Message from Reverend Robert**:** Growing up I always looked forward to snow days. Often it would start snowing just before we shut off the lights to go to bed, and first thing in the morning we would get up and turn on the radio to hear if school had been canceled. Once I hit High School the excitement of hearing the name on the radio was less, but I still remember my mother coming quietly into my bedroom to shut off my alarm clock, so I could sleep more, like any good teenager wants to do. Then for many years that excitement was pretty much gone. A snow day for kids in school in Michigan meant that I had to go plow. And once I got to North Carolina, well, we only got snow once or twice down there.

But now that I have children, a bit of that excitement is back. With today’s technology, our phone rings with a recorded message just as soon as they make the decision to cancel school. I had never realized that the decision was often made about 5:00 in the morning. But our phone rings, and wakes us up. Then I go up to my son’s rooms to shut off their alarm clocks, hoping they will sleep a little bit longer. And when they wake up, I can see the excitement in their eyes. No school, fresh snow to play in, and a day to spend with the family, playing games, baking cookies, or whatever else we want to do.

In these short, cold days, I hope that you have moments of excitement. Moments when God tells you to take a day off, to build a snowman, play a game, or bake cookies. And if God does not give snow, I hope you will take your own snow day, and do whatever you have wanted to do, but have not found the time to do. Read a book, take the dog for a long walk, or just sit in front of your wood stove and do nothing.

May God be with you in all that you do this month.

 Don’t forget about PREPARE TO SERVE This is a Saturday, February 22, of workshops, discussion

 groups, and worship that is guaranteed to revive your spiritual self, and inspire you with new ideas for helping

 our church serve members and the community. We will carpool to Pembroke, NH. It starts at 8:30 and

 finishes at 3:30pm Call 225-6647 to register, or go to the UCC website for all info. [www.nhcucc.org](http://www.nhcucc.org) for all

 info. Contact Reverend Robert Vodra, or Michelle Scott for more info.

TD Bank Offers community funds. Attached is a TD Bank flyer (for those of you with email) regarding their revamped Affinity program.  In the past we did not have enough people in the program to reach their minimum quota. TD Bank has eliminated the quota, and is aggressively marketing the program. They will attend a coffee hour in mid February to explain the program and to sign people up.  The Mason Congregational Church Affinity program Code number is A3745. If you signed up in the past, you are still signed up. Anyone with existing accounts with TD Bank only need to call or visit any branch and have them add this code number to your accounts.  To qualify for the $25 rebate for opening a new checking account, you may have to do this at the Brookline branch.  At the coffee hour, TD Bank only needs the name on your accounts and they will look up your accounts on their system on Monday and add the code. Mason church will get $10 yearly for every checking account signed up and $1 for every $1000 in savings or CDs signed up. The starting date will be shortly after the TD Bank visit, and the first payment will be on that date in 2015, for all accounts signed up prior to the start date.

# Plans for more Adult Study groups:

Reverend Robert will be leading a Tuesday morning study group for 6 weeks starting Feb 11. At that time we will decide on a program of study for the next 5 weeks. There is one week where Reverend Robert has another meeting, so the group may decide to carry on without him that week, or postpone the meeting.

Your Christian Education Committee is still working on finding out what our needs are, how to schedule in more events, and would love to hear from you! Contact Marlene Damery mrsdamery@aol.com or Tina Atkinson tina185@aol.com The survey that was sent out did not generate huge responses, so they will be working on a ‘new improved’ survey, and would just love to hear from you. Did you read a book, or hear of a program of study that especially interests you? Or is there a longing in your spiritual life that a study group could help with.

# Don’t Miss our SUPER Annual Meeting on February 2, 2014. After a time of coffee, sandwiches, and more to sustain us, we will begin. Please plan to attend to help make the quorum needed for an effective, and blessedly short annual meeting!

# February 13th Community Supper 5:30 to 7 pm and still free!

Enjoy a meal with your friends, and neighbors—and meet new friends and neighbors.

Coffee House, February 15Performers are Neptune’s Car, a duo with a variety of folk music, stories and skillful instrumentation. Don’t miss them! If you have seen them before, be sure to come and hear their newest creations. As always, there are open mike spots for local performers who share a few songs and show us that talent is all around us.
Come at 6:45 to get on the open mike list, or just enjoy some coffee and snacks before the music starts at 7:30pm til about 9:30. See: <http://thelivingroomcoffeehouse.wordpress.com/>

XC Ski Family Outing on February 9 after worship. We can carpool over to Windblown XC Resort in New Ipswich for a great time on their 40km of trails. Rentals are available, and free lessons will be part of the day. Bring your own equipment, and pay the reduced trail fee for this special day. If no snow or poor conditions, snow date is February 23 Speak to Steve Tamulonis, Keith Williams, or Michelle Scott for this family day on skis.

HELP WANTED**…**Church School Teachers still needed for Winter/Spring semester Thank you to all who volunteer. If you want to assist, email Jennie Jwalsh131@comcast.net or call at 603-291-0097.

News from Search Committee: The faithful Search Committee, is now working on our church brochure to help ‘advertise’ us in the best way for our new minister as well as the community. Thanks to all of the work this committee is doing.

News from UCC: March 28-30, 2014 Celebration IX “Together we can…” A women’s celebration. This is an event for clergy and lay women. Registration info is available from Jan Bittner at jabittner@charter.net or 860-429-3134. Contact Michelle at miscott39@gmail.com or 878-1680. (Note: Michelle plans to attend, and welcomes company.)

# Calling all knitters: Our prayer shawl supply is low. There is yarn at church for the knitting, and the pattern for nice shawls to wrap around with love is at: <http://www.shawlministry.com/instructions.html> Prayer Shawls are not only a gift of love, the power comes in the knitting. Email or call Susan Suokko if you have any questions. Usercat2@comcast.net or 941-920-0270

# Make a note:

 We look forward to the birds and the Suokkos migrating north in April or May.

Prayers for the Milkovits family as they continue healing. Prayers for Cindy Tibbits. Prayers for Kathy Gregg for a great healing/rehab from her hand surgery.

Prayers for Curt and June, friends of Polly Smith.

# Missions are always with us:

* Do you know someone who needs a prayer shawl? Contact one of the Deacons, (Dotsie, Cindy, or Michelle) or call Linda Lannin at 603-878-2470.
* The Food Bank is always in need. As you shop, think of what a person might want to see at the food bank—paper products, coffee, canned fruit, raisins, nuts, are some items that might be special.
* **Do you enjoy coffee hour?** We use fair trade coffee, and support our coffee hour by selling coffee to you for your home use. Mason Church RUNS on FAIR TRADE coffee! Please contact Mark Stroms, 603 305-0023.
* Remember our Laila. Send mail to Laila Washburn, c/o Brett Kivela, Will Road, New Ipswich 03071. Visitors welcome, it would be good to call first. 878-3065
* Do you know someone who needs spiritual support, or other support, of the pastor and deacons? Please call, your church family may be able to help. Leave a confidential message at 603-878-1684.

Martin Luther, 16th century
"This life therefore is not righteousness, but growth in righteousness, not health, but healing, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise. We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it, the process is not yet finished, but it is going on, this is not the end, but it is the road. All does not yet gleam in glory, but all is being purified."