



# FRIENDS HELPING FRIENDS

Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church

## Pastor's Corner

By Pastor Phil Vasseur

January/February 2007

### "The Brightest Gem"

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The Brightest Gem	1
MV Men's Quartet	2
Pathfinders' Corner	2
Kids' Korner	2
MVC Calendar	3
Family Christmas Celebration	4
Adventurer Club Pics	4
Cantata	5
Adult Christmas Party	5
Kids' Page	6
Our Shared Values	7
Young Adults	7
Live Nativity Pics	8
Edgewood/GBA	8
Birthdays	9
Recipe	9
Points of Interest	10
Polina's Farewell	10
Christmas Around the World	10
SNE Calendar	10
Sabbath School Promotions	11
Church pic and address	12
Poems	12
Recognition	12
Editor's Desk	12

Dear Christ Follower,

**What is the brightest gem in the treasure of the birth of Christ? Some say that it is Christ's self-surrender of His timelessness. It's hard to imagine God exchanging eternity for a calendar! "But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son..." (Galatians 4:4, NIV). The One who created time becomes subject to its demands!**

**Others say that there is a brighter gem. They say it is Christ's self-surrender of His boundlessness. When Jesus entered time, He entered a body. The "boundless One" became bound—confined in a body. He couldn't be everywhere at the same time anymore. The One who could reach across the heavens can now only reach across the table.**

**Still others say there is a brighter gem. They agree that the self-surrender of His timelessness and boundlessness are bright gems in the treasure of the birth of Christ. But there is a brighter one. The brightest gem is Christ's self-surrender of His sinlessness. "God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21, NIV). Jesus exchanged His heavenly crown for a crown of thorns!**

**A lot can be said about the brightness of each of these gems. But do you know what the coolest thing about the birth of Christ is? Here it is. The coolest, brightest, most awesome gem is He did it for you! Christ surrendered His timelessness, boundlessness and sinlessness for you! Now that's pretty bright. My eyes are beginning to squint. Are yours?**

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**

**Love,  
Pastor Phil**



## Merrimack Valley Men's Quartet

Submitted by Lance Forrester



We were treated to more music recently, by the four blended voices of the still un-named male quartet in our midst. They are a group of guys who love to serve the Lord with the blessings of music and who enjoy the challenge of singing quartet style. They came together as a result of Ben and William's interest in forming a quartet at Merrimack Valley Church. Sherri has been a wonderful silent partner. She has been a source of encouragement and help to the group, especially in the early stages, sharing her musical and logistical talents to establish practices and singing engagements too for this fledgling group.

By way of their history in quartet singing, here are some little known facts about the men. Both Steve (Bass) and Lance (Tenor) were members of the Merrimack Valley Quartet some years ago, which also included Ron and Homer Holiman. Lance has sung with many other quartets through the years in the Boston area, as well as one in his youth, which toured his island home of Jamaica for 2 years. Ben has also sung in a male vocal group in his native land Ghana called Blackapella, which had a distinctive A capella sound and has been professionally recorded. William is from Venezuela and he too has sung in a male quartet in his youth in his native home as well.

The men look forward to future opportunities to blend their voices again, in service to the King.

L to R: Ben Osei-Mensah, Lance Forrester, William Carvajal, Steven Dovich  
Photo by Dale Jacobson

## Pathfinders' Corner

Photos by Bob McCall

### Pathfinder News

Submitted by Rita McCall



The past two months have been quite busy. We sponsored a Bible Heroes costume party on October 29. The young people came dressed as their favorite Bible character or Bible item. We saw Angels, Queen Esther, David, and Aaron's rod. The Pathfinders monitored the games that were played. The favorite game was finding Noah's animals. We had a bucket of "crystal goo" that the kids reached in to pull out Noah's animals (crystal marbles) during a countdown. It was messy but fun. Another favorite was slaying Goliath. Goliath's face was posted on the wall and the young people were given 5 "stones" (mini marshmallows) to throw at his face to see if they could hit him between the eyes.

In early November we collected canned goods for our Thanksgiving Baskets. We collected enough food to make baskets for 10 families, stock the emergency food pantry and donate to the Lazarus House. The baskets were supplemented with fresh produce and Market Basket gift certificates provided by the church members. Thanksgiving cards were made by the Women's Ministry as well as the Pathfinders. The families who received the baskets were extremely thankful. This was truly a blessing for all who provided and received.



In December we visited the truly blessed by following the history and story as told by



"Journey to Bethlehem" nativity. We were journey of Mary and Joseph and hearing the the Shepherds and Wise Men.

The club was inspected by our Area Coordinator, Olga Slocum, on December 2. She is always amazed at how much our small club accomplishes and plans.



We are looking forward to a great New Year. Pathfinder Sabbath is scheduled for January 20, 2007 and we have many special things to show and share with everyone. Mark your calendars and come share this special event with us.



## Kids' Korner



Here's a challenge for the kids. In this newsletter are hidden snow-topped pine trees. See if you can find them.

These trees can be anywhere in this newsletter and could be in a different size and/or color.

This is the object that you will be looking for:

Happy Hunting!



Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church

408 Broadway Road  
Dracut, MA 01826

Phone: 978-454-9226  
www.mvsda.org

January 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			

February 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>			

January Calendar of Events

- **3** – 7:00 p.m. Mid-week study, New Community (How to study your Bible)
- **6** – 1:00 p.m. Couples Together – The Best is Yet to Come
- **7** – 3:00 p.m. Pathfinder Meeting–Full Dress Uniform  
5:30 p.m. Pathfinder Staff Meeting
- **9** – 7:00 p.m. Church Business Meeting
- **10** – 7:00 p.m. Mid-week study, New Community (How to study your Bible)
- **12** – 7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
- **13** – 1:00 p.m. Fellowship Dinner  
2:00 p.m. Women’s Ministry Bible Study & Craft  
2:30 p.m. Men’s Ministry
- **14** – 3:00 p.m. Pathfinder Meeting – Field Uniform
- **17** – 7:00 p.m. Mid-week study, New Community (How to study your Bible)
- **19** – 7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
- **20** – Pathfinder Sabbath  
1:00 p.m. Adventurer Staff Potluck  
1:30 p.m. Nursing Home Ministry  
2:30 p.m. Adventurer Staff Meeting  
4:00 p.m. Adventurer Club Meeting
- **24** – 7:00 p.m. Mid-week study, New Community (How to study your Bible)
- **25** – 7:30 p.m. Elder’s Board Meeting
- **26** – 7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
- **27** – 1:30 p.m. Nursing Home Ministry  
4:00 p.m. Adventurer Club Meeting
- **31** – 7:00 p.m. Mid-week study, New Community (How to study your Bible)

February Calendar of Events

- **2** – 7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
- **3** – 4:00 p.m. Adventurer Club Meeting
- **4** – 3:00 p.m. Pathfinder Meeting–Full Dress Uniform  
5:30 p.m. Pathfinder Staff Meeting
- **9** – 7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
- **10** – 1:00 p.m. Fellowship Dinner  
2:00 p.m. Women’s Ministry Bible Study & Craft  
2:00 p.m. Men’s Ministry  
5:00 p.m. Social Committee Meeting
- **11** – 3:00 p.m. Pathfinder Meeting–Field Uniform
- **13** – 7:00 p.m. Church Board Meeting
- **16** – 7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
- **17** – 1:30 p.m. Nursing Home Ministry  
4:00 p.m. Adventurer Club Meeting
- **18** – 5:00 p.m. Valentine Party – Building Fund Benefit
- **21** – 10:00 a.m. Adventurer’s Outing–Children’s Met. Museum
- **22** – 7:30 p.m. Elder’s Board Meeting
- **23** – 7:00 p.m. D.O.G. Puppet Ministry Practice
- **24** – 1:30 p.m. Nursing Home Ministry

Please refer to the church website for current information,  
[www.mvsda.org/index.php3?section=Calendar](http://www.mvsda.org/index.php3?section=Calendar)





### Family Christmas Celebration December 23, 2006



Photos by Dale Jacobson

### Adventurer Club Pictures



Christmas Party

Inspection



Refreshments



Story Time

### Pathfinder-Adventurer Induction Ceremony October 21, 2006



Fun

Photos by Monte Nelson and Steven Dovich



## December 2006 Events

### 12/9/06 – Cantata

*Jesus, Our Emmanuel* – a Christmas Cantata was presented by the combined choirs of Christ Church United and Merrimack Valley.

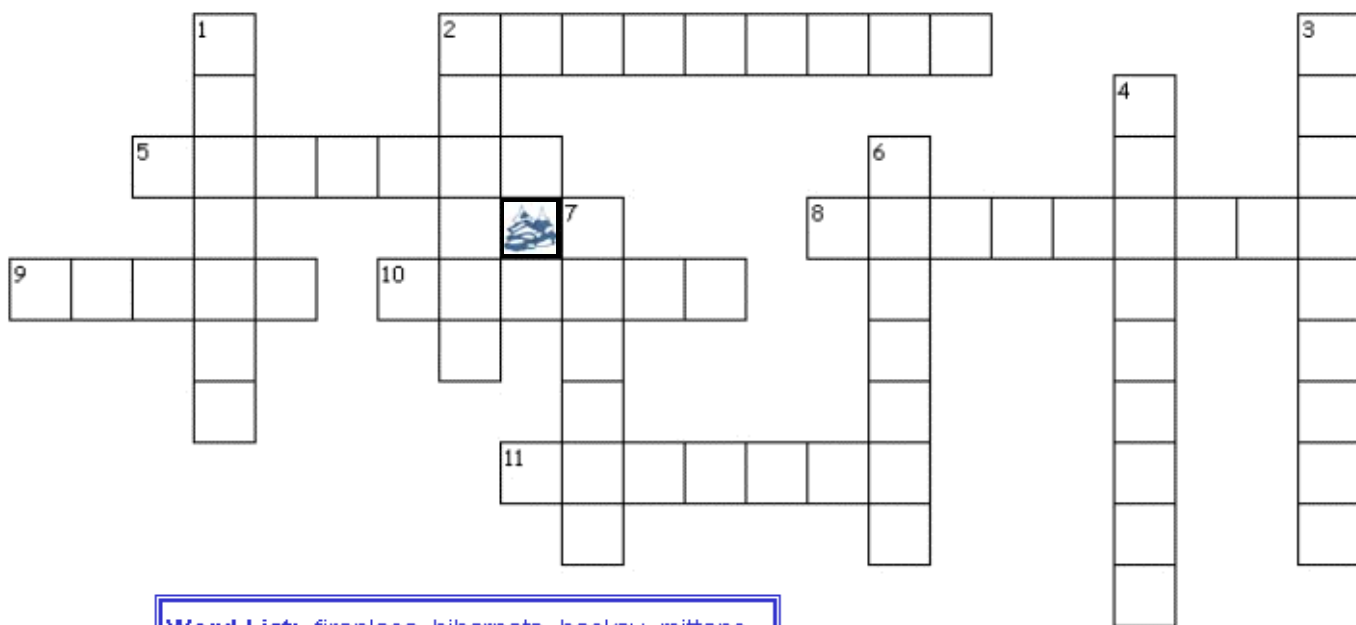


### Adult Christmas Party – Yankee Swap



Photos by Dale Jacobson

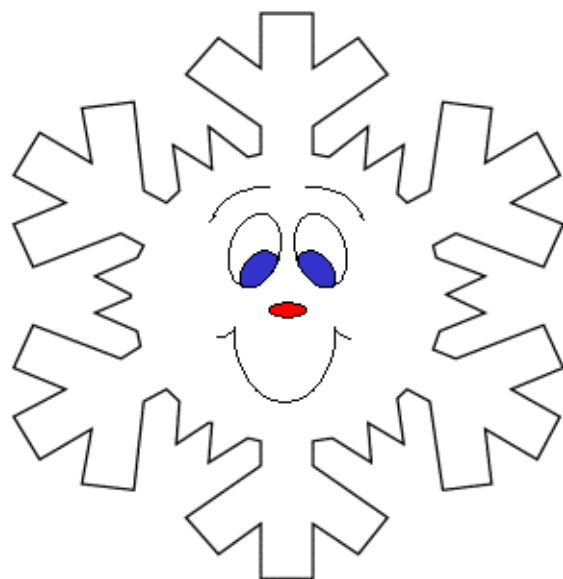
# Winter Crossword



**Word List:** fireplace, hibernate, hockey, mittens,  
penguin, polarbear, skidoo, skiing, snowflake,  
snowman, sweater, white

## Across

2. no two are alike
5. tuxedo with feathers
8. light a fire here to keep warm on chilly days
9. winter's favorite color
10. twelve sticks and one puck
11. frosty fellow with a carrot nose



## Down

1. grandma will knit you one to keep you warm
2. winter vehicle for off road travel
3. some animals do this all winter
4. white teddy
6. covers for cozy hands
7. strap two sticks on your feet and swoosh down a hill

## Our Shared Values

### *Divine Worship*

*Our congregational worship celebrations each Sabbath are God-glorifying, driven by biblical principles, and shared in an atmosphere of loving fellowship.*

**W**e come together, week by week, to turn our attention towards our Creator and God. Like Christians everywhere, we come together as a congregation to worship. Not many years ago, there was little difference in style or structure between us and neighboring Adventist churches. Then as we built our church home, we set out to rebuild our worship on a biblical model and with a style that would be uniquely ours.

The Elders Board began the process with a scriptural study on worship to lay the foundations for what would follow. We explored the context of worship and the different forms in which worship occurred. Next, we looked at how those foundations could be expressed in contemporary culture and thinking. In seeking to make worship relevant to modern thinking, we wanted to remain firmly grounded with biblical worship.

These studies became the starting point for a broadly representative worship committee that discussed how to make Merrimack Valley worship unique and attractive, and not just a carbon copy of the churches in surrounding districts. As we considered each aspect of what is now our worship service, we looked at how it would fit within the foundations of scripture.

We used our Shared Values as building blocks upon that foundation. From Loving Fellowship and Evangelistic Growth we agreed that worship must reach out to those who are not members. In doing so we create an environment that is welcoming and that values all who come through our doors. Gifted Ministries demand that we extend opportunities for worship leadership to as many participants as possible.

Worship at Merrimack Valley draws visitors to our doors because it resonates with relevance and integrity. Our willingness to share the leadership roles contributes to the cultural diversity that we experience each week. Our blended worship brings a vitality of contemporary style that is comfortable even to the traditionalists among us. But most importantly we gather each week, not to receive a handout of blessings, but to bring our praise and worship to offer to God who created and redeemed us.

Submitted by Steven Dovich

## Young Adults Sabbath School

These photos show one of the activities the Young Adult Sabbath School has been doing lately. This group has been meeting not only during the class on Sabbath but also every other Sunday to study the bible, pray for each other, and spend some time together. Since we started meeting we have had many answers to our prayers...Praise the Lord! We would like the church to know what a blessing this group has been for all of us and how God has been working in our lives in amazing ways!



Article and Photos submitted by William and Catalina Carvajal



## Live Nativity December 8, 2006



Photos by Dale Jacobson

### Edgewood Elementary/Greater Boston Academy News

Submitted by Rondi Aastrup, Principal

January and February are busy months at Edgewood/GBA. We have semester exams, and our Student Week of Prayer in January; our Elegant Dinner fundraiser, Christian Love Month, the Academy Choral Clinic, and Constituency Meeting in February.

You are all especially invited to come to our Youth Church on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. This special Sabbath service is organized and presented by GBA youth for young people grades 7-12, but families and friends are invited. There will be a potluck afterwards, so come prepared to feast on God's Word and good food.

February 25 is our annual Elegant Dinner fundraiser. Traditionally, this is the highlight of the school year for parents and friends of EW/GBA. Chef Sualua of Atlantic Union College prepares a feast fit for royalty. Local musicians provide excellent entertainment. And the evening raises upwards of \$40,000 for Christian Education. It's a great event to catch up with old friends as well, so call the school now to make your reservation: 781-438-4253.

**Rondi Aastrup**  
*PreK-12 Principal/Senior English teacher*  
Edgewood Elementary/Greater Boston Academy  
108 Pond Street  
Stoneham, MA 02180  
781-438-4253  
[www.greaterbostonacademy.com](http://www.greaterbostonacademy.com)



*Excellence for the Purpose of Service  
Educating for Eternity*



**January**

3 William Lee  
 4 Madison Esmeal  
 4 Brenton Forrester  
 4 Frankie Sok  
 5 Kelly Kan  
 6 Jimmy Newell  
 7 Rejoice Asomugha  
 10 Angel Clare  
 11 Niki Clare  
 16 Alexander Dovich  
 16 Jose Portillo  
 18 Kellie Esmeal  
 18 Greg Irrgang  
 18 Youda Ly  
 19 Reggie Watson  
 20 John Hodson  
 20 Navy Lim Kan  
 23 Solomon Asomugha  
 27 Jereme Holliman  
 29 Evelyn DeJesus

# Happy Birthday

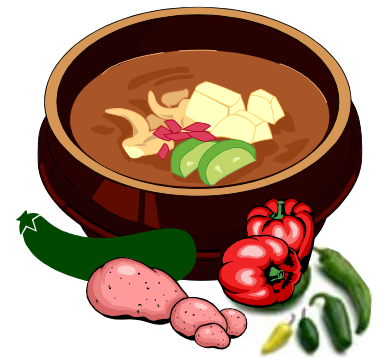
**February**

1 Nalyne Kan  
 5 Markus Guevara  
 7 Krista Dembkoski  
 7 Kim Saxton  
 8 Gary Patch  
 11 Joan Reiss  
 13 Rita McCall  
 13 Junior Candelario  
 19 Chelsea Reuther  
 19 Jennifer Voight  
 19 Johanna Sosa  
 20 Eric Patch  
 22 Gabriella Rocha  
 23 Christian Guevara  
 25 Warren Saxton  
 26 Norma Tatone  
 26 Rob Voight  
 27 Ayzlynn Crowley

**Southwestern Vegetable Stew**

Submitted by Marge Patch

1 Tablespoon oil  
 1 medium onion, coarsely chopped  
 1 garlic clove, minced  
 1/2 lb. new red potatoes, cut into 1/2-inch cubes (1-1/2 cups)  
 1/2 cup Green Giant "Niblets" frozen corn  
 1/4 cup chopped red bell pepper  
 1 (14.5-oz. can white hominy, drained, rinsed)  
 1 (14.5-oz.) can ready-to-serve vegetable broth  
 1 (4.5-oz.) can Old El Paso "Chopped Green Chiles"  
 1 teaspoon chili powder  
 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano leaves  
 1 medium zucchini, quartered lengthwise, cut into 1/4-inch slices (1 cup)  
 4 teaspoons chopped fresh cilantro



Heat oil in large saucepan over medium-high heat until hot. Add onion and garlic; cook 2 to 3 minutes or until onion is crisp-tender and garlic just begins to brown, stirring frequently.

Add all remaining ingredients except zucchini and cilantro. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 10 minutes.

Add zucchini; simmer uncovered an additional 8 to 10 minutes or until zucchini is tender. Sprinkle with cilantro.

---

**Makes 4 (1-1/4 cup) servings**

Prep Time: 20 minutes (Ready in 40 minutes)



## POINTS OF INTEREST

- The SNEC Executive Committee voted to approve a \$5,000 grant to GBA and SLA for secondary technology on November 19, 2006.
- The new conference newsletter, *Southern New England Conference UPLINK*, is in the making. Printed quarterly, the first edition should be distributed in the churches by early January.
- February 18, 2007–Valentine Party will be a building fund benefit. Details to follow.

## Farewell to Polina Kadatska

Polina leaves for Andrews University on January 7, 2006.



Photos by Dale Jacobson

## Christmas Around the World

December 16, 2006

A Christmas Musical presented by the children of Merrimack Valley SDA Church. They shared the wonder and excitement of the Savior's birth as seen through the eyes of children from other countries around the world.



Photos by Dale Jacobson

## Southern New England—Calendar of Events 2007

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
Jan. 14 7:45 a.m.	SNEC Teen Snow Day	Catch the Coach at SNEC Teens only—ages 13-19	Carol Cabrera	978-365-4551, Ext. 20
Jan. 15	Office Closed—M.L. King Day			
Jan. 21	SNEC Executive Committee	Conference Office		
Jan. 21-23	Pastors' Retreat	Camp Winnekeag	Carol Cabrera	978-365-4551, Ext. 20
Jan. 25	SNEC Art Clinic			
Jan.. 29-31	AU Youth Advisory			
Feb. 2-4	AU Young Adult Retreat	Camp Winnekeag	Carol Cabrera	978-365-4551, Ext. 20
Feb. 9-11	SNEC Marriage Weekend	Camp Winnekeag	Carol Cabrera	978-365-4551, Ext. 20
Feb. 14-17	AU/AUC Music Festival			
Feb. 19	Office Closed—President's Day			
Feb. 22	SLA Constituency Meeting			
Feb. 23-25	SNEC Rally			



# Sabbath School Promotions—2006



Photos by Dale Jacobson





**Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church**

**408 Broadway Road  
Dracut, MA 01826**

**Phone: (978) 454-9226**

**[www.mvsda.org](http://www.mvsda.org)**



**God's Winter Psalm**

*Lucille Chisham Campbell*

Silver, shining silver,  
Glistening, falling white.  
Falling oh, so softly,  
Twinkling in the light.

Every tiny flake falls,  
Quietly and so calm.  
Falling in silent rhythm  
To God's winter psalm.

**The New Year**

*Grace Noll Crowell*

The new year lies before us, white and clean:  
So many lovely days in which to live,  
So many hours to spend like silver coins,  
So many precious moments God will give  
For us to use in service and in love,  
In friendliness and sympathy, until  
Our lives may be like fountains, lifting up  
To sparkle in the sunlight and to spill'  
In radiance and beauty all about,  
That other lives may catch the gleam and shine  
Of spraying fountains, lifting, filled with light,  
That will be your life, friend, that will be mine.

O help us live so beautifully, God,  
This year of all the years, that we may be  
Like showers of blessings, falling on mankind—  
Bright fountains, lifting high and clear to Thee.

**“Happy New Year”**



*From the Editor's Desk*



Call Cindy Harris at  
(978) 685-5905, or e-mail at  
cinlee4@comcast.net  
to submit articles for the next newsletter.  
**Next Deadline: Feb. 12th**

**RECOGNITION**

Dale Jacobson, Photo Editor  
Bob McCall, Printer