**The Fish Net**

**Boston Presbyterian Church**

**Fall 2012**

Dear Friends,

It was mid-afternoon on Sunday, July the 1st. Susan and I were indoors, sitting in the living room when she asked me what the loud noise was. Realizing that it was coming from outside we rushed out the front door to be greeted by a sight I have never seen before and hope to never see again; the garage of a home across the street was a raging inferno and the flames had already spread to the adjacent house. In no time at all, the street was blocked off and filled with emergency vehicles. The destruction however was so extreme that neither building could be saved, and even as I write this one of the houses is just now being rebuilt from the foundation up while the other one awaits reconstruction.

What happened that day was a heart-breaking tragedy but if there was any good news, it lay in the fact that even though one of the families was home at the time, no one was seriously hurt or killed. Amongst other things this episode reminded me of how fragile life is but it also made me wonder…if I had to get out of the house quickly in an emergency, what if anything would I grab on the way out? Old photographs or the old Croll Family Bible from Scotland that has been entrusted to my care? Family heirlooms or something else perhaps?

As I thought about it I realized that as precious and and as important as some of these things may be to me, in the end they would not be crucial. I would certainly regret their loss but life would go on without them. The absolutely crucial thing would be to make sure that everyone, including our family dog, got out safely; as long as that happened the rest wouldn’t really matter.

At Thanksgiving of course we give thanks for the many blessings we have and experience but Thanksgiving is also a time to pause and reflect on what in life is truly most important to us. We have many things to be grateful for but perhaps we shouldn’t focus as much on the “what” but rather on the “who.” By all means give thanks for the material blessings but also give thanks to God for the people, relatives or friends who touch our lives for the better, for they too are just as much a part of God’s good gifts as our homes, the harvest and all the rest.

Wishing you a most blessed Thanksgiving.

Shawn