



January 10, 2009 Edition of the MIHN Newsletter

MIHN Host Congregations

Christ Lutheran Church, Natick
Christ the King Lutheran Church,
Holliston
The Dover Church
Federated Church of Ashland
First Congregational Church,
Natick
First Parish Church, Wayland
First Parish in Framingham
Pilgrim Church, Sherborn
St. Paul's Episcopal Church,
Natick
Unitarian Universalist Society of
Wellesley Hills
Unitarian Universalist Area
Church, Sherborn
Wellesley Congregational Church
Wellesley Hills Congregational
Church
MIHN Support Congregations
Fisk United Methodist Church,
Natick
Holy Spirit Catholic Community,
Wellesley
Peace Lutheran Church, Wayland
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church,
Wellesley
St. Theresa's Catholic Church,
Sherborn
Sha'arei Shalom, Ashland
Temple Beth Elohim, Wellesley
Temple Beth Torah, Holliston
Temple Or Atid, Wayland

Note from the Board

Most of our Board members have been working for the past six years toward the vision that is now a reality. We come into 2009 with enormous gratitude and awe for all that has been accomplished! We have countless people and organizations to thank; many of those are listed on the pages of this newsletter. We are especially grateful for our dedicated and enthusiastic staff, Beth Cooper and Marcia Praver. They expertly oversee the day to day operations of our entire program, care for our guests, work with referral agencies, provide training ETC... They are a superb team and we are extremely blessed by their commitment.

As you know, there is always work to be done in any social service organization. We are far from the exception being a fledgling organization! My goal for 2009 is to bring on additional Board members with public relations and fundraising experience who are willing to work with us to improve our financial security and raise our profile within the community. If you are one of those individuals, we would very much like to hear from you! Please contact me at candace@sutlink.com or Judy Mongiardo at jmongiardo@earthlink.net

My personal thanks to all of our many volunteers and coordinators and especially to my fellow Board members. May we all enjoy a healthy and peace-filled 2009.

Sincerely,

Candace Sutcliffe

Director's Letter

There is so much excitement in producing MIHN's first newsletter. There have been so many "Firsts" since MIHN opened its doors on October 5th that it is difficult to narrow down what information to include; our first family, congregations' first host week, volunteers' first experiences, first fender bender in the MIHN van (this one I can probably leave out).

Without hesitation, first and foremost for me is to extend my sincere thanks to the many of you who invested so much time, energy, and passion to make the Metrowest Interfaith Hospitality Network a reality. It was your incredible commitment that drew me to the Network and continues to inspire me exponentially. From the Board of Directors, to the Coordinators, to the Volunteers on the frontlines, I am amazed by the tremendous capacity of your kindness and generosity.

I have shared the following story at trainings and meetings but I think it bears repeating as it so wonderfully demonstrates the strength of our network. Upon the arrival of our first family, we sent out an email to the coordinators requesting assistance in obtaining car seats and strollers. Literally, a couple of hours after sending that email, the items requested were not just donated, but delivered to the day center. The only appropriate response was "WOW".

I am confident that the "WOW"s will be many throughout our journey as a Network Community; a journey I am honored to share with all of you.

Warm Regards,

Beth

Don't miss your opportunity to be part of the

MIHN Cookbook



We are in the process of compiling recipes from our Network Volunteers and Families to create the MIHN Cookbook as part of our spring fundraising kickoff.

Send your favorite recipe to Marcia at: marcia@metrowestihn.org

MIHN's First Family

Daisha and Vidal: Bridging the Gap.

Our first family (of seven!) was lively, engaging, and grateful. They came to us when they had nowhere else to turn and for 2 months, we as a community provided Vidal, Daisha, Brenda, Vidal Jr., Absalon, Rebekah, and Caleb with shelter, warmth, support, and fellowship when they needed it most.

I think the experience is best summarized by Jeff, a UU Area Church volunteer, as he reflects on sharing Thanksgiving with our first family;

"It was a truly rewarding experience for me and my family. After we ate, we all cleaned up together. No one asked anyone to do anything in particular; we just all lent a hand together, much as any family does at the end of a meal. Then, we all just stayed in the kitchen, sitting around the center island talking. And, no one left. It was fun. It was fellowship. It was family."

express their gratitude for our, and the other churches' hospitality shown his family. And then he brought it all together for me. He said that first of all, we are all family in the eyes of the Lord.

And looking upon all those crammed into the kitchen, he said that clearly our church was a family, come together to share our love with each other. And, he thanked me and asked me to thank all those in our church for welcoming his family into our family on a day that is meant to be shared among family. I was touched by his sentiment as well as the correctness of his words. We are a family – the members of our church – one in which we are loved and accepted and celebrated to be members of. And, Vidal was right. His family had been welcomed into ours and is now a part of it."

Jeff

Note: Vidal keeps in contact with Marcia and me and he let us know that they spent Christmas in Springfield with Vidal's family.

Looking upon the scene in the packed kitchen, Vidal said to me that it is hard for his family to

Welcome to **Sha'arei Shalom, Ashland** MIHN's newest Support Congregation

In the Spotlight: MIHN Day Center

Through the generosity of Pastor Nancy Hitt and The First Baptist Church, MIHN's Day Center has a place to call home. Located in the center of Natick on 13 Common Street, MIHN maintains its office, guest lounge, and guest shower facilities. Open 365 days a year from 7am to 5pm, the Day Center is the home-base for MIHN families. It is where school age children catch the bus, adult guests search for housing and employment, and families relax and regroup on the weekends.

The Day Center would not be possible without the tremendous efforts of Mike Donoghue and Dave Emslie. Mike and Dave are responsible for the successful coordination of the construction projects. Dave also contributed countless hours of labor and oversight in direct construction work. It was through their efforts that the following companies donated their labor and/or materials in constructing the Day Center bathroom: Shawmut Construction Company, DR Howard, Northeast Electrical & Mechanical, G&R Tile, Pro Scanning, Easton Concrete Cutting, Universal Construction, Dellorfon Electrical Co., Jennifer Luoni and Kamco. The generosity of these companies combined with a \$10,000 grant from the Barnes Fund for Mission and Justice Ministries of the Massachusetts Conference of the UCC and a \$1,000 grant from The English Fund of the Crossroads Community Foundation made this achievable.

Thanks to the giving of many, the Day Center is fully furnished and functional with couches, refrigerator, toaster oven, kitchen table and chairs, microwave, cribs, changing table, etc... We are currently pursuing funding for additional storage cabinets that are needed at the Center, as well as for our new and exciting upcoming project: Construction of a laundry room!

*Day Center
Volunteers Needed.
We calculated that if
every MIHN
Volunteer signed up
for ONE 3 hour
block PER YEAR our
weekend schedule
would be covered!
To sign up contact
Laraine at
lmarthinsen@comcast.net*

We gratefully acknowledge the following grants that assisted in providing MIHN's start up funds:

Central Congregational Church of Newton Legacy Fund	\$3,000
Fund for the Unitarian Universalist Social Responsibility	\$2,800
Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare Foundation	\$1,000
Highland Street Foundation	\$1,000
Liberty Mutual Foundation	\$7,500
Paul and Phyllis Fireman Charitable Foundation	\$3,000
The Barnes Fund for Mission and Justice Ministries of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ	\$10,000
The English Fund of the Crossroads Community Foundation	\$1,000
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans	\$3,200

To our Member Congregations,

The opening of the Metrowest Interfaith Hospitality Network would not have been possible without the tremendous financial contributions and support of MIHN's Member Congregations.

It is through the Congregations' generous donations that the foundation of the Network's budget was realized.

We thank you for your continued support as we work together to provide those in need with a warm, safe and welcoming place to call home.



Guest Center Lounge at the Day Center



Absalon in the Day Center shower

MIHN extends **Many Thanks to Good News Garage** for their donation of the MIHN Van! GNG accepts donated vehicles, reconditions them and awards them to low-income New England residents. www.GoodNewsGarage.org

MIHN extends **Many Thanks to James G. Bruce, CPA of Daniel Dennis & Company LLP** for accounting services provided in 2007.

Should you wish to donate to MIHN

Please complete the following and mail to:
MIHN
PO Box 847
Natick, MA 01760

Name _____ **Email** _____

Address _____

Amt. _____ **Check#** _____

Thank You!