

Worship offered in the church building and via Zoom online

Since August, worship has been offered in the church on Sundays at 10:30 a.m. as well as being broadcast on Zoom. We are following all state and local guidelines which dictate the number of people allowed, social distancing, cleaning requirements, etc. If you have questions about attending in-person worship, please call Worship & Spiritual Life Committee chair Pat at 413-634-5046.

WiFi Internet Service is at the Church Building

Thanks to the generous financial donations of our friends and members, WiFi with Comcast was installed Oct. 1st at the Mary Lyon Church building. Since then our online internet Zoom services have improved each week thanks to purchases and donations of equipment and constant "tweaking" of placement and settings. Your technology committee is grateful to all for making this technology possible. It keeps us connected to our friends and members who live near and far. For those of you in the church building, thank you for allowing the distraction of additional microphones and wires. ALL feedback on how this is going is appreciated and sought! Your Technology Committee is Carl, Annie, Judy and Tina. We'll provide a comprehensive detailed report for the annual meeting in January 2021.

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"TODAY'S SERMON IS PRE-RECORDED... WE CAN PAUSE IT TO PONDER... REWIND IT TO REVIEW... OR FAST FORWARD TO THE SPECIAL MUSIC."

Flowers for Worship

Dec Pat C.



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ADVENT Began 11/29

Waiting for Christ's birth - lighting a candle on each of the four Sundays before Christmas:

- 1 - purple candle of Hope
 - 2 - purple candle of Peace
 - 3 - pink candle of Joy
 - 4 - purple candle of Love
- Christmas - white Christ candle

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CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Every Sunday this month at 10:30 a.m. Celebrating the Christ child with readings,



Advent candles and carols.

Sun. 12/27 at 10:30 am we will celebrate Christmas with lighting the Christ Candle.

No Christmas Eve Service

CLOTHING SHED



OPEN!!

Our clothing shed, which was closed in August by St. Pauly Textile, Inc. due to the pandemic is now open. Please bring us your bags with clothing, shoes, linens, and blankets for distribution across the USA and around the world. Let's fill the shed!

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2020 Reports Due Soon

Committees' and Officers' written reports for the year 2020 will be due in early January. We are not sure what our Annual Church Business Meeting will look like yet but it is time to think about writing down what the Committees and Officers have accomplished (in spite of COVID19) this year! If you have questions about the January Annual Meeting, contact our church moderator, Paul W., at 413-625-2649.



Thank You for Your Continued Support

Thank you to all who send in weekly offerings! Your generosity helps us keep up with church expenses. Please continue to mail your donations payable to the Mary Lyon Church to our church collector, Vi S. whose address is in our directory or mail to the church to Vi's attention at Mary Lyon Church, P.O. Box 87, Buckland, MA 01338

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Food Pantry Collections

Dec: **Peanut Butter & Jelly/Jam**

Food Pantry Pickup days:

Tues. 12/1, 12/15 & 12/29 from 3 pm to 6 pm at Ashfield Congo Church on Rt. 116 in Ashfield.

If you want to donate food, call 413-625-0020 and arrange either a pick up at your home or meet time at the church in Ashfield.

Should you wish to send a financial donation directly, mail to: Hilltown Churches Food Pantry, c/o First Congregational Church, Main St. Rt. 116 P.O. Box 161 Ashfield, Ma. 01330 OR send to our church attn Missions, put Food Pantry on the memo line.

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CHURCH COOKBOOKS FOR SALE



\$12.00 each includes postage

We'll mail to you!
Email your order to info@marylyonchurch.org
Or call (413) 339-4231

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Window Images Greeting Cards For Sale

in packs of six for \$15.00
You pick images



Price includes postage.
Email info@marylyonchurch.org or call Tina.

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Crafts for 2021 Bazaar

Although we were unable to get together these past many months to make crafts, Cyndie S. is still creating items for our Silver Bell Bazaar which will be bigger and the best for 2021.

So, during these pandemic times and with winter fast approaching, she continues to make crafts and she hopes you are too. If you have trouble with figuring out some craft ideas, just go online and there are hundreds of wonderful and easy items. Happy crafting!!

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Window Capital Campaign

We're coming to the end of 2020, and the Stained-glass window campaign still needs additional funds to meet our goal. It's unfortunate that we have not been able to have any fundraisers these past many months, but we continue to accept donations and will do so for another year. Please send your contributions (to help with your 2020 tax returns) to the Mary Lyon church with a notation for the WCC.

We're almost there!
Thank you very much.

Still Collecting Pennies



Even though we're not out shopping much these days and getting change back from our purchases, the stained-glass window capital campaign continues to collect pennies. So please save those pennies (and maybe other change too) so that when we're all back together, we can count those coins and put them toward our campaign. Thanks to everyone!

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Monday Nighters Last Chance to buy Raffle Tickets!

Drawing is 12/20.

Call Luahn for more info.

We have included a full-size sheet of raffle tickets in this newsletter.

Drawing is planned for 12/20/2020. If you would like to purchase tickets, just cut out from the full sheet included. Fill in your info, and mail completed ticket(s) and your payment payable to the church – with "Raffle" on Memo line of your check. Mail to the church P.O.Box 87, Buckland MA 01338

If you would like more than the number of tickets included here, just let us know. **LAST CHANCE TO GET YOURS - SO ACT NOW!**

This is a wonderful way to support the Monday Nighters and our Church.

BOOK NOOK

Walking with Henry

by Rachel Anne Ridge

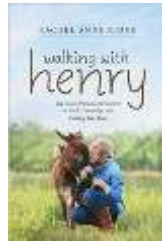
from Janet Gerry

If you enjoyed the story of Flash, the lost donkey who wandered up Rachel Anne Ridge's driveway just when she needed help negotiating life, faith, and second chances – you'll love Walking with Henry. Henry is a miniature donkey, chosen as a companion to Flash, and like Flash, immediately takes up residence in Ridge's heart.

She and her husband Tom's children are grown and gone, and she is at a new and unexpected point in her spiritual journey: feeling lost, anxious, doubtful. "Maybe," she thinks, standing next to little Henry, "maybe somehow this small, dark chocolate-colored donkey could make everything all right again."

The lessons Henry learns – that there will always be enough hay for him and Flash – echo Ridge's search for mercy after the sad episode of Penny and Prince leaves her with the sort of crushing guilt that all of us imperfect humans have experienced. "All the things I've done... What I've left undone..." Walking with Henry brings Ridge to a new understanding. She receives big lessons from a little donkey on faith, friendship, and finding her path. If you go walking with Henry, you too may find healing, a new sense of possibility – and grace.

For young readers on your Christmas shopping list, Ridge has written and illustrated Flash the Donkey Makes New Friends, suitable for kids 3 to 8 years of age.



The Christmas Box

By Richard Paul Evans
from Tina Peters & Ken Wood

Since it was first published, more than seven million people have been touched by the magic of The Christmas Box, a holiday classic that is as beloved in our time as A Christmas Carol was in Dickens's.

When Evans wrote The Christmas Box, he intended it as a private expression of love for his two young daughters, Jenna and Allyson. Though he often told them that he loved them, he didn't feel that they could ever really understand the depth of his feelings until they had experienced the joy of rearing their own children, and by that time their relationship would have changed forever. In writing The Christmas Box, he hoped that at some time in the future they would read the book and know of their father's love.

[from Amazon.com]

Share your book suggestions with us. Call or email Luahn or info@marylyonchurch.org.

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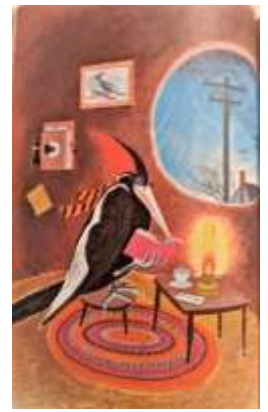
Flowers for Worship 2021 **Volunteers Needed**

It's time to set the monthly flower schedule for the Sundays in 2021. Please call Vi at 413-339-8497 to be assigned a month in 2021. If you had a month this year and would like that month again just let her know. Your help will be very much appreciated and we are so very grateful to everyone who contributed in 2020. Give Vi a call.



POEM: The Woodpecker

Last month we carried the story of Anna Marie and "Kent" who had recently acquired a text book Roberts English series which included his favorite third grade poem back in 1966. In case you were wondering about it, here it is:



The Woodpecker

by Elizabeth Madox Roberts

The woodpecker pecked out a little round hole
And made him a house in the telephone pole.
One day when I watched he poked out his head,
And he had on a hood and a collar of red.
When the streams of rain pour out of the sky,
And the sparkles of lightning go flashing by,
And the big, big wheels of thunder roll,
He can snuggle back in the telephone pole.

Illustration credit is Mamoru Funai; poetry acknowledgement is The Viking Press, Inc. from Under the Tree by Elizabeth Madox Roberts. 1922, B.W. Huebsch, Inc., renewed 1950 by Ovor S. Roberts



Pastor's Message

Dear Friends,

In our calendar world we are heading toward the new year. But in our church calendar, the new year begins on November 29th, the First Sunday of Advent.

During the four Sundays of Advent, we focus on the Advent candles of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, and prepare to celebrate Christmas when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. The question is, can we incarnate the words hope, peace, joy, and love, in our lives, in our community and in our world?

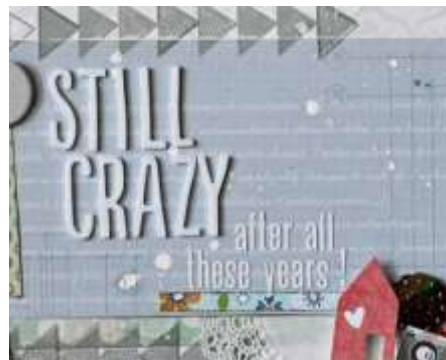
I recently had a discussion about this with an old friend who said (only half-jokingly): "Rich, you're crazy to still believe in these things after all these years. Just look at the world and what is happening...it's just crazy to still believe in those ideals." Well, then I AM CRAZY!!

Those of you who have attended the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service know that I often take-off on those themes. But if the choice is to adjust to, and accept the world at large the way it is, with all the power, violence, oppression, problems, etc. or to be crazy enough to believe

in God's promises and in the ongoing influence of Jesus' life, ministry and continual presence...then put me down as certifiably crazy!

And in this new church year underway, and in the new calendar year of 2020-2021, I invite you to be crazy too. Crazy enough to believe in "Peace on earth and goodwill toward one another." Crazy enough to believe in the inherent goodness of humanity. Crazy enough to believe that we here, all of us connected to the Mary Lyon Church, can make a difference by the quality of the way we live our lives and treat each other.

So, I'm crazy for Hope, and Peace, and Joy, and Love...and maybe I am just an old hippie who won't let go of dreams for a transformed and better world...but then, again, so was Jesus in a way...and he promised to be with us always, even to the end of the world.



Rich

Mary, Did You Know?

By Greene Lee Rufus &
Lowry Mark Alan

Mary, did you know that your baby boy would one day walk



on water?

Mary, did you know that your baby boy would save our sons and daughters?

Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new?

This child that you've delivered, will soon deliver you

Mary, did you know that your baby boy will give sight to a blind man?

Mary, did you know that your baby boy will calm the storm with his hand?

Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?

When you kiss your little baby, you kiss the face of God Mary, did you know? (Did you know?)

The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the dead will live again

The lame will leap, the dumb will speak the praises of the lamb!

Mary, did you know that your baby boy is Lord of all creation?

Mary, did you know that your baby boy would one day rule the nations?

Did you know that your baby boy is Heaven's perfect Lamb? That sleeping child you're holding is the great I am