

THE PARISH POST

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

CHESHIRE, CONNECTICUT
www.cheshirecongregational.org

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No. 10

Ardently Seeking the Promised Land

By Jeff Braun, Senior Minister

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., preached of the beloved community. Through his faith's unforgettable fire and his words' prophetic power, Dr. King spoke of a place, of a people, and, what's more, of a state of *spirit*, that not only reflect Jesus' love... they *embody* it.

From prison cells to city streets, from The Great Emancipator's feet to the pulpit of the Mason Temple Church in Memphis, Tennessee, Dr. King pointed to the prize on which we must train our eyes. He pointed to the mountain that, together, we must climb (a mountain where we have yet to reach the summit). And he pointed... he *preached* and he *prophesied* and he *pointed*... toward the promised land beyond that mountain.

What *is* that promised land? What is that leveled and peaceful valley of which Dr. King caught a fleeting but certain glimpse? What is that Son-blessed place that commanded his every thought and effort and, thanks to his vivid testimony, that continues to shimmer in the minds of millions even after his death?

The promised land is that state of communion in which we, as Christians – and, even more broadly, we, as siblings in the Holy Spirit and children of God – have found a way to live ... in peace. Peace, not as the absence of difference or disagreement or even conflict. But, rather, peace as the constructive means (and process) by which we engage, reconcile, and even celebrate our differences. In short, it is the community of the beloved.

This month, we continue moving boldly toward that community. Through an All Saints Day service on November 1 that remembers lost loved ones and gives voice to the forgotten and oppressed. Through the rising strains of our Memorial Music performance, also on November 1, and through the “Sacred Conversation on Race” that will carry from worship into our “second hour” lunch discussion. Through a church-wide Harvest Dinner on November 14 that celebrates “What Unites Us” through fellowship, food, and photography.

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Through these events, and more, we'll deepen our participation in Christ's saving love. And, in the spirit of Dr. King, we'll keep climbing, keep dreaming, keep building the community in which we care for one another ... as deeply as God cares for us.

God's Peace,
Jeff



Sign Up for Mission Trip

The deadline for signing up to go on the spring mission trip to the Gulf Coast is November 30.

We will return to Camp Coast Care, now in its new headquarters at the epicenter of the destruction in Bay St. Louis, Miss. Acres of devastation remain and many families are still unable to rebuild their homes without the help of volunteer builders.

Dates for the 2010 trip are March 6 through March 13. We plan to arrive in Mississippi on Saturday, spending Sunday in New Orleans, worshiping with a UCC congregation, touring the city, including the Ninth Ward, and sharing a meal of famous New Orleans cuisine, before starting rebuilding on Monday.

You do not need to be a skilled builder to go on this trip! People of all skill levels are needed.

We hope to keep the cost of the trip to approximately \$300 per person through support from the Board of Outreach and other church sources, and through our

November Worship Schedule

Sunday, November 1: Memorial Music Sunday and All Saints Celebration. One service at 10 a.m. Communion will be served. Food offerings will be collected; the food of the month is jelly or jam. 'A Sacred Conversation on Race' will follow at noon.

Sunday, November 8: Services at 9 and 11. Jeff Braun preaching.

Sunday, November 15: Services at 9 and 11. Alison McCaffrey preaching.

Sunday, November 22: Services at 9 and 11. Jeff Braun preaching.

Sunday, November 29: First Sunday of Advent. Services at 9 and 11; Jeff Braun preaching.

second annual benefit concert on January 3. Sign up on the table outside the church offices. We will need a \$100 deposit by November 30 from those who plan to go on this trip.

For more information, talk to Alison McCaffrey or any of the church members who went on Mission Trip 2009.

They are: Pete Ploch, Lisa Canas, Robin and Jack Sellati, Sue Pappas, Chris and Ed Albrecht, Jack Burton, Kevin Ross, or Larry Pivrotto. Or contact the members of the planning team: Alison McCaffrey, Jeff Braun, Peggy Allen, Chris Fitzmaurice, Robin Sellati and Pete Ploch; or visit www.campcoastcare.com on the web.

A Bigger, Better Christmas Fair December 5

The First Congregational Church Christmas Fair is greatly expanded this year, both inside and outside the church. The fair will be held on Saturday, December 5, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For the first time, Christmas trees and wreaths will be for sale on the Church Green. Also new this year will be a Children's Christmas Corner, where youngsters can buy inexpensive gifts for family members, decorate a cupcake and/or a gingerbread house, make a gift, listen to a Christmas story told by a well-known Cheshire storyteller, and talk to Santa Claus.

Also new this year will be a "cookie walk" in which shoppers purchase a container, then fill it with a variety of homemade cookies they choose. Themed gift baskets will also be sold.

Many Christmas Fair favorites, enjoyed for years by fairgoers, will continue this year:

- An expanded food booth with teacher gifts, baked goods, breads, jams and jellies, pecans and fair-trade coffee;
- Granny's attic, with old and new gifts, linens, candles, antique jewelry, and other treasures;
- Old and new Christmas decorations and ornaments;
- Handcrafted gifts, jewelry, baskets, and more from artisans in third-world countries. (A portion of the purchase price provides poverty relief.)
- Poinsettias;

- And lunch with the church's signature dish, homemade corn chowder.

This year, our Christmas Fair is featuring a new area: the Children's Christmas Corner. It will feature a craft area where children can decorate a preconstructed gingerbread house, a snowman, crafts with pinecones, and a card making table. Santa will be on hand for hearing children's requests and providing a great photo opportunity for parents. We are going to have a special time (probably around 1 p.m.) with a wonderful storyteller. There will be a special table set up so that children can purchase Christmas gifts for their parents and grandparents at very reasonable prices. We are also going to have a cupcake-decorating table.



We are very excited about this, and are asking for donations of any of the following to help defray the costs: Candy for decorating the gingerbread houses; plastic bottles from liquid CoffeeMate (the 16-oz. size would be best) for the snowmen; any Christmas-patterned material scraps or felt for the snowmen; craft supplies (glue, glitter, construction paper, stickers, etc..)

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for the pinecones and cards. Also, new or nearly new items for our shopping table—costume jewelry, neckties, candles, note cards, mugs, knickknacks. If you are a teacher with a closet full of ‘teacher gifts’; you don’t know what to do with, this is a perfect place to donate them! We also need empty small boxes suitable for packaging the gifts; jewelry or tie boxes would be great.

A box will be in the Parlor for your donations, or you can see Beth Ross, Joellen Jason, or Jan Garthwait.

One of the attractions at this year’s fair will be gift baskets of all kinds. We’d love it if each church family would donate a gift basket. Get creative! Build it as a family project.

There are three ways to help. You build the basket, deliver it to church, ready for bidding. Or if you are not feeling creative, but would like to help, we can build a basket, box or pail with items you donate. If you’d like to be a category 1 person but don’t know where to begin, join us with your supplies on Tuesday, November 17 at 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall for a class on building beautiful gift baskets. After building a basket for the Christmas Fair, you’ll be ready to create beautiful, individualized baskets for everyone on your Christmas list! RSVP to Patti Dickinson (271-7003) to hold your spot and for a supply list. In addition to making gift baskets on November 17, there will be also be a workshop to assemble gingerbread houses for the Children’s Corner.

Please consider supporting our church’s fair by donating a finished basket or ingredients for a basket. Donations of baskets and supplies will be ongoing from now until November 22. Finished baskets will be accepted through November 30. For basket delivery or questions please contact Patti Dickinson at pdickinson4b@cox.net or 271-7003.



Serving at Columbus House

One of the exciting things about our Columbus House mission is to see new names on the signup sheets. There is always at least one new person who will prepare part of a meal for someone he or she may never know or see.

The September 30 meal had many new participants. We are so grateful to all of the cooks and servers: Marge Williams, the Blacks, Sue Chatfield, Kathy Duffendack, Karen Gravino, the Pivirottos, Karen Bassett, Arleen Reid, the Eaglesons, the Louys, Ken Anderson, Sharon Graver, Martha Lape, Emma Norback, Suzanne Lawson, the Mulés, the Sullivans, Eleanor Gager, Beth Eichelman, Beth Ross, the Albrechts, Virginia Donovan, Carol Cummings, Marilyn Gordon, Lisa Canas, Todd Skrzyniarz, Jan Cowles, and my husband, Joe.

We provided a nourishing, comforting meal to close to 100 people. Once again, we received applause after the meal! Many thanks to all for making this happen. Our next trip there will be December 30. Will we see your name on the list?

Jan Garthwait

Opportunity for Recognition

The Board of Stewardship is enthusiastic about a new opportunity to recognize all of those who pledge, and to share this joyful opportunity with the rest of the congregation.

With the approval of the Executive Board, the Stewardship Board will post a list of pledging individuals and families this year at the end of the annual drive.

We will list names of donors or donating families, but not the amounts pledged.

The purpose is to begin a more open conversation about what it means to pledge and how individual members who pledge think about their pledges and manage their resources so that they can pledge.

We will contact every pledging person or family individually for consent to post. We will not post names without consent, and will offer the opportunity to be listed as 'anonymous.'

We will post these names only in a single copy of the list on the Stewardship bulletin board – no electronic lists, no sharing of this list beyond the single posting.

While being on this list is the decision of the individuals and families, we hope all take advantage of this opportunity.

CE Task Force Is Created

With the recent announcement of Debbie Gravell's resignation as Director of Christian Education, we want to share with the congregation the activity that is in progress toward filling that role.

First, we recognize the wonderful job that Debbie has done for the past 13 years. Her ministry to children and families is an important part of what First Congregational Church is all about, and her shoes will be hard to fill.

In accordance with the bylaws, the Executive Board has appointed a task force of church members representing a number of key church boards as well as Sunday school teachers, parents, and youth resource adults. This group is tasked with building and executing a transition plan as well as developing the updated job description for the director of Christian education position.

Its activities will culminate with a proposal to be presented to the church membership at a church meeting. A recommendation of church members who will comprise the final search committee is part of that presentation; that search committee will move forth and fill the permanent position with the job description.

The task force so far is: Linda Milton, Chair (CE Board incoming chair), Kate Hall, Ted Bloschichak (CE Board), Bob Porter (Personnel Committee), Kirsten Sullivan (incoming Deacons), and the Rev. Jeff Braun.

Christian Education in November

November's Church School lessons revolve around the Twenty-Third Psalm.

Thou Art, Room 8: Grades 2-4 will use symbols and pictures to illustrate Psalm 23 on square pieces of felt. The squares will be combined into to make a wall hanging. Grades 5-6 will explore the images in the Psalm and why people used images to sing to God. They will put together a poster and add themselves as sheep at the end.

Red Sea Productions, Room 9: This workshop will focus on knowing that God is always with us even when we feel anxious, worried or afraid, through the use of puppets and discussion.

Desert Tales, Room 10: A storyteller portraying a shepherd will include children in an active storytelling experience to help them create lasting images and connections to the 23rd Psalm.

Gospel Games, Room 11: This workshop will show children how God "leads us in right paths" through the use of a maze game. A discussion will follow.



Children's Offering Envelopes: The offering envelope packets children receive each year from the church school are a family opportunity to teach children about helping others and Christian Stewardship through weekly giving using their offering envelopes. We encourage families to talk about giving to the church and to the world through the church. We also

encourage you to talk with your children about their gifts and talents and how they can use them for God and write that in the appropriate place on the envelope.

We hope you will decide together as a family the portion of children's weekly money that will be given to the work of the church.

Each week in Chapel or in Church School, children are invited to give to God through their offering. We bless the money that is given and talk about how it helps others and the church.

Hand in UNICEF Envelopes: "Trick or treat for UNICEF" has been an important tradition for American children for more than 50 years. The funds help UNICEF provide clean water and sanitation, healthcare, nutrition, education and emergency relief to the world's most vulnerable children.

Our church has had a tradition of mission partnership with UNICEF at Halloween. Your children received UNICEF envelopes for use Halloween night. Please return the money to the church school class or to the Christian Education office by the first week of November.

It is most helpful if you count the money together as a family and then write a check (made out to the First Congregational Church with a memo UNICEF) or send it in bills rather than

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10:00 Service – Memorial Music Sunday

Nov. 1	Worship	Worship	Worship	Worship
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9:00 Service

Date	Thou Art	Red Sea Prod.	Desert Tales	Gospel Games
Nov. 8	Week Off	Grades 3 & 4	Grade 2	Grades 5 & 6
Nov. 13	Grades 5 & 6	Grade 2	Grades 3 & 4	Week Off
Nov. 20	Grades 3 & 4	Grades 5 & 6	Week Off	Grade 2
Nov. 27	Grade 2	Week Off	Grades 5 & 6	Grades 3 & 4

11:00 Service

Date	Thou Art	Red Sea Prod.	Desert Tales	Gospel Games
Nov. 8	Week Off	Grades 5 & 6	Grades 3 & 4	Grade 2
Nov. 13	Grades 5 & 6	Grades 3 & 4	Grade 2	Week Off
Nov. 20	Grade 2	Week Off	Grades 5 & 6	Grades 3 & 4
Nov. 27	Grades 3 & 4	Grade 2	Week Off	Grades 5 & 6

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return the box of change. This expedites the counting for our financial people who count the money.

Operation Christmas Child:

Operation Christmas Child brings joy and hope to children in desperate situations around the world through gift-filled shoeboxes and the good news of God's love. This program of the non-denominational evangelical Christian organization Samaritan's Purse provides an opportunity for people of all ages to be involved in a simple, hands-on mission project while focusing on the true meaning of Christmas, Jesus.

Since 1993, this Samaritan's Purse project has shared the Good News of God's love with hurting children through

the simplest of gifts, shoeboxes filled with school supplies, toys, and personal items. They are packed by caring people, and help introduce children to Jesus Christ. Local believers follow up with evangelistic programs, and many precious boys and girls later receive Jesus as their Savior.

Again this year Mickey Wheeler has made small teddy bears to go in each of our boxes. Please leave room in your box for a bear. Remember to either buy a plastic clear shoe box or wrap a regular cardboard shoe box separate from the lid and put an elastic around it. This way we can put the bears into the boxes.

Families will receive a brochure about this exciting project through the church school soon. Shoeboxes are due back on

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Sunday, November 22. We are currently seeking families who would like to deliver the shoeboxes to Gateway Bible Church in Oakville on that afternoon. Delivering the boxes is a way to allow your family to do a hands-on project of mission and see what other families and churches are doing as well. We can be a small part of bringing joy and hope to millions of children around the world again this Christmas. Please contact Debbie Gravell at 272-5323 ext. 16 if you are willing to bring the boxes to Oakville.

Advent Workshop: An Advent workshop will be held Sunday, November 22, from 1 to 3 p.m. in the Parish Hall. All ages are welcome for an afternoon of crafts and fun, to prepare our hearts, our homes, and our church for the season of Advent. Church School families are especially encouraged to come. We will provide you with all the materials. Just bring your fun-loving spirit. A blessing of the crèche liturgy will be provided for families to take home and bless their family crèche.

Christmas Pageant: The annual Christmas pageant will be Sunday, December 13 at 4 p.m., with children in the pageant arriving at 3. The dress rehearsal will be the previous day, December 12, in the morning. We need more younger children to round out our cast by playing sheep, shepherds and angels. A signup sheet will be out in early November through the church school for children to indicate interest.

Speaking parts have already been cast. If your child missed the audition times and wants to participate, check with Linda Milton as soon as possible to see if there are still any openings. The speaking parts cast will rehearse lines on the following dates: Line rehearsals: Sundays, November 8, 15, 22 and December 6 at 10:30 a.m. sharp. Blocking rehearsal: Friday, December 4 from 6 to 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary.



News of the YUTES

Twenty-five young people and six adults, including the Rev. Jeff Braun, had a blast at our zip-line event last month. We were led by five guides through the course that included five zip-lines and two suspension rope bridges. It was great to get out and have some fun together, while working on that fear of heights many of us have. We look forward to many fun and exciting group events and activities throughout the year.

We had a lot of fun during our first game night of the year. Those who came deemed it a success and asked to continue it. We'll be gathering the first Wednesday of each month. Our next game night will be November 4, from 6 to 8 p.m. in Room 11. Get all your homework done in advance and join us!

Our first retreat is just around the corner! We will gather on November 20 starting at 7 p.m. at the church. Please eat dinner and then come prepared with your sleeping bag, air mattress, games, slippers,

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teddy bear, and some snacks to share. We'll then join our church family on Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon to help with the fall cleanup. Bring proper clothing, gloves, rakes, and anything else you can to help with the fall cleanup.

Keep an eye on www.yutes.org for news, events, and updates.

*Todd Skrzyniarz
Director of Youth Ministry*

Reception for Todd Skrzyniarz

The Board of Christian Education will sponsor a reception for Todd Skrzyniarz, the new Director of Youth Ministry, on November 1 during coffee hour.

We will formally introduce Todd to the congregation and welcome him into his new position. On November 1, please note there is a single service at 10 a.m.

College Addresses Needed

We like to keep in touch with our college students throughout the year. Parents are asked to e-mail or otherwise contact the church office with your student's name, postal mailing address, and e-mail address as soon as possible.

Book Drive

Gillian Reinhard, a sixth grader at a Cheshire school and a member of our church, is collecting K-8th grade books for needy magnet schools in New Haven and Hartford. Please drop the books off in the marked church parlor basket. Thank you!

Join Stepping Stones

Stepping Stones, our 5th and 6th grade youth group, meets on the second Friday of each month from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall for fun and games and some mission work. Twenty young people attended our October meeting. They donated candy and filled Halloween bowls to provide to the young residents of the Children's Home in Cromwell. We enjoyed make-your-own sundaes and spent the evening getting to know each other better. We played a couple of crazy, funny games and we also spent time planning a great year of events.

On November 13, we plan to make s'mores around a fire pit and enjoy a game or two. Our mission work will be for the benefit of our church members, friends, and neighbors. Linda Milton will show us how to make cards with stencils and stamps that can be used in visitations and correspondence.

We are also going to practice singing Christmas carols for our December caroling field trip, so bring your singing voices!

If you have never been to Stepping Stones, please join us. There are always new faces, and everyone is welcome. If you have been to Stepping Stones, we look forward to seeing you again and ask that you invite a friend!

The leaders are Kerrie Dunne, Kate Hall, Mark Sprankel, and Steve and Joyce Mulholland. If you have questions, ask any of these Stepping Stones leaders or call the Mulhollands at 272-0140.

Thanksgiving Food Donations

As Thanksgiving once again approaches, our congregation will again put together Thanksgiving meals for 50 families who are clients in the care of the state Department of Children and Families. Each dinner includes non-perishable food items and a frozen turkey for a family of six.

Watch for the sign-up sheet and information on the Outreach bulletin board. The food items donated should be boxed, not bagged, because canned goods are too heavy for bags.

Here's a suggested list of donations; it's only a guide: Stuffing, packaged mashed potatoes or a bag of potatoes (if purchased right before delivery), canned yams, canned beans, canned corn, canned cranberry sauce, canned gravy, boxed pie(s), cookies, packaged rolls, olives, nuts, juice, coffee, soda, napkins, paper plates and candles.

You may also donate a frozen turkey (frozen is preferred, because they are not cooked until November 26), and a disposable aluminum pan in which to cook it.

The boxes should be brought to the church kitchen by noon on Sunday, November 22.

This time of year is a time for reflection and to give thanks for all God has blessed us with. While many of us are surrounded by loved ones and a bounty of food from which to feast, the families who will receive the dinners are in financial crisis.



Food baskets delivered in the past have been nothing short of amazing. It is clear that God's hand plays a part in these loving preparations made for someone else.

This year we have received a donation of a \$25 Stop & Shop gift certificate to be used as a thank you. Everyone who donates a turkey and/or fixings will have his or her name entered in a drawing to win the gift certificate. Please call Christine Fitzmaurice at 272-1472 or Beth Ross at (860) 426-0702 with questions, or if you need your donations picked up. Thank you, and happy Thanksgiving!

The Board of Outreach



Hygiene Kits Sent to the South

Thanks to the generosity of the congregation, we have recently sent almost 60 hygiene kits to our United Church of Christ Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi. Thanks to those who participated in this act of outreach.

Upcoming Benefit Concerts

The sixth annual Malawi benefit concert and silent auction will take place on Sunday, November 22, at 7 p.m. Our own Robin Sellati will once again share her musical talents and those of her gifted young students. Amy Webb will update us on this year's successes in our ministry to children orphaned by AIDS in the African country of Malawi.

Other surprises are being planned. Arts and crafts donated by members and friends of the congregation will be auctioned, and refreshments will be served. Those wishing to donate new arts and crafts for auction please contact Amy Webb or Don Lee. Please bring friends, relatives, neighbors, and perhaps one of our senior members who cannot drive after dark.



Those who attended last year's Mission Trip Benefit Concert were treated to a wonderful evening of music and a reception hosted by the Board of Outreach. We are pleased to announce that our own members who are students at the prestigious Eastman School of Music will return this year.

Trevor Biggart will bring his classical guitar magic, and Jonathan Allen and his percussion trio will amaze us with their virtuosity. Robin and Jack Sellati will bring us songs from Broadway. Watch the Parish Post for the complete list of performers, and mark your calendars now for 7 p.m. on Sunday, January 3. Yes, this concert is appropriate for children.

Notes from the Executive Board

The Executive Board devoted a major portion of its October meeting to the recently announced retirement of our longstanding Director of Christian Education, Debbie Gravell. The key focus of the deliberations was to be sensitive to the needs of our children, their parents, the Sunday school teachers, and the entire congregation.

The goal is to provide a seamless transition without any interruption of the Sunday school program or other vital Christian Education activities. Our by-laws require church meetings to recognize Debbie's retirement; approve any appropriate changes to the job description; and approve the naming of a search committee. We will address all three of these topics during a single meeting December 6.

A reminder of dates for upcoming congregational meetings:

- Sunday, December 6: To vote on our final budget and Director of Christian Education issues.
- Sunday, January 24, 2010: Annual Congregational Meeting (snow day Monday, January 25th, 2010).

**Have you remembered
First Congregational Church
In your estate planning?**

A Spirit-Filled World Communion Sunday

From the Staff

The October 4 World Communion celebration was a Godsend. It was a true feast of love, a feast of fellowship and faith-building worship. A feast to sustain us not only on that morning, but for weeks to come. And a feast that literally radiated out to everyone's homes, as our dinner tables became one with Christ's table, as our various Sunday suppers merged with and were infused by the Spirit of Christ's holy meal.

Thank you to one and all for so opening your hearts – and our collective heart – to the glorious and uplifting movement of the Spirit. On that Sunday, our sanctuary was a sacred sandbox. And the Spirit of our Lord came palpably to play!



Special thanks to all who had a direct hand in setting up, rehearsing for, and bringing to life the service. To our Senior Choir, Junior Choir, and Bell Choir; to our liturgical decorating team; to the dancers from the Connecticut Chapter of the National Liturgical Dance Network; to our Deacons, ushers and greeters; to Fred and Pat's prep of the sanctuary (including a few last-minute things); to the office staff's amazing work on that multicolor bulletin; to Outreach for their Brake for Poverty program offering; to Stewardship and to Charles Jones for their passionate witness about pledging; and to anyone and

everyone who (for whatever reason) we may not have named...

...Thank You! Your gifts of time, treasure, and talent are a blessing to our church, as was so irrepressibly clear.

God grants us such incredible blessings. Blessings beyond count and measure. And, we, God's people, need but to open our hearts as we did on October 4 and as we do so often, for that Spirit to rush in.

Let us keep opening to the Spirit. Let us keep celebrating the goodness of our Lord. And let us keep seeking new and fresh and world-welcoming ways to rise... to rise... to RISE... in the love of Jesus!

Let the people say, Amen!, as we, your joyful staff join you!



Congregational Meetings

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Visit our web site:
www.cheshirecongregational.org

Milestones

In the Life of our Church Family

Baptisms:

Trey J. McCauley, son of Tyler and Jennifer McCauley, by Jeff Braun on October 18.

Deaths:

Jim Bouchard, brother of Debbie Schroeder, in September.

Kristine E. Arpaia, Will Arpaia's sister-in-law, on September 12.



Lectionary for November

Sunday, November 1: Ruth 1: 108; Psalm 146; Hebrews 9: 11-14; Mark 12: 28-34.

Sunday, November 8: Ruth 3: 1-5 and 4: 13-17; Psalm 127; 1 Kings 17: 8-16; Hebrews 9: 24-28; Mark 12: 38-44.

Sunday, November 15: 1 Samuel 1: 4-20 and 2: 1-10; Daniel 12: 1-3; Psalm 16; Hebrews 10: 11-25; Mark 13: 1-8.

Sunday, November 22: 2 Samuel 23: 1-7; Psalm 132: 1-18; Daniel 7: 9-14; Revelation 1: 4-8; John 18: 33-37.

Sunday, November 29: Jeremiah 33: 14-16; Psalm 25: 1-10; 1 Thessalonians 3: 9-13; Luke 21: 25-26.

We Give Thanks

A personal thank you to all the volunteers who give their time and energy, and to all who donated items, to this fall's rummage sale.

Sherry Kovalesky

Thank you for the calls and concern regarding my foot surgery. The flowers were beautiful. I am so fortunate to belong to such a caring congregation.

Maureen Crowley

Thank you so much for your prayers, get well and birthday greetings. It has helped me so much to know how many people are thinking of me. Visits from Alison, Ruth Havlick, Sue Chatfield and Jane Richards brightened my days. I am looking forward to the day when once again I will be able to attend church services with you.

Mary Louise Sylvester

Thank you for the cards and visits during my surgical rehab. Also, Alison's visit on a difficult day was very appreciated.

Loraine Trudell

Thank you for all your kindness and prayers we received with our move to Pennsylvania. The beautiful plaque is hanging in our dining room. Looking at it reminds me of the love and spiritual growth I felt at First Congregational Church. We are settling in and even had a chance to explore into Lancaster County a little. There is definitely a peacefulness seeing the Amish farms and the buggies parked at Walmart.

Ken, Gretchen, Dan, and Justine Bates

Notes from the Executive Board

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More Thanks

Thank you so much for the lovely blanket for Blake and book for Mark David. That was extremely thoughtful, we really appreciate the kindness. A special thank you to Susan Mancinelli for making an adorable blue baby blanket.

Mark, Kim, Mark David, and Blake Poole

Thank you so much for the wonderful blanket and frame for Trey. It was a special day, and your gesture made it extra special. The warmth at this church is extraordinary!

The McCauley Family

Craft a Lasting Legacy

To rise and to serve and to give in Christ's name is our honor, our joy, our prayerful privilege while we are alive. And, through God's grace, it's how we craft a lasting legacy as well. It's a legacy grounded in our earthly days, but one that lasts far, far beyond.

To sum it up, how we live and what we choose to give while we're alive have a material impact on our world and Christ's church after we die.

And if it is, indeed, a legacy we wish to craft, there is no greater way, no more concrete or lasting way, than through a Planned Gift.

As its name suggests, a Planned Gift is one you make during your lifetime, but which benefits the church after your death. Planned Gifts take many forms. Putting the church into your will is the most common. But others include a Gift Annuity, a Charitable Remainder Trust, or a Life Insurance policy. All of these gifts can be set up through a United Church of Christ program. Members of the Planned Giving Committee – Marshall Tucker, Bob Mead, Bill Gordon, Harry Black, Bill Mann, Joe Madden or Bob Porter - are happy to explain the details or to help you craft your legacy gift.

Through your prayerful choice now, your planned gift will ensure that First Church continues to radiate and testify to the Good News of Christ's everlasting love.

Celebrate ‘What Unites Us’

On Saturday, November 14 at 6 p.m.

We gather as a church family
for a

Harvest Dinner

To celebrate ‘What Unites Us’
through:

Food, Fellowship & Photos



- ☞ Sign up in the lobby for the food item you’ll bring.
- ☞ Drop off photos for the photo show through November 10 in the lobby drop-off box. (No expertise required!)
- ☞ On November 14, bring albums and snapshots to share of recent trips, family memories – or of whatever unites us.

Special Features:

Photo show

Church slideshow set to music

The launch of a new way to share church photos throughout the year

Our evening promises to be a low-key, low-cost way to celebrate what unites us, to relax, and to rejoice in all our mutual blessings.

All ages welcome!

Please sign up and join us for the dinner

(Even if you don’t submit photos)