**Canaan Union Church**

**314 Main Street**

# Canaan, Maine

**March 17-23, 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**

**I appreciate all the support that we receive from our friends and family. Those who have ordered my book entitled “Delightful Stories from the Heart of Maine” should receive it by March 30.**

**Recently I listened to a musical performance featuring a gentleman in his sixties and his eighteen year old daughter on my computer. They had been encouraged to enter a singing contest by someone who walked by while they were performing on the street corner of New York City. As I watched the two of them connect with each other during their performance, I couldn’t help but notice the spiritual electrodes that were present during their presentation.**

**The teenager spoke about the fact that she and her dad are street performers and she loves spending time with her father. He is her mentor and best friend and he supports her in everything that she does in life. She had always dreamed of singing in front of a large audience and now her dream had come true. Her father’s baritone voice blended with her angelic soprano notes and together they made beautiful music. Though this was their first public appearance, no one would have ever guessed that to be the case. The young girl followed her father’s cue and their voices blended flawlessly. As their eyes met during the performance, it appeared that the girl drew strength from the most important man in her life, her dad.**

**As the last notes died down to a silent moment, the crowd stood and there was a loud outbreak of applause.**

**The judges were overwhelmed with emotions and some of them had tears in their eyes as they observed the father embrace his daughter and hold her close to his chest. Her moment had come and he was willing to give all the credit and appreciation to his daughter. He had encouraged her, trained her and practiced singing with her on the street corners in anticipation for this moment. When the announcement came that they were the winners of the contest, everyone was ecstatic with joy.**

**My mind went back to the years that my parents did street ministry. They bought a small green bus and installed large horns on the top. Every Sunday afternoon, we set up chairs, musical instruments and members of the congregation gathered behind Tillson’s Hardware store in Dexter and the music flowed all over town. I played the accordion and sang with my sister, RosaLee. Because our parents were there and so enthused about the spreading of the gospel, we both were very much involved. Thinking back, my sister was very shy and I wouldn’t have dared to sing on the streets if it hadn’t been for my parents being so enthusiastic about spreading the gospel through music. The streets lined with people who came to listen to the guitars and accordions and the blended voices of young people harmonizing.**

**My dad gave a short sermon before we packed up everything and left until the following Sunday when we gathered there again.**

**Later we held services down in West Garland and we always had neighbors and people passing by who stopped and listened to the service.**

**It was all a part of training and passing the torch to the next generation. Like this wise dad, my father took time to teach us the Bible, provide us with instruments and encouraged us to sing together. Now this loving father had shared his love for music, encouraging his daughter to join him on the street corners to share their talents and passion for music to whoever was willing to stop and listen. My parents did similar things with hope that there were people who received the gospel message through their efforts.**

**Children who have parents that spend time nurturing, training and encouraging them have a great advantage over those whose parents do not praise or support them.**

**Over the years of my ministry, I recall many times people sharing with me the sense of loss in their lives because their parents gave them no encouragement to pursue their dreams. Not only did they not show them a path to reach their goals, but many discouraged them by telling them they were not smart enough, the idea was stupid, they didn’t have the money to help them, and many other “wet blanket” comments were thrown over the young person’s desires causing them to set aside their goals and dreams.**

**Years later, these people are bitter and hurt because they never forgot the hurtful comments of their parents, teachers, or other people who crushed their spirit.**

**Colossians 3:21 admonishes fathers not to do things to make their children bitter lest they become discouraged. Ephesians 6:4 commands fathers not to push their children to the point that they get exasperated and angry, but to train them up in the admonition and instruction of the Lord.**

**The Bible speaks about blessing the children. There is a wonderful story in Genesis chapter 48. Israel was now old and**

**suffered from poor eyesight. Joseph brought his two sons to visit his father. Joseph was a beloved son of Israel who had been sold into slavery by his jealous brothers many years before. However, Joseph trusted and lived for God and God brought the family together in the land of Egypt where Joseph had been elevated to being a ruler next to Pharaoh. Israel, his father, was nearing the end of his life and he asked who the boys were who had come to see him. Joseph answered, “These are the sons that God has given to me.” Read what Israel’s reply was, “Bring them to me that I may bless them.” Joseph brought the young lads near to his father who embraced them and kissed them. Israel said, “I never expected to see your face again, and now God has allowed me to see my grandsons as well.”The blessings that Israel pronounced on Joseph and his sons are interesting and thought provoking.**

**His love for his beloved son never diminished even though many years passed where he was separated from him.**

**I pray that everyone who reads this will take time to bless others and build them up. Your encouragement and your positive attitude might be just the thing that helps turn failure into success for another person. Everyone needs a helping hand and we are admonished to build one another up. As we do for each other, so we do for the Lord Jesus Christ. Our children are our inheritance from the Lord. Bless them; pray for them; love them; and the rewards will come back to you many times over.**

**Pastor Diana**