

# Parish of the Good Shepherd

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING TO RELIGION IN AMERICA? A new series in the Forum

The signs of change are everywhere. Almost every sizable city in America now has a mosque and a Hindu temple. While interest in religious questions has never been higher, trust in religious institutions has never been lower. Empty churches are being sold as condos, and yet religious faith is almost a requirement for political office. The percentage of Americans professing no religious faith has been growing year by year, and yet even atheists form organizations which in many ways resemble churches. After decades of decline in mainstream American denominations, evangelicals are now faced with evidence of fewer people in their churches. And in spite of some Roman Catholic Churches being revived by Hispanic immigrants, one out of every ten Americans is a former Roman Catholic.

What's going on here? Is America repeating the pattern of religious decline we've seen in Europe for the past 40 years? Are we seeing something like the "Quiet Revolution" of the 1960's which turned the province of Quebec in Canada from being one of the most Catholic regions in the world to being one of the most secular in just over ten years? Perhaps. But there are other signs, too. America continues to be one of the most religious countries in the world, and even among the ruins of formerly powerful religious institutions there are signs of great energy and renewal. There are churches, Protestant and Catholic, north and south, "conservative" and "liberal" (how I hate those labels!) which are growing while others right across the street are dying. Why?

These are some of the questions Regina and I will be trying to answer in a Forum series beginning on September 16. Come and join us. And come with your own questions, too.

The Forum meets at 11:30 (right after coffee time) in the Loring Room. Childcare will be available.

GTW

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The first few Sundays in September are a great time to invite someone to come to church with you. The energy is great and since so many people are back after some time away, newcomers are likely to feel less conspicuous.

<p>Please note: New email address as of September 1<sup>st</sup>: <a href="mailto:office@goodshepherdnewton.org">office@goodshepherdnewton.org</a> Mary Ann's email address is now: <a href="mailto:ce@goodshepherdnewton.org">ce@goodshepherdnewton.org</a> And check out the new parish website: <a href="http://www.goodshepherdnewton.org">www.goodshepherdnewton.org</a></p>
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# PARISH NEWS –

## September 5, 2012

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WEEKDAY EUCHARIST ☩  
WEDNESDAY 7:15 a.m.

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### VESTRY

Senior Warden: Brian McTigue

Junior Warden: Chris Sole

Treasurer: Ted Ketterer

Assistant Treasurer: Gail Murphy

Clerk: Terry Robinson

To January 2013

Betty Blume

Loring Conant

Emily Guimaraes

To January 2014

Kathy Hassinger

Ken Rothwell

Jeff Russelkk

To January 2015

Peter Barber

Ann Honeycutt

Jim Nauen

### NEW DIRECTORY

Work is being done on creating a new parish directory for fall of 2012. If your email is not in the current directory and you would like it included in the new one please let the office know by Sept. 15, or if your email has changed please let the office know so it will appear correctly in the new directory.

### BIBLE STUDY

The Tuesday evening Bible Study group meets each week in the Loring Room beginning at 7:00 p.m. Newcomers are always welcome. Study guides are available on the tract table in the Common Room.

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN  
EDUCATION

### SEPTEMBER DATES

9 - 9:45 AM Church School Registration (details below)

9:45 AM: Nursery Open

10:00 AM: Church School for Children K-5<sup>th</sup> grade

(in Loring Room)

Middle School Youth into Church

16 - 9:45 AM Nursery Opens

9:45 AM: Level II Open and Teachers in classrooms

10:00 AM: 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> gr to Loring Room

6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> gr to Youth Room

**Welcome!** Church School and Nursery

Registration will take place this Sunday, September 9 at 9:45 AM. Download and complete the Registration Forms in advance from the new Parish website:

[www.goodshepherdnewton.org](http://www.goodshepherdnewton.org) Once on the site, click on "Children & Youth" in the upper navigation bar - you will see the link to the forms in the left sidebar on that page. Registration Forms will continue to be taken on a rolling basis.

**Teachers** will be in classrooms by 9:45 AM next Sunday, September 16:

- Mary Ann Stewart in Level II Atrium (age 6-8 group)
- Jen Pachus in Loring Room (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade group)
- Julia Johnston-Ketterer downstairs in the Youth Room (6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> grade group)

Please note that **Level I Atrium** (age 3-6 group) will not begin until Sunday, October 14 (more details about this schedule will be mailed to families).

**Confirmands** and their families are asked to hold Sunday, September 23 from 5-7 PM for a potluck - Truman, Regina and Mary Ann will provide an overview of the next two-year confirmation program and families will have an opportunity to visit. Confirmation classes will be 5:30 to 7:00 PM Sunday, September 30, October 14, November 4, and 18. Bishop Shaw will meet with Confirmands after church on Sunday, October 28. More details regarding the new Confirmation group (8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> graders) will be mailed separately.

*Faithfully,*  
*Mary Ann.*