**Canaan Union Church**

**314 Main Street**

# Canaan, Maine

**October 14-20, 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**

**I am very thankful for the notes and cards that we receive from our faithful partners in ministry. Thank you!**

**Some great moments occur from time to time in a person’s life. When the great moment involves reaching out to help another person succeed or overcome difficulties in their lives, the blessing is twofold; one for the part that you played in helping others and the joy the recipient has in being victorious in overcoming hardships. Both rejoice and are happy.**

**There has been many times in my life that I felt defeated and alone. There have been seasons in my memory where I could not see any way that I could ever overcome the problems that I faced. However, during those times, someone always came to my side and encouraged me that a better day was just ahead; just believe. The sun would shine again if I would just have faith in God and keep walking believing that even though I didn’t see Him and perhaps didn’t feel his presence, that He was in fact right beside me. I have learned through the years that it true that God never leaves us nor forsakes us and when we are overcome with grief, an antidote for sorrow is found in reaching out to help others who are struggling. Somehow you forget the pain of your own situation when you focus on helping a hurting person overcome their problems. It is wonderful to share in their victory!**

**I received a letter from a prisoner a while ago. It was a very interesting letter. The man had been given one of my bulletins to read by another inmate. He enjoyed reading it and started looking forward to reading them every week. This went on for a period of time and one day the person who was supplying the bulletin left the prison and the inmate wanted to continue reading the papers so he sent his name to me and asked to be put on the mailing list. Several years went by and I had no other correspondence from him. A few months ago, I sent a note out in the bulletins inviting people to write to me. I received his letter and it was very touching. He said that the bulletins have made a difference in the way that he views life now. After reading them for a few years, his thinking has changed. He is teaching illiterate inmates how to read; he takes care of the flower gardens around the prison; he has let go of the negative attitudes that had caused him so many problems in his past. He has become a kinder, more caring individual and has built a relationship with God. Tears came to my eyes when I read his words. I thought back over my life when God placed individuals in my path to teach me to forgive, trust, and to let go of the negativity that controlled my emotions. I rejoice in the peace and joy that I have in my life and in my relationships with others. Because of the transformation that I have experienced in my own life, I have the desire to help others gain the same freedom from the shackles of the past that I have discovered. I am amazed at the outcome of the power of God.**

**Our daughter, Ania, wrote to me these words, “ Mom, I treasure any advice you give me and take to heart the wonderful stories you've told,” Our daughter, Cherie, wrote, “ I love you, Diana, and I can’t wait to come home for Thanksgiving to be with you and Dad.” My young grandchildren in Arizona wrote, “ Come play with us, Grammy. We can go to Peter’s Pizza and have fun.”**

**The seeds that we sow today will bring forth fruit as the years go by. These children, though they are far away from my touch, still are bonded to me because I have taken time to let them know how important they are to me. When we place high value on people, they learn to love themselves and they mirror love back to us.**

**I read a story of a man who had a very difficult childhood due to illness. He had polio as a seven year old and was placed in an iron lung in a hospital room with other children who had polio also. He felt very alone and started crying because he was so sick. A kind doctor came to his bedside, cleaned him up and changed his bed. He hugged the little boy and told him that God loved him. The child still had tears in his eyes and when he looked up, he saw tears in the doctor’s eyes also for he was touched by the boy’s plight. That act of kindness remained with that child and he never forgot the healing touch of a doctor who offered a helping hand to a sick boy. Later when an inconsiderate teacher kicked him out of his class because he wasn’t up with the other students, the boy stopped going to school. He never learned to read until his two sons were adults. Yet the seeds of love that had been placed there by his family and the doctor helped him to have courage to overcome illiteracy and hardships and he eventually became a millionaire and wrote a book to help others who suffered shame and lost opportunities in life from lack of education. He began to volunteer in prisons helping men get their GED and he receives much satisfaction from reaching out to others who have suffered in the same areas that he had in his youth. God’s love has touched his life and given him opportunities to pass on the gifts that he has to enable others to succeed. His name is Tom Harken and he wrote the book “A Millionaire’s Secret.”**

**If you read through the Bible, you may notice how often that God takes the barriers that seem impossible to break through and He reveals his power by making a way where there is no way. A road where there is no path and He shines light into darkness. When people call out on the name of the Lord, He gives power to overcome the enemy of our souls. Young David was used to kill the giant, Goliath, with a stone and a homemade slingshot. Gideon won the battle with the Midianites with 300 men and lamps and trumpets. Jesus spoke and winds and the boisterous sea obeyed his voice. Fish fell into the nets of Jesus’ disciples and they didn’t know how that it happened. People were amazed that ignorant fishermen were changed into preachers of the word of God and the power of God used them to convert people all over the world to Christianity. Evil people couldn’t stop them by threatening them, by throwing them into prison, or even putting them to death. Persecution only caused the flames of truth to spread even more and to call people to join the army of the Lord. When Jesus Christ does a work in a person’s heart, it makes him want to share the good news with others. That is the reason that I continue to write these bulletins every week. I want you to experience the joy of knowing Jesus Christ and the power of prayer in your life.**

**Pastor Diana**