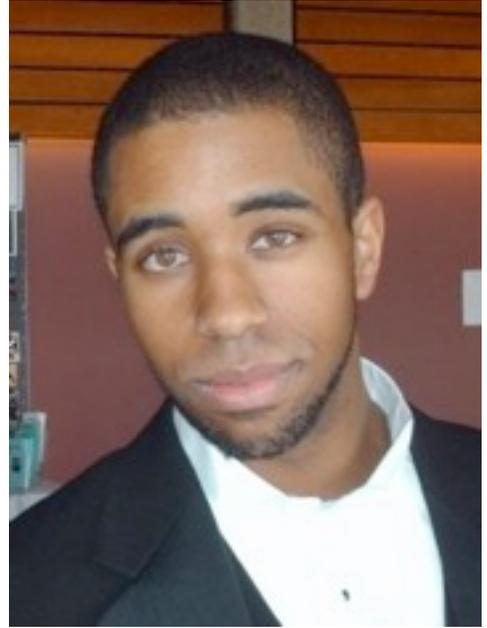
One potential project for this year is for the church to compile and produce a high quality leather bound devotional of daily readings for the year 2013. This will require a great deal of work from volunteers whom would be gleaning content for the project and meeting on a monthly basis. If you are interested in participating in this, please sign up or call the office.

My friends, this year is going to be one of growth, exploration, nutrition and legacy ...

*Peace,  
Mike  
Boston 2012*

## Meet The Choir...

Marques Hollie is a senior at The Boston Conservatory completing his degree in Vocal Music Performance under the tutelage of Dr. Rebecca Folsom. Marques' 2011-2012 season began with performances as the baritone soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Cranberry Coast Concert Series and the role of the Judge in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Trial by Jury*. This summer, Marques performed the roles of Don Basilio and Don Curzio in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Dr. Blind in Johann Strauss' *Die Fledermaus* as an apprentice artist with Opera in the Ozarks in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Marques is a native of Omaha, Nebraska and performed with Opera Omaha in the choruses of Verdi's *Aida*, Puccini's *La Boheme*, and the world premiere of Paul Moravec's *The Blizzard Voices* during the 2007-2009 seasons.



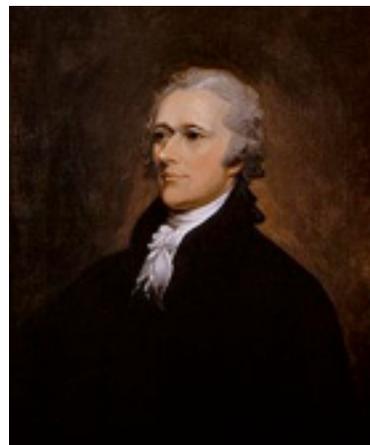
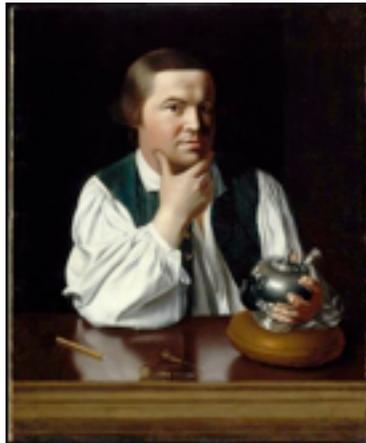
*Marques Hollie*  
*Baritone*

## Youth Initiative Wii Night ~ December 2011



For December's Youth Initiative Wii Night, we offered 'make your own pizzas' to go with the video games and companionship. Everyone enjoyed themselves!

# Can you name who's who?



The person to name them all/the most wins a \$50 Gift Certificate to Maggianos. GOOD LUCK!

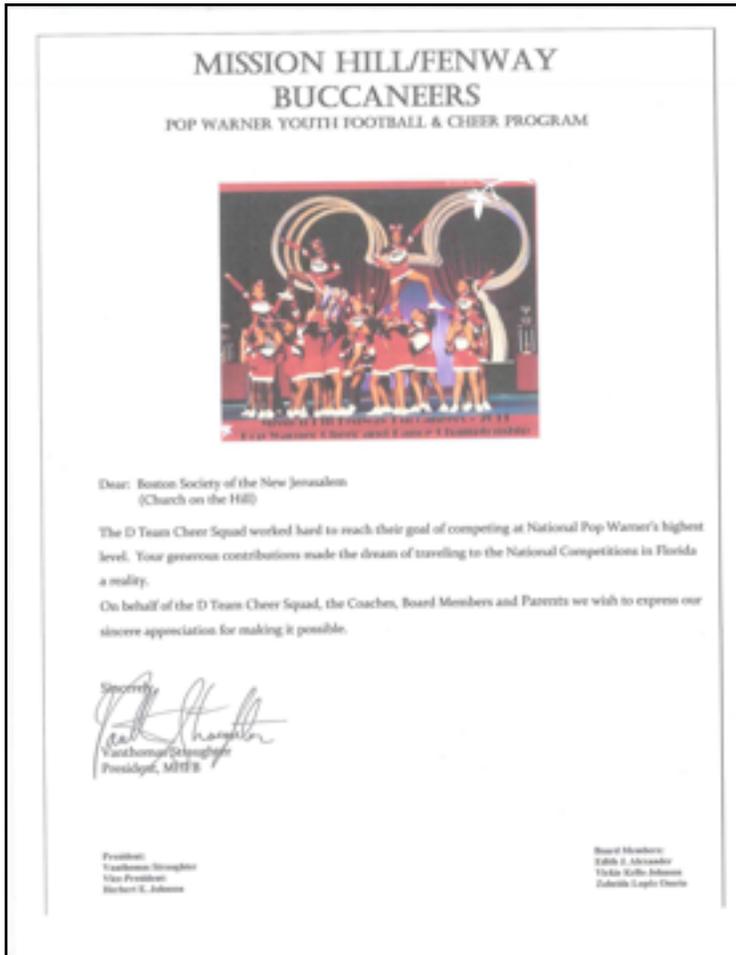
Congratulations to Charlie Pham for naming 8 of 12 last month!

Answers from December's "who's who" can be found on page 7.

Correspondence



Church President, Mary Guarino with Santa Claus



Dear Church on the Hill,

I wanted to personally thank you for hosting such wonderful Christmas and New Years Eve parties this year. I am so fortunate to have been able to attend both and had a splendid time! Everything including the food, music, atmosphere, and company were fantastic. You were able to personify the holiday spirit for me and I am truly thankful that you really helped me appreciate the holiday season. I know I am always having trouble finding my Christmas cheer when it is so mild and snowless outside. Your parties more than made up for the lack of a White Christmas. Thank you all again and I look forward to seeing all of you soon.

Sincerely,  
Santa's Elf

*Unless we form the habit of going to the Bible  
in bright moments as well as in trouble,  
we cannot fully respond to its consolations because  
we lack equilibrium between light and dark.*

*-Helen Keller*

# Church Calendar Events 2012

All are welcome. Come as you are.

## January

Sunday, January 1	9:45 AM	<b>New Year's Day.</b> Bible Reflection
	11:00 AM	Church Service and Communion with Rev. Dr. Ted Klein
Wednesday, January 4	5:00 PM	Church Council Meeting
	6:00 PM	Board of Trustees Meeting
Sunday, January 8	9:45 AM	Swedenborg Class with Rev. Dr. Ted Klein
	11:00 AM	Epiphany Sunday Service with Rev. Dr. Ted Klein
Sunday, January 15	9:45 AM	Bible Reflection
	11:00 AM	Church Service with Laity in the Pulpit
Wednesday, January 18	12:00 Noon	Senior Lunch
	6:00 PM	Youth Initiative Wii Night
Saturday, January 21	1-4:30 PM	Activity Afternoon for Children and Youth
Sunday, January 22	9:45 AM	Swedenborg Class with Rev. Dr. Ted Klein
	11:00 AM	Church Service with Dr. Mary Kay Klein

## February

Wednesday, February 1	5:00 PM	Church Council Meeting
	6:00 PM	Board of Trustees Meeting
Sunday, February 5	9:45 AM	Swedenborg Class with Rev. Dr. Ted Klein
	11:00 AM	Church Service and Communion with Rev. Dr. Ted Klein
Sunday, February 12	6:00 PM	<b>Super Bowl Party</b>
	9:45 AM	Swedenborg Class with Rev. Dr. Ted Klein
Sunday, February 12	11:00 AM	Church Service with Dr. Mary Kay Klein
	12:30 PM	<b>Annual Winter Member's Meeting</b>
Wednesday, February 15	12:00 Noon	Senior Lunch
Sunday, February 19	9:45 AM	Bible Reflection
	11:00 AM	Church Service with Laity in the Pulpit
Sunday, February 26	9:45 AM	Swedenborg Class with Rev. Dr. Ted Klein
	11:00 AM	Church Service with Rev. Dr. Ted Klein



**Church on The Hill (Swedenborgian)  
The Boston Society of the New Jerusalem, Inc.**

140 Bowdoin Street, Beacon Hill  
Boston, MA 02108-2799

**Check Out The New Website at  
[www.churchonthehillboston.org](http://www.churchonthehillboston.org)**



**Lydia Maria Child (1802-1880)**

Member of the Church  
Writer, Author, Abolitionist,  
Civil Rights Advocate  
Writer of "Over the River"

**"It is my mission to help in the breaking down of classes, and to make all men feel as if they were brethren of the same family, sharing the same rights, the same capabilities, and the same responsibilities. While my hand can hold a pen, I will use it to this end; and while my brain can earn a dollar, I will devote it to this end." Lydia Maria Child**

