

## WE'VE GONE DIGITAL

This is the first edition of our email newsletter – we look forward to the ways this will help us communicate better with one another as a church family.

We know there will probably be a few glitches and minor issues as we sort out the process for sending these. If you come across anything that should be corrected, please email us at [office@middlestreetbaptist.org](mailto:office@middlestreetbaptist.org), and we'll make it right.

Enjoy!

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## FROM PASTOR CHRIS

We plant seeds, not oak trees. Imagine trying to plant a fully-grown oak tree in your back yard. You would have to tear up your entire yard just to fit all the roots. There would be no guarantee that the tree would take, and imagine all the re-sodding you would have to do after you got the tree in the ground.



**With the new year right around the corner, it's time to start** thinking about resolutions. Maybe you love making **New Year's resolutions; maybe** you never do. **Whatever your preference is, though, it's a great time to evaluate** the past year and make plans for the coming year.

**Maybe you've given some thought to making some spiritual resolutions.** I hope you have! Maybe this is the year you give extra attention to your prayer life, or to **serving the "least of these."** Maybe you commit to more consistent time reading and studying the Bible.

Remember: we plant seeds, not oak trees. If you have never really made a practice of spending time with the Lord in prayer or reading your Bible, starting out with an hour every morning is probably unrealistic. Instead, try to ease into it. Maybe five minutes reading a chapter of the Bible (Mark or John might be a good place to start) and five minutes praying (consider praying for family members, **friends, and asking God to draw you closer to himself, even if you don't feel like**

you're very good at prayer), all while you have your morning coffee. And see if that time eventually doesn't become fuller and richer.

There's no silver bullet for a healthy spiritual life. It's long, slow, plodding work. "A long obedience in the same direction," as pastor and author Eugene Peterson puts it. We plant seeds, not oak trees.

We plant seeds, and then we water those seeds and care for the saplings, and over time we get to enjoy the massive, beautiful, shade-giving oak.

May 2017 be a year of growth for you in your relationship with the Lord!

Warmly,  
Chris

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## NEW YEAR'S EVE

As is our tradition, we will host a First Night Performance in our fellowship hall. First Night is a family oriented, non-alcoholic celebration of leaving the old year behind and embarking on a new year.

The performances in Fellowship Hall will include:

8:15–9:00 pm

9:15–10:00 pm

10:15–11:00 pm

Jeff Warner & Bruce McIntyre trade sets with Great Bay Sailor.

Maritime, Celtic, Americana and Tunes of the Season – a must see!

The fireworks display will be held at South Mill Pond and will start at 7:30 pm.

Countdown to Midnight in Market Square at the Street Dance

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## ANNUAL MEETING :

Sunday, January 22, 2017

The Annual Meeting of the membership of Middle Street Baptist Church will be held on Sunday, January 22, 2017, at 11:30 a.m. or immediately following worship service in Fellowship Hall. The purpose of the meeting is to elect officers, board and committee members, and representatives; to hear annual reports for 2016; to discuss and vote on proposed revisions to our church constitution; and to transact any other business that may properly come before the membership. The meeting is open to everyone, and all active church members are requested to be present in order to vote.

A light lunch will be served after the meeting.

If the Annual Meeting cannot be held on Sunday, January 22, 2017, due to a snow emergency, it will be held on Sunday, January 29, 2017 at 11:30 a.m. or immediately following worship service in Fellowship Hall.

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## GIVING ENVELOPES

Giving envelopes for 2017 have arrived and are on a table in the Fellowship Hall. If you give using these envelopes, you will find one with your name on there. Thanks for your faithful giving to the ministry of Middle Street!

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## ANNUAL REPORTS DUE

Please submit by December 31

Alice Marden Memorial Fund  
Budget Meeting Minutes  
Board of Deacons  
Budget 2016  
Estimated Income  
Flower Committee  
Moderator  
Pastor  
Securities Report  
Treasurer

Ann Judson  
Board of Christian Education  
Board of Trustees  
Church Clerk  
Financial Secretary  
Board of Missions  
Nominating Committee  
Publicity Committee  
Social Committee  
Ushers

Reports from the boards/committees listed above are still outstanding.

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## IN MEMORY:

[Ruth G. Moulton](#)

November 7, 1924 – December 8, 2016

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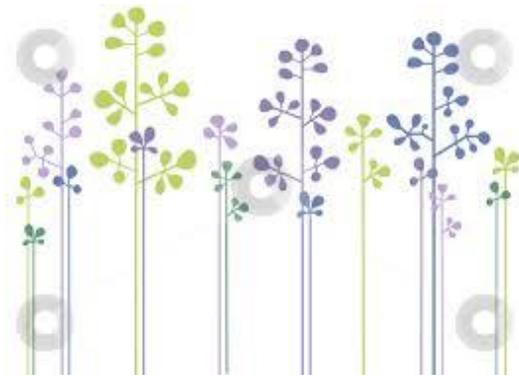
## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Jan 11 – Anna Hand  
Jan 17 – Barbara Brown  
Jan 20 – Andrea St. Jean  
Jan 26 – Jamie Moynihan

## JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Jan 30 – Rosalie and Evan Churchill

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The Flower Committee would like to thank all of those who have donated flowers in the past months. There are many openings in the winter months ahead, so if you would like to donate flowers in memory/honor of someone, please sign up on the calendar downstairs or speak to a member of the flower committee.

Ellie Hayes: [\(603\) 964-6587](tel:6039646587)  
Beverly Dow: [\(603\) 436-7182](tel:6034367182)  
Jan Witham: [\(603\) 436-7252](tel:6034367252)

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## ANN JUDSON FELLOWSHIP

Ann Judson Fellowship will meet on Monday, January 9th At Grille 28 on Grafton Rd, Portsmouth, 12:45 pm. All ladies are welcome.

The sign up sheet will be on the podium next to the kitchen. Please include your phone number when signing up in case there is a cancellation due to weather.

If you have any questions or need more information please call Jan Witham at [\(603\) 436-7252](tel:6034367252).

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## DAUGHTERS OF EVE

### Women's Bible Study

All women are invited to come and find out how a group of women connect with their daily walk with Christ, learn more about one another, and have a great time together. **We recently began a new Bible study, "Twelve Women of the Bible".** The study guide and DVD are based on the teaching from Lysa Terkeurst and several other women. Each of the twelve sessions is focused on one biblical woman, to help women discover new insights and provide a powerful witness to **God's gracious love.**

Daughters of Eve meets the third Tuesday of every month at 6:00 pm and the meetings will be held at the church. This new program is a separate Bible study each month so even if you miss one, just come the following month! Each meeting we will watch the DVD together with a discussion to follow. Remember to bring your Bibles!

Plenty of books have been ordered. please see Janet Hand to receive a copy.

### Upcoming Meetings

Tuesday, January 17th at 6:00 pm

We will be discussing session 4 about Hannah. The key Scripture is 1 Samuel 1:1-20. **"Hannah was a real woman who faced real heartache, real conflict, and yet chose to exercise her faith in a way that stands as an example for all of us today."**

Tuesday, February 21st at 6:00 pm

The Bible Study will be about Abigail, session 5 in the book. We will learn about Abigail and how she dealt with confrontation in relationships. The key Scripture is 1 Samuel 25:1-39.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Janet Hand at [\(603\) 436-3051](tel:6034363051) or [janetmhand@gmail.com](mailto:janetmhand@gmail.com).

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# MISSIONS

## LOCAL:

On Dec 2nd several MSBC folks supported our Portsmouth Salvation Army **Christmas Campaign by giving their time to “Man the Kettle” in Market Square.** Thank you to our Bell Ringers: Jeanne Finnemore and Barbara Kirkham, Julie and Doran Morford, Dick and Janice Clark, Tom and Janet Hand, Louis Dow and Tom Hammer, Marge Pomper and Patty Fitzgerald, Martha Petruzzi and Ellie Hayes, Dick and Elaine Wilder, Tim and Lucyana Chapman, Jack Foster and Jen Clark, CJ Lisi and Melodie Chapman.

Also, thank you to our December Salvation Army Soup Kitchen volunteers: Sharon Stone, Sara Cooley, Al Gillette, Peter and Marilyn Gustafson.

**MSBC continues to help provide food for “End 68 Hours of Hunger”.** This program provides a bag of food for the weekend to Portsmouth school children in need.

## A WINTER COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

**Your Mission Board invites you to participate in our annual Soup for “Souper” Bowl Sunday!** Please donate cans of soup on Jan. 15, 22, 29, and Feb. 5. This soup will benefit the Seacoast Family Food Pantry. Last year we donated 96 cans of soup. **Let’s try for 100 cans this year!** Can we do it? YES!

## INTERNATIONAL:

Newsletter from our Special Interest Missionaries: Dr. Bill and Ann Clemmer <https://www.internationalministries.org/read/64023-if-these-volcanic-rocks-could-shout>

To begin our new year, your Mission Board shares with you the following poem by Howard Thurman.

“When the song of the angels is stilled, When the star in the sky is gone, When the kings and princes are home, When the sheperds are back with their flock, The work of Christmas begins: To find the lost, To heal the broken, To feed the hungry, To release the prisoner, To rebuild the nations, To bring peace among people, To make music in the heart.”

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## ADVENT 2016



## END 68 HOURS OF HUNGER

THE MISSION: Confront the 68 hours of hunger experienced by some local

school children by providing bags of food that they can take home and eat over the weekend.

HOW WE CAN HELP: We will collect a designated food item for the bags every week. These items will be delivered to the drop off location for delivery of bags each week to the Portsmouth Schools.

REQUESTED FOOD ITEMS:

January 1st and 8th: Cereal bars and granola bars

January 15th and 22nd: Chicken noodle soup – small cans

January 29th: Canned tuna (albacore) packed in water

Please put all items in the Big Red Box in Fellowship Hall. Thank you!

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## GRANDPARENTS: SAVE THE DATE!

On Saturday, February, 18th, and Saturday, March 11th, we will host a two-part seminar called "Courageous Grandparenting: Unshakable Faith in a Broken World." The seminar will address the question, "How can we be effective grandparents in a world that is so different from the one we grew up in?"

The seminar is open to the public, and both sessions will begin around 8:30 pm and conclude by 12:30 pm. Keep an eye out for more details to come!

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## THANK YOU

Thank you all so much for the generous love gift which you gave us during this Christmas season. We are so grateful to be a part of this church family, and we look forward to an exciting 2017 together!

Warmly,  
Chris, Jaime, Bonnie, and Tamara

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## PRAYER CONCERNS

This section of the newsletter has been omitted in the online version. Please contact the church office (603) 436-2337 or [office@middlestreetbaptist.org](mailto:office@middlestreetbaptist.org) for a complete newsletter.

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## THE MONTH AHEAD

Friday, January 6th  
12:00–5:00 pm  
Red Cross Blood Drive

Wednesday, January 18th  
5:30 pm  
Church Council

Monday, January 9th  
12:45 pm  
Ann Judson

Sunday, January 22nd  
11:45 am  
Annual Meeting  
(snow date January 29th)

Tuesday, January 17th  
6:00 pm  
Daughters of Eve

Tuesday, January 24th  
Newsletter Deadline

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## LIVING NATIVITY PHOTOS





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## CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

**Given by:**

Jack and Audrey Foster

Joan Keech & Family

Barbara Kirkham

Lori, Jim, Jonathan, & Leah  
Kelley

Perham, Hodgdon Family

Esther and Vivan Martindale  
& Family

Louis and Beverly Dow

Jan Witham

Olivia Phipps

The Poor Family

Ellie Hayes

Bob and Kathy Pearl

Barbara and John Folland

Roxanne Ferrin

Bill and Vicki Walters

Victor and Helen Tine

Grace Simms

Gail O'Connor and Ellen  
Czachor

Martha DeStefano

**In memory/honor of:**

Peacekeepers

William T. Keech

Vivien Kirkham

Our parents and grandparents, Bernard and Erdine  
Ramsdell

Stephen and Louise Perham, Paul A. Hodgdon

Mildred Johnson, loving mother and faithful servant of  
God

Loved ones

My husband, Bob

Harold and Millicent Phipps Donald Phipps

Loved ones

John Hayes

Jason Pearl, Arthur and Gladys Pearl, Lloyd and Beverly  
Jordan

My beloved mother, Jacqueline Holmes

Mom and Dad & Jess Stanley

Our parents

Loved ones

My husband, Bob Simms

Our parents, Ruth and Dick Moulton

My son, Jim, and husband, Skip DeStefano



Martha Jones	Warren
Gary and Judi Sama	Our parents, who made so many Christmases magical
Verne Anderson	Kathleen Anderson
Tom and Janet Hand	Our children and grandchildren
Susan Anderson	Mom, Kathleen Anderson, and Dad, Verne S. Anderson, Jr.
Peter and Marilyn Gustafson	Our parents
Dick and Janice Clark	Children, grandchildren, & other family Kenneth, Geneva, Kenny King Richard and Jim Clark
Martha McGovern	My father, Richard Jurkowski
Dottie Steere-Doyle	My sister, Flora Goddard