**Canaan Union Church**

**314 Main Street**

# Canaan, Maine

**May 20-26, 2012**

**Sunday School 9:30 AM**

**Sunday Morning Worship 10:15 AM**

**Pastor: Diana J. Perkins**

**Send your letters to: Canaan Union Church**

 **P. O. Box 1642**

 **Waterville, Maine 04903-1642**

**We thank you and the Lord Jesus Christ for the many blessings that come our way through his people that support our ministry.**

**Being raised in a home where both parents are pastors has both benefits and disadvantages. One benefit was the love for the Bible and the knowledge that came with hearing the word of God daily.**

**However, the disadvantage was that the members of the church became ears and eyes for our parents. They felt a sense of duty to be on the look out for any inappropriate behavior displayed by the “preacher’s kids” and never missed an opportunity to report the misdeeds promptly to our father. I resented having so many people who were “concerned” for my well being. Early in life, I learned that if I played my cards right, I could even the score by playing harmless pranks. My schemes were successful many times because I used innocent bystanders who could take the blame without any consequences. Causing chaos without getting caught became my game. Sometimes the strategy worked and other times I regretted I had embarked on this journey as it backfired at times and I suffered the consequences.**

**As an adult, I still enjoyed those moments when I could bring the house down with laughter by playing harmless pranks. One year as it approached spring time, I thought of a way to use my magic on a couple of pastors including my mother.**

**I thought of all the fun our youth group had when I was a child making and hanging May baskets on the first day of May. It was called May Day and the idea was to decorate and create a basket, fill it with penny candy and get a group of friends together to pay the friend a visit. One would set the basket down on the front door step, ring the doorbell and shout, “May basket on “ and the recipient would then have to chase all of us until the last one was caught and then we all sat down together and shared the goodies.**

**Everyone enjoyed the fun and it was always a great surprise when it was my name called at the front door. However, the tradition died out with our generation and this particular year, I thought it would be a great time to revive it.**

**I called some of the ladies from our church and asked them if they would be interested in hanging a May basket on my mother for May Day. Most of them had heard of May Day, but had never participated in playing this game before. I told them how much fun it would be to take a wicker clothes basket, fill it with all kinds of goodies and hang it on my mother for May Day. I explained the rules that she would have to chase all of us and since she lived on upper Main Street, I thought if we all headed in different directions, we could keep her running for quite a while. I got six young volunteers who were enthusiastic about this grand idea and we worked together on that morning filling the basket. Together we carried the basket to her front door and rang the bell. My mother came to the door and we shouted, “May basket on Sister Webber.” Her eyes got big as she saw the huge basket filled with groceries, candy and a few “suckers’ and she hesitated as if she was deciding whether or not to play our game. However, she started running towards Rose Gould, and Rose took off like a shot, down the hill towards the business section of Dexter. Mom chased her and finally caught up with her in front of Remy’s store. All of us were laughing as we watched two women running down Main Street, one in hot pursuit of the other. Shoppers stepped aside as the two runners whizzed by them. They looked like they were practicing for the Boston Marathon. Rose was the only one Mom chased as it took so long to catch her that we didn’t have the heart to make her chase the rest of us. Both of them were tired and winded by the time that Mom caught up with Rose. Mom earned the basketful of treats. I invited all of them over to my house for snacks and though it was a bit ridiculous, it was harmless and sometimes it is appropriate to make people wonder what in the world is going on around town. It was a memory that we laughed about for years. It was worth seeing my mother step back in time and just enjoys childish fun. It didn’t happen often, but that May Day was one to remember.**

**The Bible has some wonderful stories where God showed a sense of humor. I love the story of the Canaanites who hardened their hearts against God and grieved him because of their sins. A song writer wrote about the incident and we use to sing it at our church. God didn’t compel them to go against their will; he just made them willing to go. By sending an army of hornets to their camps they dispersed willingly and quickly. See Exodus 23:28.**

**When Balaam wouldn’t listen to God’s commandment, God sent an angel to block his way. His donkey refused to move upon Balaam’s command and he hit his donkey. When Balaam insisted on moving forward, the donkey moved towards the side crushing Balaam’s foot. It was painful and Balaam started beating his donkey. God opened the donkey’s mouth and he started talking to Balaam asking him why he was treating him badly when he was a faithful donkey. See Numbers 22:28.**

**In 2 Kings7:1-18, there is a delightful story of God providing for his people. Four lepers sat outside the gate of the city of Jerusalem. The Syrian army was encamped around the city holding the people hostage. The Israelites were hungry and the people were desperate for God to deliver them. The Lord caused the Syrian soldiers to hear horses and chariots and a great host coming so they fled the area with great haste and fear. The four lepers reasoned among themselves that they had nothing to lose by leaving their area and approaching the Syrian camp. They didn’t realize that it had been deserted. They were destined to die anyhow and they were willing to take a gamble that the Syrians would spare their lives and give them something to eat. When they approached the camp, they were amazed that it had been deserted and everything had been left behind. The lepers hid silver and gold and ate all they could hold. They went back to send word to the king in Jerusalem. The king was amazed and the prophecy that Elisha had spoken concerning God supplying food for the people the next day came to pass just as he promised.**

**Men have always tried to outsmart the Lord and to put their plans in motion. Working with God on your side is most profitable.**