

**FISHERS ISLAND UNION CHAPEL**  
**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**821 CRESCENT AVENUE, P.O. BOX 192**  
**FISHERS ISLAND, NEW YORK 06390**  
[fichapel1@gmail.com](mailto:fichapel1@gmail.com)  
[www.fiunionchapel.org](http://www.fiunionchapel.org)

*"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,  
you are welcome here."*

## **CHAPEL HAPPENINGS**

### **JANUARY-FEBRUARY-MARCH 2016**

Jesus said, "I am the world's Light. No one who follows me stumbles around in the darkness.  
I provide plenty of light to live in."

- John 8:12 (*The Message*)

Greetings, all!

This season of Epiphany draws our attention to the light of Christ, and in that spirit I want to celebrate with you the opportunities we have at Union Chapel -- even in our winter season - to shine the light into the community and the world beyond.

In December we held a wonderful Christmas celebration for Islanders with stories and a special outdoors tree-lighting. Laura Edwards' weekly Wednesday School has expanded to two classes for children, one pre-school and the other for older children. Through special resources such as The Islanders for Islanders Fund, Candy is able to help island families meet expenses for food, fuel and utilities during these lean months.

Looking beyond our shores, our ministry continues with donations to vital non-profits in Connecticut, and donations of clothes to support Verena Brooks' Little Pebbles ministry to orphanages in Central America. And learning of the disturbing, recent acts of religious extremists in our country and around the world, some of us are studying Islam in order to help us understand this great world religion and respond as faithful Christians.

We take these small steps with great faith that they will be a ray of Christ's life-giving light. As always, details are inside this issue of Chapel Happenings, and as you read along, know that we send blessings to all our friends and members as we each strive to be revealers of Christ's glory wherever we are, in all that we do.

Grace and peace,

Candy

# New! Union Chapel Book Group

In December Candy launched a church Book Group that meets weekly to discuss books about Christianity and other religions.

The first book selected is *No God but God*, by Reza Aslan, a Muslim scholar and sociologist who writes about the origins, evolution and complexity of the Muslim faith, one of the three great religions that trace their roots to Abraham. Aslan begins with a socio-economic description of the Arabian Peninsula at the beginning of the 7th Century, when Muhammad received his first revelations from God. Muhammad saw himself as a prophet in the line of Abraham, Moses, David and Jesus, receiving revelations from the same God as theirs. *No God but God* is no easy read, but it seems particularly important today to understand as much as we can about the Muslim faith, which has been claimed both by the protesters for democratic reform in the Arab Spring and by the Taliban and the jihadists of al-Qaeda and ISIS.

Since the members of the group, including Candy, have no special expertise in Islam, and we welcome any other seekers of truth in this murky area to join us in our journey of discovery.

- Barry Bryan



## **EASTER FLOWERS**

**One of the ministries of the congregation is to provide flowers for the sanctuary. Please join us this Easter Season. Thank you, in advance.**

At this time of year our thoughts turn to the beautiful Easter Season. Union Chapel will be decorated with beautiful lilies and spring flowers. If you would like to contribute toward these flowers, please complete the form below, write a check made payable to Fishers Island Union Chapel and mail to F.I Union Chapel, P.O. Box 192, Fishers Island, NY 06390.

**GIVEN BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**IN MEMORY, HONOR OR CELEBRATION OF: (circle one)**

**AMOUNT OF YOUR CONTRIBUTION:** \_\_\_\_\_

## UNION CHAPEL CONTACTS

Church office phone #: (631) 788-7898

New email: [fichapel1@gmail.com](mailto:fichapel1@gmail.com)

[www.fiunionchapel.org](http://www.fiunionchapel.org)

Minister: Rev. Candace Whitman

[candy@fiunionchapel.org](mailto:candy@fiunionchapel.org)

Moderator: Susan Renna

Trustee Chairperson: Louisa Evans

Deacon Chairperson: Laura Edwards

Administrative Assistant: Diane Dexter



### CHURCH BUSINESS HOURS

Monday, Thursday, Friday

10:00am – 1 pm

Tuesday – 10:00am – noon

Closed all other days



Book Group

## NAMING CONTEST!

We are looking for a name for our new church book group. Something that fits our vibe, of course.... enthusiastic readers, books about religion, faith, and the like, meeting when convenient to schedules and the season.

Please submit your suggestions to Diane by **March 31**. The prize? A free copy of our next book selection.

The new name and the winner will be publicized in the next *Chapel Happenings!*

## LIGHT THE STEEPLE MINISTRY

A soft light has been installed inside our “steeple” to be lit from sunset to midnight. The Trustees invite you to “Light the Steeple” in honor of or in memory of a loved one by donating \$25 to Union Chapel. Just submit the form below, and we will light the steeple on the appropriate week and print this remembrance in our newsletter.

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### LIGHT THE STEEPLE FORM

In Honor of   or   In Memory of   (circle one)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Given by \_\_\_\_\_

For the week of \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to and mail this form to: Fishers Island Union Chapel, P.O. Box 192, Fishers Island, NY 06390

### THE STEEPLE WAS LIT FOR THE FOLLOWING:

**November 2015**

**In Memory of Gayle Brown**

**Given by Paula Pendergast**

**December 2015**

**In Memory of Everett Brown**

**Given by Paula Pendergast**

**In Honor of Melen Zito**

**Given by Rob, Linda, Abby and Reed Noyes**

**In Memory of Lyn Stepanek**

**Given by Gene and Marty Litch**

**In Memory of Scott Lamb**

**Given by Jane and Lew Lamb**

**In Memory of Catherine Leslie**

**Given by Courtney, Jeff, Finlay and**

**Tatum MacDonald**



## Profile: Mitchell Kucsera

### Our excellent audio technician

Mitchell joined Union Chapel last March as our Sunday morning audio technician. He is a junior at Fishers Island High School, and comes to us with training in soundboard engineering. Our new employee is a great addition to our staff and a delight to work with. Thanks, Mitchell, for being a quick study and willing to pitch in with other tasks. And congrats on your soon-to-be one year anniversary with us!

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Suggestions for music to be played during worship are always welcome!

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## BIBLE QUESTIONS YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO ASK

**What is the order in which the books of the New Testament were written, and should we consider this in judging their reliability?**

Scholars find it difficult to pinpoint precise dates of origin, but there is general agreement that all 27 books in the New Testament were written between about 50–100 C.E. The earliest documents in this period were likely Paul’s letters to the churches around the Mediterranean (along with other letters), then the gospels and Acts, and then toward the end of the first century, Revelation.

On the question of reliability (which itself could mean different things), it is thought that the gospels were circulated orally long before they were written down, and also that it is quite possible that stories about Jesus were circulated even during his lifetime. In other words, the gospels were not written from distant memories but based on existing material. Another factor to consider is that the first churches by necessity needed to determine the validity of the letters and gospels they read on Sundays, and during the second century had selected as authoritative a set of writings very close to the New Testament we read today.

This is a very quick look at a deep and worthwhile subject!



Please send your questions about the Bible (any kind of question!) to Candy at [candy@fiunionchapel.org](mailto:candy@fiunionchapel.org).

# CHRISTMAS 2015

## HIGHLIGHTS

## Teaching our Children the Meaning of Christmas



A wonderful start to the Christmas season began with our Community celebration. Friends and family gathered **on December 6<sup>th</sup> and sat around** the wonderful tall lighted Christmas tree, while stories about elves, Santa Claus and the birth of baby Jesus were read by Laura Edwards, Aaron Lusker, Benjamin Edwards and Miggie Bryan. After delicious refreshments and the richest hot chocolate you ever drank, we lit the outdoor tree on the corner and gathered around to sing Christmas carols. (Our indoor tree came courtesy of The Rummage, with the lights already on it!)

We thank the library for joining us in putting together this event, our jolly readers, Ryan Rodd as a merry Santa, and Race Rock for gift of the lights which everyone in town seemed to enjoy in the coming weeks.

On December 24, our Christmas Eve service featured the Christmas story, carols and candlelight.

In our Wednesday School classes we talked about the gift from God of his son Jesus, who lived on earth and talked about the best way for us to live our lives. We give gifts to the people we love in memory of that gift God gave us that first Christmas Eve.

For fun we sang Christmas carols with bells to shake while skipping around the social room, “hiding baby Jesus” was a special game enjoyed by both classes. One student hides a figurine of Jesus while the rest of the class waits down the hall. When the door is open the children swarm in looking for a tell-tale part of the figurine. A prize for the winner and be careful, this game could go on for hours and dinner could be missed.

- Miggie Bryan



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**THANK YOU  
TO OUR VOLUNTEER ANGELS FOR  
FLOWERS AND SOCIAL HOUR  
NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER**

**SOCIAL HOUR:**

Anita Fritze	Laura Edwards
Sharon Patterson	Diane Dexter
Liz Burnham	

**FLOWERS:**

Laura Edwards	Ellen Parker
All Advent Flower Donations	



**ARE YOU ON OUR  
EMAIL LIST?**



Kindly send Diane your email address. It is a well-spent

minute since it saves the church both time and money. If you still prefer to receive a paper copy just let Diane know your preference. We won't use your email for anything else. To reach Diane: (631)788-7898 or [fichapel1@gmail.com](mailto:fichapel1@gmail.com). Thank you.

**SILVER LAKE  
CAMPERSHIPS**

By popular demand, the church hopes to again this summer sponsor island children for a week at Silver Lake, the wonderful UCC camp in Connecticut. Donations to this fund will be gratefully received (please write "Silver Lake" in the memo line of your check).

And keep your eye out for a possible campership fundraiser this spring!

**THRIFT SHOP NEWS**

The Thrift Shop will be opening later this spring but goods can be dropped off any time this winter and left in the water-proof box outside.

The theme this year is VOLUNTEER, VOLUNTEER, VOLUNTEER – more details to follow.

Please remember to save egg cartons for the slightly used golf ball purchases that Dave Denison and Mary Pankiewicz work on (washing, drying, polishing, sorting, packing!).

The shop also could use cleaning supplies, plastic storage boxes, paper bags with handles on them and plastic bags.



**Friendly Reminders**

**Donate your old eyeglasses in the basket in the Fellowship Room**

**Save egg cartons and coffee cans for the Thrift Shop!**



**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS INFO**

Winter weather is upon us, and temperatures are falling, but fear not!

Daylight savings begins: Sunday, March 13, 2016 (Set your clocks ahead)...and ends Sunday November 6, 2016 (set clocks back).

# Planning ahead.... Memorial Day Fair

Come join the fun for our traditional Memorial Day fair on Saturday, May 28th from 10 am to 1 pm.

## SPECIALS:

1. Scrumptious homemade goodies at our food table
2. Raffle
3. Craft tables
4. Homemade lunch

**Volunteers will be welcome. Keep your eye out for announcements this spring!**



## UNION CHAPEL ANNUAL APPEAL

Please don't forget to support the Union Chapel with an appeal check made payable to FI Union Chapel, P.O. Box 192, Fishers Island, NY 06390. Thank you all who have supported us already.



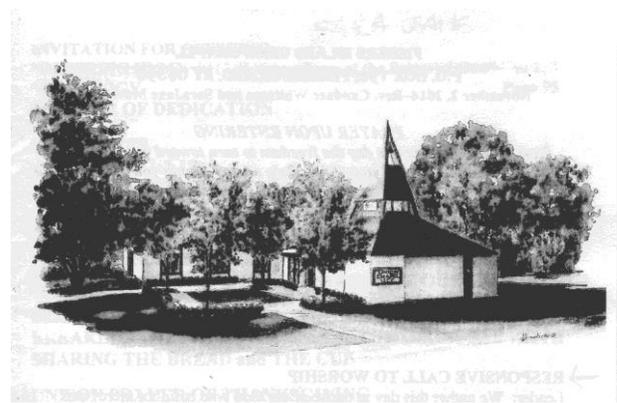
## Do you know what God looks like?

A kindergarten teacher was walking around observing her classroom of children while they were drawing pictures. As she got to one girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was.

The girl replied, "I'm drawing God."

The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like."

Without looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, "They will in a minute."



## Union Chapel Hosts ICB DROP-IN DAY January 28

**All year-round residents  
invited!**

On Thursday, January 28, Union Chapel will be a "drop in" center from 8:30 – 10:00 am and 4:30 – 6:00 pm for islanders to share with their elected ICB representatives their concerns and hopes for the island. Please let your voice be heard and stop by! Your three ICB year-round community representatives will be present: Heather Burnham, Nate Malinowski, and Candy Whitman.

For information about ICB, visit the island website at [www.fishersisland.net](http://www.fishersisland.net) and click on "ICB" on the top menu bar.



# UNION CHAPEL CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

January-February-March 2016

## Each month:

Communion Sunday - 10 am - first Sunday  
Ladies' Potluck Luncheon – noon - first Monday  
Bible Study – Mondays, 4 pm, parsonage  
Library Book Club – 7 pm – second Thursday (at the Library)  
Wednesday School – 2 and 3 pm – each Wednesday  
Deacons' meeting – 10 am second Friday  
Trustees' meeting – 1 pm third Monday  
Senior Lunch – noon – third Thursday

## Lent, Holy Week and Easter:

February 10 - Lent begins  
March 20 - Palm Sunday  
March 24 - Tenebrae Dinner and service  
March 25 - Good Friday  
March 27 - Sunrise Easter Service and breakfast  
Easter Service – 10 am

### **SENDING LOVE AND PRAYERS**

*Union Chapel mourns the loss of*

*Dick Hoch (November 15, 2015) and*

*Harris Parsons (January 19, 2016).*

*Our heartfelt condolences to the Hoch and the Parsons families.*

*May God's comfort and peace surround you in the coming weeks and months.*

*Dick and Harris will be deeply missed.*

*Dick's Memorial Service was held on December 12<sup>th</sup> and the family expresses their thanks to all those who showed their love and respect.*

*A memorial service for Harris is being planned for later this year.*