



Steeple Notes

The First Congregational Church of Rowley
United Church of Christ
175 Main Street • P.O. Box 364 • Rowley, MA 01969



Olde Tyme Country Fair - Pictured above, the volunteers at the Fair having a good time. More photos on page 6. Thanks Penny H. for the photos

Our Olde Tyme Country Fair was a huge success. It was a great time for fellowship amongst ourselves and our community. We thank everyone for their hard work. Those that helped setting up, those that worked the fair, people that baked or donated to the fair and those that shopped. We also want to thank Country Gardens for donating all the flowers, kissing balls, and cemetery baskets. Please remember to support them.

A GREAT TIME WAS HAD BY ALL.
WE LOOK FORWARD TO NEXT YEAR.

Kay Dalzell and Donna Irving
Co-Chairs of the Fair

Sunday Worship Services 10am Reverend Tom Bentley

Sunday, December 5

Heritage Sunday

Communion

Lay Reader: Dave Irving

Deacons: Les Warren

Jerry Schmidt

AV Angie Estevez & Eric Fila

Sunday, December 12

Lay Reader: Sue Hazen

Deacons: Nicola Pyburn

Ken Sanford

AV *Volunteer needed*

Sunday, December 19

Lay Reader: Youth CE

Deacons: Jen Loring

Les Warren

AV Angie Estevez & Eric Fila

Friday, December 24

Christmas Eve

Lay Reader: Nancy Schmidt

Deacons: All

AV Angie Estevez & Eric Fila

Sunday, December 26

Lay Reader: Penny Hurley

Deacons: Nancy Schmidt

Nicola Pyburn

AV Angie Estevez & Eric Fila

*From the
Pastor*



Talking and Listening to Nature in our Advent Time

What do Pedro Martinez, the famous Red Sox pitcher, Saint Francis, and Tom Bentley have in common? Answer: They talked to their plants. I am sure if all gardeners were honest, we would discover that lots of people talk to their plants.

Last year we purchased an Alberta spruce in a pot. This sweet creature served as a decorated Christmas tree on our deck and then continued to grow through the summer. I was always concerned that the tree was stressed by having its roots in a pot. Somehow, I missed watering it for just enough time for it to dry out and it died. I still mourn when I see its parched carcass.

Am I weird having such emotional bonds to plants? My answer is no.

There is now a substantial body of scientific evidence showing trees of the same species are communal, and often form alliances with trees of other species. Forest trees have evolved to live in cooperative, interdependent relationships, maintained by communication and a collective intelligence similar to an insect colony.

Science is discovering new empirical facts and these are welcomed to supplement the truth mystics, saints, artists, and indigenous peoples have known since the beginning of recorded time. Nature is alive. It is not a “thing” to be abused at will.

This Advent we are gathering via Zoom on the Monday nights of December before Christmas at 7 PM to reflect on our relationship with creation. This is not “church chat “. It is a vital conversation to reframe our relationship to the organic realm. If we do not do that, we will destroy ourselves sooner than we realize. Relationship is all about communication. I hope we can hear what nature is communicating to us before it's too late. YOU and any friends you want to invite are welcome. You can get any needed information from Shawna in the office or at our website firstchurchrowley.org

Peace and Hope in this time of Advent

Rev. Tom

CREATION:

A Door to Our Hearts and the Divine

This Advent season we will be hosting a four-week series scheduled for the four Mondays in Advent:
November 29
December 6
December 13
December 20.

The Zoom Sessions will be at 7:00 PM and last no more than an hour.

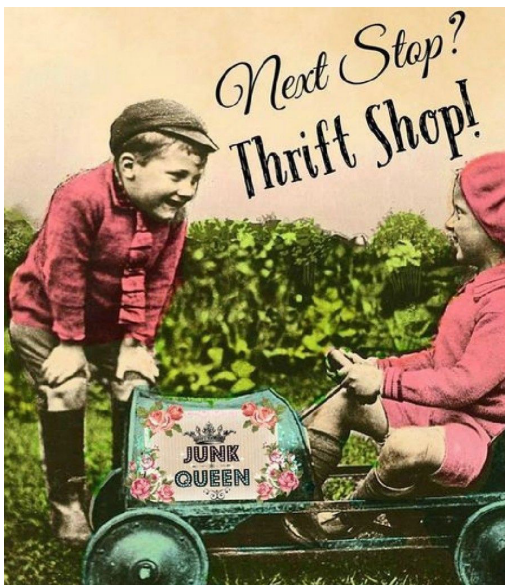
The focus is to help us deepen our awareness of how creation is alive and we by our living consciousness are in full unity with this Divine Presence.

We will be looking at

- Biblical passages and stories which help us (or hinder us) from this union with the “Living Divine” present in our unique earthly setting.
- Spiritual practices that can enhance our sensitivity to God’s presence in all living things.

- Christian communities (specifically the Franciscans) which invite people of faith to be in union with all living things.
- Other traditions including guidance from our indigenous neighbors (sometimes referred to as Native Americans) which can help us expand our awareness of our partnership with our organic environment.
- The expanding role of the science of Cosmology that is creating a synthesis with our faith-based Cosmology.
- Personal ways we can begin to lessen our impact on our natural environment to help it recover from centuries of abuse and exploitation.

<https://zoom.us/j/98643935222>



Fellowship Thrift Shoppe

Tuesdays 3-6:00pm

Thursdays 3-6:00pm

Saturdays 9am-1:00pm

Sundays 10:45am-1:00pm

We take donations of home goods and clean clothing during our hours of operation. Please no toys, stuffed animals or electronics.

Contact Paul Chang if you have furniture to donate, or email the church office at FirstChurchRowley@gmail.com.



We hope you enjoyed shopping at our Annual Holiday Fair. We so enjoyed seeing everyone and hope you got the perfect gift. We are currently seeking actors and actresses for our Christmas Pageant on December 19th. We are looking for all ages to help us tell the story of Jesus's birth. We also hope you will join us for Christmas caroling and hot cocoa after the pageant with the Missions Committee.

Please reach out to Amy Hanson to sign up for a part in the pageant. We need your help to make sure we can offer this very special program this year. See you soon at the church!

Please contact Amy Hanson at aleehanson@hotmail.com or Shawna in the church office if you would like to register for Sunday School or Youth Group.

December Birthdays	
Robert Mulkern	12/4
Judy Robillard	12/4
Neil Butler	12/5
Louise Mehaffey	12/7
Robert HaleCollins	12/11
Karen Moore	12/13
Pam Sanford	12/14
Elizabeth "Liz" Butler	12/16
Karen Merry	12/21
Rhonda Ward	12/25
Margaret Niska	12/30



MISSIONS wishes all a Merry Christmas full of joy and gratitude.

Please join us for Christmas caroling on December 19 after service. Before we go we will enjoy cookies and cocoa at the church. The plan is to go up and down Main Street, around the Common and down to the Plantation. If some would like to then drive

over to the Mill housing on Haverhill Street that would be great.

Please start gathering hats, mittens, gloves, scarves of all sizes that we will bring to Lazarus House on the 14th of December so they can put them in their Christmas packages.

Family Promise has a sign-up genius that Shawna has forwarded

to all if you would like to give a gift of clothing or toys to a family. The last pick up for that is December 9th.

As you make your Christmas purchases be mindful of our environment and the impact of our waste.

Send out prayers and healing to all of the Afghan families and children that have found themselves on a new journey. Let's hope the joy of Christmas will find them, and all of the displaced people throughout the world.

Donating Market Basket gift cards for Triton School? They can be placed in the offering basket during the month of December.



Whenever there is a need for spiritual support, you are encouraged to call anyone on the Prayer Chain with your concerns and they will inform the others so that our prayers of love and support can be with you immediately.

The Prayer Chain members are as follows:

- Patti Cummings(978) 948-8176.....Patti.Cummings@livanova.com
- Kay Dalzell(978) 948-2674kdalzell@comcast.net
- David & Donna Irving(978) 948-7020dvdirving@aol.com
- Nicola Pyburn(978) 948-2598..... nicola.pyburn@gmail.com
- Ken Sanford(978) 948-2847kcsanford1@gmail.com
- Dennis Ward(978) 432-1021rward3024@comcast.net
- Jerry & Nancy Schmidt(978) 388-1417schmidtncancy36@gmail.com, jschmidt22@comcast.net
- Les Warren(978) 352-7551leswarren3@gmail.com



Janet Brown	Jason Kent
Al Locke	Pat and Steve True
Helen Downing	Dede Todd
Nancy Cook and her daughter	Jean Short (Kay Dalzell's neighbor)
Paul DuVal	Helen Dobbins
Gretchen Lee (friends of Bev and Doug Phillips)	Family of Gerry Ernstrom
Millie and Nat Dummer	Lisa Levandowski
Ginny Merry	Colin Wilson (Rhonda Ward's father)
Sally McRae	Arnold and Patti Cisco
Kurt Reese	

Memories from the Olde Tyme Country Fair November 21, 2021



Welcome to Heritage Sunday, December 5, 2021



Mother Church: St. Peter's Anglican Church, Rowley, England



First Congregational Church of Rowley, MA

Today we celebrate the rich history of both our church and our town. First Congregational Church of Rowley and the Town of Rowley can trace their founding back to the Act of Incorporation established on December 4, 1639, naming Ezekiel Rogers' Plantation as Rowley. Thus, today being December 5th, it is the closest Sunday to the actual incorporation date.

From **Rowley Revisited** 1989 edition prepared by Willard Jewett, we read of our history: "Ezekiel Rogers, the 24th pastor of St. Peter's Church, Rowley, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, England, aroused by the intolerance of the Archbishop and high officials of the established church, resigned his pastorate and organized a company to sail to the new country beyond the sea. He was a man, much esteemed, with a salary of 240 pounds. His going was brought to the attention of the King.

"Through his influence, ships were brought from London to Hull for his party. In Mr. Rogers' party were

many from the hamlet of Rowley and surrounding parishes. Twenty families sailed with him in the ship "John" of London in June, 1638 and arrived in Charlestown in August of that year. On the ship the first printing press to be used in America was brought and set up in Cambridge.

"Although land was offered in several places and much pressure brought upon him to settle in Quiniapiac (New Haven), he decided to take the land between Ipswich and Newbury.

"In the session of the General Court, which opened September 4, 1639, it was voted Mr. Ezekiel Rogers' Plantation shall be called Rowley. Rowley thus granted, with but a mile of seacoast, extended on the west from the Merrimac River to Salem and embraced what was Bradford (later annexed to Haverhill), Boxford, Georgetown, Groveland and a part of Middleton."

Our "daughter" churches include the following with their founding

years: Bradford – 1669; Boxford – 1702; South Byfield (Byfield Parish) – 1702; Groveland – 1727; Georgetown – 1732; Boxford 2nd – 1736; Linebrook – 1749; and the First Baptist Church of Rowley – 1830.

From **The Standard History of Essex County** published in 1878 by the C.F. Jewett & Co. of Boston, we read about Rev. Samuel Phillips: "The Rev. Samuel Phillips (Harvard College, 1650) was settled in June, 1651, as teacher of Mr. Rogers' church, on a salary varying from £50 to £90 per annum. During the sickness of the pastor, Mr. Phillips performed the whole duties of the ministry, for which service the selectmen ordered that £5 should be paid to him. After the decease of Mr. Rogers, his widow, and those in sympathy with her, continued to annoy Mr. Phillips for the space of eighteen years, on account of his reception of this money, to which they persistently claimed he had no legal right. The case was decided in favor of the widow by the Ipswich court; but the decision was overruled by the General Court, and by a church council held on the 19th of November, 1679, and the course of Mr. Phillips justified.

"On the 15th of November, 1665, Samuel Shepard (Harvard College, 1658) was ordained pastor of the church, Mr. Phillips still acting as teacher. Mr. Shepard dying, April 7, 1668, Mr. Phillips was then ordained as pastor, in which office he continued until his death, which occurred, April 26, 1696, after a ministry, either as teacher or pastor, of forty-five years. During the last thirty years of his life, fifty-four were added to the church, and at his death the office of teacher in that church is supposed to have ceased."

LOOKING AHEAD

Sunday

10am Worship

Fellowship Thrift Shoppe
Open 10:45am-1pm

Monday

1pm-2pm
Council on Aging (COA)
Fitness Group

Tuesday

Fellowship Thrift Shoppe
Open 3pm-6pm

Wednesday

10am (GTKU)
Get To Know Us
Corinthian Room

Thursday

Fellowship Thrift Shoppe
Open 3pm-6pm

7 pm Alanon
Corinthian Room

Friday

5:30pm Boy Scouts

Saturday

Fellowship Thrift Shoppe
Open 9am-1pm

7pm AA

Wednesday, December 1

7pm Missions/CE meeting
Zoom

Friday, December 3

11am COA
Crafting class

5:30pm Rowley Sewing
Circle (Quilting)

Saturday, December 4

10:30am Missions Walk

Tuesday, December 7

6:30pm Boy Scouts

Wednesday, December 8

6:30pm Trustees Meeting

Saturday, December 11

8am-9:30am Pancake Breakfast

Tuesday, December 14

7pm Executive Committee
Meeting

Wednesday, December 15

7pm Diaconate Meeting

Thursday, December 16

10am COA Cooking Demo

Friday, December 17

5:30pm Rowley Sewing
Circle

Sunday, December 19

11am Christmas Caroling

Friday, December 24

7pm Christmas Eve Service

Monday-Thursday Office Hours 9am-1pm

Follow us on Social Media:

Facebook [@FirstChurchRowley](#)

Instagram [@FirstChurchRowley](#)



Subscribe to Reverend Tom's YouTube Channel:

<https://bit.ly/RevTomBentley>

Visit our Website: FirstChurchRowley.org

and Online Calendar: <https://www.firstchurchrowley.org/church-calendar>

Contact Us:

Email: FirstChurchRowley@gmail.com

Pancake Breakfast!

**First Congregational Church of Rowley
175 Main Street, Rowley, MA**



**Saturday, December 11, 2021
8:00 am – 9:30 am**

**Pancakes • Toppings • Bacon
Heart-Healthy Turkey Sausage
Coffee • Juice • More!**

**\$8 Adults
Children under 6 eat free!**

First Congregational Church of Rowley • 175 Main Street, Rowley, MA

**For more information email FirstChurchRowley@gmail.com
Or call 978-948-3993**

First Congregational Church of Rowley
Officers, Boards, Committees Staff
June 2021 - May 2022

STAFF	NAME	POSITION	Telephone & Email
	Rev. Tom Bentley	Pastor	978-973-2362, bentley123@aol.com
	Eric Fila	Sexton	978-332-3387, ericfila@gmail.com
	Shawna Kelley	Church Administrator	firstchurchrowley@gmail.com
	Music Director	Karl Schmuck	978-948-5062, nakamaka@verizon.net

OFFICERS	NAME	POSITION	Telephone & Email
	Kay Dalzell(22)	Moderator	978-948-2674, kdalzell@comcast.net
	Eric Gundrum (22)	Treasurer	978-609-7230, gundrume@yahoo.com
	Doug Phillips(22)	Financial Secretary	978-462-4249, drphillips00@gmail.com
	David Floodman(22)	Assistant Finance/Treasurer	978-992-1227, davidfloodman1@verizon.net
	David Irving(22)	Clerk	978-948-7020, dvdirving@aol.com
	Donna Irving(22)	Historian	978-948-7020, dvdirving@aol.com

DIACONATE

**Penny Hurley(22) , 978-948-1242, penelopehurley@gmail.com	David Irving*	978-948-7020, dvdirving@aol.com
**Dennis Ward(22) , 978-432-1021, rward3024@comcast.net	Donna Irving*	978-948-7020, dvdirving@aol.com
Nicola Pyburn(23), 978-948-2598, nicola.pyburn@gmail.com	Nat Dummer*	
Les Warren (23), 978-352-7551, leswarren3@gmail.com	Kay Dalzell*	978-948-2674, kdalzell@comcast.net
Jerry Schmidt(24), 978-388-1417, jschmidt22@comcast.net	Ken Sanford*	978-948-2847, kcsanford1@gmail.com
Nancy Schmidt(24), 978-388-1417, schmidtncancy36@gmail.com	*Emeritus	
Jen Loring(25), 978-948-2569, cjloring@comcast.net	Jr. Deacon, Vacant	
** Chairs	Jr. Deaconess, Vacant	

FINANCE/TRUSTEE

**Gary Confalone(22) , 978-948-8405, gconfalone@comcast.net	Sean Pyburn(24),	
Glen Pyburn(22), 978-948-2598, apandsons@comcast.net	Jeremy Schmidt(24),	TBA
Sharon Emery (23), 978-948-2244, captray3@gmail.com		
Adam Hanson(23), 978-356-0501, c16rfd@hotmail.com.		
Stuart Dalzell*		
*Emeritus		

CHRISTIAN ED

**Amy Hanson(22) , 978-356-0501, aleehanson@hotmail.com	Vacancy (23)
James Kay (22)	Vacancy(23)
** Chair	Vacancy(24)
	Vacancy(24)

NE ASSOCIATION DELEGATES

Judy Robillard(22) 978-948-2007, jhrbutterfly@yahoo.com	Vacancy
---	---------

MA Conf. UCC DELEGATES

Nancy Schmidt(22) 978-388-1417, schmidtncancy36@gmail.com	Jerry Schmidt(22)	978-388-1417, jschmidt22@comcast.net
---	-------------------	--------------------------------------

First Congregational Church of Rowley
Officers, Boards, Committees Staff
June 2021 - May 2022

Executive Committee

Comprised of Officers: Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer

Board Reps: Finance Trustees

Staff: Pastor and Admin Assistant

MISSIONS

****Danby Whitmore(22)** 978-948-3484, danbywhitmore@gmail.com Vacancy(24)

Holly Ardito(23) 617-480-4572, hollyardito@gmail.com

Pamela Sanford(24) 978-948-2847, pasanford1@gmail.com

**** Chair**

Memorials

Marge Thurston(22) 978-948-7040, marthu@verizon.net Vacancy(24)

Music Committee

Liz Butler(22) 978-948-7627, thebutlershome@verizon.net Vacancy

Richard

Jesionowski(23) 978-289-0450, richard@crystalvision.com Diaconate Member TBA

Member at Large

(Don Thurston)???

Flower Committee

Lisa Jesionowski(23) 978-289-0450, richard@crystalvision.com Vacancy

Debbie Confalone(24) 978-948-8405, dconfalone@comcast.net

Fellowship Thriftshop

Marge Thurston 978-948-7040, marthu@verizon.net Merle Phipps 978-948-7443, phippsmd66@gmail.com

Nicola Pyburn(23), 978-948-2598, nicola.pyburn@gmail.com Sharon Emery 978-948-2244, captray3@gmail.com

Supervisor / Vacancy

Nominating

Nicola Pyburn 978-948-2598, nicola.pyburn@gmail.com Kay Dalzell 978-948-2674, kdalzell@comcast.net

Donna Irving 978-948-7020, dvdirving@aol.com Finance/Trustees Rep TBA

Ken Sanford 978-948-2847, kcsanford1@gmail.com

Pastoral Relations

David Irving, Kay Dalzell, Penny Hurley, Ken Sanford and Nancy Schmidt

****BOLD - Chair Person**



Southern New England Conference

United Church of Christ

Living the Love & Justice of Jesus

Daily Lectionary Scripture References – December 2021 (Year C)

Wed., Dec. 1

Psalm 90
Isaiah 1:24-31
Luke 11:29-32

Thurs., Dec. 2

Luke 1:68-79
Malachi 3:5-12
Philippians 1:12-18a

Fri., Dec. 3

Luke 1:68-79
Malachi 3:13-18
Philippians 1:18b-26

Sat., Dec. 4

Luke 1:68-79
Malachi 4:1-6
Luke 9:1-6

Sun., Dec. 5

Second Sunday of Advent
Baruch 5:1-9 or Malachi 3:1-4
Luke 1:68-79
Philippians 1:3-11
Luke 3:1-6

Mon., Dec. 6

Psalm 126
Isaiah 40:1-11
Romans 8:22-25

Tues., Dec. 7

Psalm 126
Isaiah 19:18-25
2 Peter 1:2-15

Wed., Dec. 8

Psalm 126
Isaiah 35:3-7
Luke 7:18-30

Thurs., Dec. 9

Isaiah 12:2-6
Amos 6:1-8
2 Corinthians 8:1-15

Fri., Dec. 10

Isaiah 12:2-6
Amos 8:4-12
2 Corinthians 9:1-15

Sat., Dec. 11

Isaiah 12:2-6
Amos 9:8-15
Luke 1:57-66

Sun., Dec. 12

Third Sunday of Advent
Zephaniah 3:14-20
Isaiah 12:2-6
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:7-18

Mon., Dec. 13

Isaiah 11:1-9
Numbers 16:1-19
Hebrews 13:7-17

Tues., Dec. 14

Isaiah 11:1-9
Numbers 16:20-35
Acts 28:23-31

Wed., Dec. 15

Isaiah 11:1-9
Micah 4:8-13
Luke 7:31-35

Thurs., Dec. 16

Psalm 80:1-7
Jeremiah 31:31-34
Hebrews 10:10-18

Fri., Dec. 17

Psalm 80:1-7
Isaiah 42:10-18
Hebrews 10:32-39

Sat., Dec. 18

Psalm 80:1-7
Isaiah 66:7-11
Luke 13:31-35

Sun., Dec. 19

Fourth Sunday of Advent
Micah 5:2-5a
Luke 1:46b-55 or Psalm
80:1-7
Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

Mon., Dec. 20

Psalm 113
Genesis 25:19-28
Colossians 1:15-20

Tues., Dec. 21

Psalm 113
Genesis 30:1-24
Romans 8:18-30

Wed., Dec. 22

Psalm 113
Isaiah 42:14-21
Luke 1:5-25

Thurs., Dec. 23

Luke 1:46b-55
Micah 4:6-8
2 Peter 1:16-21

Fri., Dec. 24

Christmas Eve
Isaiah 62:6-12
Psalm 97
Titus 3:4-7
Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20

Sat., Dec. 25

Christmas Day
Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

Sun., Dec. 26

First Sunday after Christmas
1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
Psalm 148
Colossians 3:12-17
Luke 2:41-52

Mon., Dec. 27

Psalm 148
Proverbs 8:32-36
John 21:19b-24

Tues., Dec. 28

Psalm 148
Isaiah 54:1-13
Revelation 21:1-7

Wed., Dec. 29

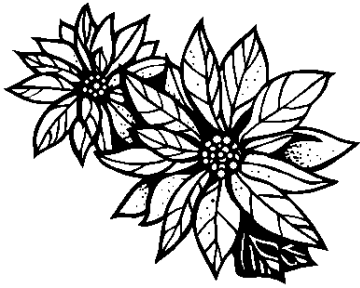
Psalm 147:12-20
1 Chronicles 28:1-10
1 Corinthians 3:10-17

Thurs., Dec. 30

Psalm 147:12-20
2 Chronicles 1:7-13
Mark 13:32-37

Fri., Dec. 31

New Year's Eve
Ecclesiastes 3:1-13
Psalm 8
Revelation 21:1-6a
Matthew 25:31-46



Christmas Poinsettia **Order Form**

Name: _____

Telephone: _____ email: _____

Printed information for the Bulletin: (i.e. given in memory or in celebration of...)

Color: Red (quantity _____); Pink (quantity _____);
White (quantity _____)

Cost: \$11 per poinsettia

***Deadline for order forms is Sunday, December 12, 2021**

Checks should be made payable to First Congregational Church
and mailed to: First Congregational Church
Attn: Flower Committee
P. O. Box 364, Rowley, MA 01969

Or you may leave your completed order form
and check in the office.

Note: You are responsible for picking up your own Poinsettia
after the Christmas Eve Service.

If you have any questions, please contact the Flower Committee:
Debbie Confalone, 781-290-6502 or dconfalone@comcast.net
or church office 978-948-3993 firstchurchrowley@gmail.com

Santa's Subtitles

A Christmas Movie Game

Can you help Santa remember the actual names of popular Christmas movies based on sub-titles he made up that describe the plot? One point for every correct movie.

9-Year Old Obsesses Over Red Ryder BB Gun

Answers posted at the Church
on the Office Door

Searching for My Lost Father

A Heart-Warming Tale of an Angel Saving a Man's Life

Cindy Lou Who Helps One Find His Heart

Show Business Folks Gather in Connecticut

Can A Department Store Santa Be The Real Thing?

Who Wants to Go to Paris for the Holidays Anyway?

Never Feed Them After Midnight

How to Gain 30 Pounds in a Single Day

Tom Gave Kate His Heart

Jack is Bored and Decides to Look Beyond His Village

The Boy Who Receives Santa's First Gift of the Year

Repent or Robin the Frog Will Not Survive Til Next Christmas

A Ski Resort Without Snow? Bring a Broadway Show Instead.

Something Visiting Parents for Christmas is Better Than Jetting Off to Fiji

Two Brothers, An Orphan, and Amnesia

A Cancelled Christmas Bonus Causes Chaos

What Happens When Santa Forgets a Child's Bike

A Christmas Exchange Leads to Love

Outcast Because of a Christmas Cruise