**Canaan Union Church**

**314 Main Street**

# Canaan, Maine

**January 27-February 02, 2013**

**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**

**This past week, I looked over all the notes, cards and letters that I received during the Christmas season and I just want to say “Thanks for all the encouragement you sent my way.”**

**John Blanchard sat nervously watching the clock while waiting at Grand Central Station for a lady with whom he had corresponded with for over thirteen months. She had promised to meet him here tonight and he was to look for a red rose pinned to her lapel. He would know Miss Hollis Maynell by the rose.**

**John thought back to his first encounter with Hollis. He had visited a library in Florida and had picked up a book that soon caught his interest. It wasn’t the words in the book that interested him, but the notes that were written in the margins that caught his attention. The beautiful penmanship and the careful wording told him that the author had a keen mind and insightful soul. He flipped the book to the front page and there he saw the original owner’s name, “Miss Hollis Maynell” inscribed there.**

**John began a careful search and with time and effort, he located the current address for Miss Maynell. She lived in New York City and knowing that he would be shipped out the following day to fulfill his military obligation during World War II, he quickly wrote a letter to her introducing himself and asking her to correspond with him while he was at war. For thirteen months, they had written back and forth and they bonded a close friendship through written correspondence. They had expressed love for each other and John had asked for her picture, but she had refused. She felt that if he truly loved her that it wouldn’t matter what she looked like. Romance was expressed and John would now meet the woman with whom he had shared so much of his thoughts and feelings with while he had been at war.**

**Now he was home and they had planned on meeting here at the Grand Central Station in New York at 7:00 PM. The palms of his hands felt sweaty as he waiting anxiously for the train to pull in. He loved this girl with his heart and he had made up his mind that her looks didn’t matter for he had connected with a soul mate.**

**Suddenly people were coming towards him and John’s eyes fell upon the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. She was tall and slim, dressed in a light green suit, and her long blonde hair lay back in curls from her delicate ears; her eyes were a deep blue. Her lips and chin had a gentle firmness and John was so taken in by her that he almost forgot to look for the rose. He stopped short as he realized that there was no rose in her lapel.**

**A few feet behind her walked a matronly type woman who looked to be in her late 40’s. Her gray hair was tucked under a worn hat and John couldn’t help but feel disappointed as he noted that this must be Hollis for a red rose was pinned to her lapel. She was more than plump and her thick-ankled feet were thrust in low heeled shoes. The girl in the green suit disappeared and there was not much time for John to decide what to do. He gripped the small worn blue leather copy of the book that identified Miss Maynell to him. He realized that though this would not be a relationship that would bond them as man and wife, he still treasured the friendship that had been established between them. He quickly stepped forward and saluted the woman who was now standing next to him. “I’m Lieutenant John Blanchard and you must be Miss Maynell. I am so glad you could meet me; would you please accompany me to dinner?”**

**The lady’s face broadened into a tolerant smile. “I don’t know what this is all about, son,” she said, “but the lady in the green suit who just walked by asked me to please wear this red rose on my coat. She said if you asked me to dinner to tell you that she is waiting for you at the restaurant across the street. She said it was some kind of a test, whatever that means.”**

**John smiled as he realized that this was just the beginning for him and he would have a life time to figure out and understand the wisdom of Miss Hollis Maynell. He certainly intended to ask her to be his wife. He didn’t waste any time making his way across the street where Hollis was waiting in the entry way.**

**The Bible says that “Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart.” How often people make judgments before they get to know a person or they make snap judgments based on second hand information.**

**Think of the judgments that were passed on to Jesus Christ. Look at Luke 11:15. The people marveled that Jesus was able to cast out demons and bring healing to the people. Some of them remarked that he was able to perform miracles because he was in league with Beelzebub, the prince of demons. The Bible tells us that he was not handsome for his countenance would not draw anyone to him. The chief priests called him a blasphemer because he made himself equal to God. They judged him to be chief among sinners even though no one could find any error in his character. Judas, the disciple who betrayed him, even proclaimed, “I have sinned in betraying the blood of an innocent man.” See Matthew 27:4.**

**His beauty was cloaked in the form of a man and only those who desired to know God intimately would understand and follow after him. The King of the Jews was born to humble parents, laid in a manger where animals were fed, was raised as a lowly carpenter, yet his wisdom confounded the most educated religious leaders of his time. When Jesus asked, “Who do men say that I am?” the answers varied. Some say you are Elijah, others say you are John the Baptist and then some say you are a prophet.” Jesus said, “Who do you say that I am?” Peter said, “You are the Christ, the Messiah, and the Anointed One.” Mark 8:28.**

**God wants our worship to be holy and in tune with him for who he is, not for the gifts that he gives to us. True love lasts forever and will stand the test of time and tribulations. Many followed Jesus for the loaves and the fish that He provided for them. Others followed him to see the miracles and witness the events of the day.**

**There were those who desired more for they wanted to be a follower of the Lord. Those who asked, knocked and sought after him found him to be all that they would ever need, not just for this life, but for eternity.**

**Jesus said to Thomas, “Blessed are you, Thomas, because you believed when you saw me. Blessed and happy and to be envied are those who have never seen me and yet have believed.”John 20.**