

THE PARISH POST

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

CHESHIRE, CONNECTICUT
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No. 8

Time to Come Alive in the Spirit

By Jeff Braun, Senior Minister

In September, summer ebbs and fall rises. School is once again underway. Work and family schedules kick back into high gear. And, as a congregation, we *reunite*... to give thanks to God, to celebrate our blessings, and to accompany one another in the Spirit of the Lord who accompanies us.

And September will be but a taste! But an opening salvo in a larger movement. The entire year brims with opportunities, with sacred invitations. *Sacred invitations* to deepen, to embody, and to refresh our faith. *Sacred invitations* to dive reflectively within. *Sacred invitations* to reach compassionately and bravely beyond ourselves.

From a Homecoming celebration with food, an all-church photo, and fun for every age on September 13 to the inauguration of a Stewardship campaign that will inspire us to give our hearts and our thanks to God...From welcoming weekly and special worship services to a marquee music series that kicks off on November 8 with an interfaith concert featuring two internationally acclaimed

recording artists, their band, and a 14 person gospel choir...From special small-group dinners (in our Christian Life Communities) to a church-hosted photo show about "What Unites Us" that is open to the entire town...From youth and adult mission trips to every-day opportunities to put our faith into life-changing action...

Through these events *and so many more*, our hope is to come alive in the Spirit that infuses our every breath, to better realize our potential in Christ, and to spread the Good News of God's love -- in our hearts, at home and in our pews, and within the larger human communion.

Wherever summer has taken us, whatever the joys and the challenges we face, let us share them, confident in the refreshing Spirit, the abiding Son, and the ever-loving God from whom all blessings flow. Let us greet the sacred invitations of the coming year, with giving hearts (and by newly giving our hearts to God), and by giving thanks... both for all that has been and all that is yet to be through Christ!

God's Peace,
Jeff

Last Call for the Directory

The Membership Committee thanks those who have signed up to have their photograph taken for the new church photo directory. The final photo sessions will be held in the Parish Hall from Tuesday, September 1 to Thursday, September 3. They will run from 2:30 to 8:50 p.m.

The Membership Committee will assemble an all-Church roster (names and addresses) for inclusion in the directory. This roster will include all current members and friends of First Congregational Church. Anyone who prefers not to have a picture in the Directory and/or not to have name and address listed on the roster, please contact the Church Office at 272-5323.



Make a Hygiene Kit

Starting August 30, we have started collecting hygiene kits for our United Church of Christ Back Bay Mission, located in Biloxi, Miss.

Each hygiene kit should include a hand towel; a washcloth; a comb; a nail clipper (no metal files or emery boards); one bath-size bar of soap in wrapper; a toothbrush in its original package; a container of toothpaste in its original package; and a deodorant or antiperspirant. Empty zipper-type with a list of hygiene kit items are now available in the church parlor. Please return them to church by Sunday, September 27.

September Worship Schedule

Sunday, September 6: Services at 8 and 10. Jeff Braun preaching. Communion will be served. Food offerings will be collected; the food of the month is spaghetti sauce.

Sunday, September 13: Homecoming Sunday. One service at 10 a.m.; Jeff Braun preaching. See Page 3 for Homecoming Sunday details.

Sunday, September 20: Services at 9 and 11. Jeff Braun preaching.

Sunday, September 27: Services at 9 and 11. Alison McCaffrey preaching.

New Member Orientation

The Membership Committee invites all who would like to explore membership in First Congregational Church to join us for a new member Orientation Class on Saturday, October 3. Those who decide to join will be received into membership on Sunday, October 18. There will be a reception between the Services.

Child care will be provided for both of these events. Anyone seeking information about joining the church should talk with an usher, a minister, or a Membership Committee member, identified by green ribbons on their name tag. Or they may call the church office at 272-5323.

Homecoming Sunday 2009

Homecoming Sunday 2009 will be celebrated on September 13 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Please join us for this joyful and fun-filled day with our church family: food, music, games, vespers, an all-church photo. The theme is “Are You Home Yet?”

We begin at 10 with a family-friendly single service; chapel worship will be offered for ages PS 3- 2nd grade. Immediately following worship, we recess out to the church’s front steps for our annual all-church photo, then it’s out onto the green for our picnic. Boards and committees will provide the picnic foods; everyone else is asked to bring a dessert to share.

Women’s Bible Study

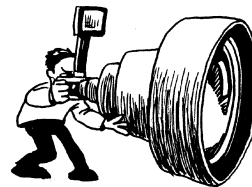
Women’s Bible study begins again September 23, with a program led by Debbie Gravel entitled “Contagious Joy.” The sessions are held on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. in the Parlor. You are welcome to join us when you can and be away when you must. Each week stands by itself. We read the scriptures, share reflections on the scripture and close with prayer. All women of the church are welcome.

We will use a study guide from the Women of Faith series on Joy in God. We will explore different scriptures about Joy as we walk through this series. Join us for this study that is sure to enable you to feel joy in God in all circumstances. The cost of the study book is \$6.

Photography Show: What Unites Us

Our third annual Photography Show celebrates the bonds that unite us in relationship with God and one another. We invite all members and friends of First Congregational Church to submit photos that capture the bonds that we hold in common. We’re expanding our invitation to the members and friends of all Cheshire churches and synagogues to join us in offering their photos on this theme. Our reception will be an uniting expression of community as we open our doors on the evening of November 14 from 6 to 8 p.m.

Our theme this year is “What Unites Us.” Be on the lookout for expressions of what you believe unites us as human beings – what are things that we share in common, that give joy, that speak to our hearts. Take a photograph. Or, you may choose to submit a photo previously taken. Print your photo—color, black or



white. If possible, please mount it on a background of your choice (matte board, foam board). Submit your photo—any

size from 4x6 to 11x14, including a one sentence description, by October 25.

All ages and skill levels are invited to participate – amateurs to professionals. All are welcome. This is not a contest, but a time to share in the beauty and diversity of our relationship with God and one another through the arts.

Christian Education for September

Homecoming Sunday, September 13, presents a somewhat different church school format. There is a single worship service at 10 a.m. On that date, children Preschool age 3 to 1st grade leave during the first hymn for chapel and then classroom get-acquainted time. Parents are asked to pick up their children immediately following the worship service and bring them outside for the church photo. Children in grades 2-8 will remain in the worship service with their families.

Church school begins for all grades from Preschool 3 to 8th grade begins on Sunday, September 20.

Bible Journeys: Grades 2 – 6: This workshop rotation for children and youth who have entered grades 2-6 this school year. Children will know what workshop they will go to by the schedule below, the Sunday Bulletin, or the Bible Journeys Board in the hallway across from Room 8.

Grades 3-6 will go to class when dismissed from the church. Grade 2 at the 9:00 service only will leave for Chapel in the early part of the service. After Chapel they will go with their Shepherds to their Bible Journeys workshop. Parents may find their children in the classroom listed in the bulletin at the end of Church School. Grade 2 at 11:00 will go directly to their Bible Journeys workshop room from the sanctuary.

This month's workshop rotation is "Noah and the Flood."

- Thou Art, Room 8: Students will create the scene of the animals leaving the ark and a rainbow. This will help ingrain the story of Noah. Students will also examine the meaning of covenant and how they are to respond to God's covenant in the artistic process of creating a rainbow for their scene.

- Red Sea Productions, Room 9: Children will learn that God talked to Noah and continues to communicate with people. Children will understand that Noah was obedient to God even when he didn't have any evidence that what God said would really happen. The children will recognize that Noah is an example to us of obedience to God. The children will become familiar with the puppets, how to manipulate them and how to store them as they work with them creating a puppet show about Noah and the Flood.

- Desert Tales Room 10: The children will watch the video Noah and the Flood. They will be able to retell the story of the Great Flood, talk about the meaning of the Rainbow and remember that the story comes from Genesis in the Old Testament.

- Gospel Games, Room 11: In this workshop, children will become more familiar with the details of the Noah's Ark story from a computer program, and will better understand Noah's faith and God's promise via researching key story details and developing a magazine special feature section using the computer.

Schedule

Sept. 13: 10:00 Service	Homecoming Worship	Homecoming Worship	Homecoming Worship	Homecoming Worship
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9:00

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

11:00

Date	Thou Art	Red Sea Prod.	Desert Tales	Gospel Games
Sept. 20	Grades 5 & 6	Grades 2	Grades 3-4	Week Off
Sept. 27	Week Off	Grades 3-4	Grades 2	Grades 5-6

Snack and Juice Supply: Three-year olds through 1st graders are served snacks and juice on Sunday mornings. We have found that asking parents to contribute once a year helps us keep within our budget. We welcome all contributions and offer a schedule as a suggested way to remember.

Please read labels carefully; snacks should have no nuts, peanut butter or peanut oil. Some suggestions of cookies which have no nuts are: nut free varieties of Chips Ahoy, Oreos, Teddy Grahams, Vanilla Wafers, and Lorna Doone.

Families whose last name begins with A or B bring juice and/or cookies in September. Families C and D, in October. Families E, F, and G, in November. Families H, I, and J, December.

Third Grade Communion Potluck: Students in grade 3 and their families are invited to a potluck supper on September 27 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Parish

Hall to discuss communion. Children will begin receiving communion with their families on Sunday, October 4. A letter will be sent to each Third Grader. If you don't receive yours, please call the church office.

Orientation Sessions

Nursery Caregivers Training and Orientation: All caregivers need to attend this yearly training and orientation session to review our procedures and safe church policies. This is an annual meeting for all caregivers both new and returning. It will be held Thursday, September 3, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the Church Nursery Room.

Bible Journeys Orientation: All people who signed up to be Shepherds and Workshop Leaders and Shepherd substitutes for Bible Journeys grades 2-6 are asked to plan to attend an evening of orientation. It will be Tuesday, September

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8, from 7 to 9 p.m. in Room 11.

PS 3 – 1st Grades Teacher and Helper Orientation: All teachers, helpers and substitutes signed up to be in this ministry for the next church school year are asked to plan to attend an evening of orientation. It will be Thursday, September 10. From 6 to 7 p.m., classrooms are open for setup; the program is from 7 to 9 in the Parish Hall.



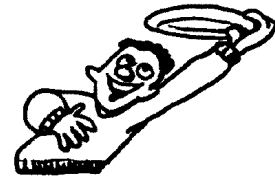
YUTES News

I'm Todd Skrzyaniarz, the new Director of Youth Ministries for our church. I've grown up in the church and have been a member since 1997. Over the past nine years, I've served on staff with group work camps, helping lead week-long mission trips that our youth have attended each summer. During the week, I work as a behavioral therapist, providing behavioral and instructional support to children with autism and special needs in the Hamden and Waterbury public schools.

I'm excited to serve alongside our amazing adult leaders and staff, as we continue to grow and foster our youth group program, the YUTES. When you see me in church, please stop me and take a moment to introduce yourself.

Now on to the fun stuff. We're ready to kick off our year with a picnic at the Brunettis' house; they have graciously opened up their home to us once again. It will be held on Sunday, September 20 from 3:30 to 7 p.m., and directions will be available on our website: www.yutes.org.

All junior and senior high (grades 7-12) youth of the church are welcome, and encouraged to attend. Whether you're a long time member or have never been to Youth Group in the past, this is a great opportunity to get together with our friends, make some new ones, and see what Youth Group this year will be all about. All the hot dogs, hamburgers, and drinks will be provided. There will be plenty of fun to be had, including the pool, an ultimate Frisbee game, and a bunch of other yard games. Please bring an item to share (salad, chips, casserole, dessert, etc.).



Our regular meetings are held on Sunday evenings from 5 to 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall, with dinner provided. They will start the following week, September 27. Please bring \$3 to cover the cost of dinner, and bring an open heart. Bring a friend if you'd like; we hope to see you there!

HOMECOMING SUNDAY

September 13, 2009

One service at 10 a.m.

All-Church Photo follows

Stay for the Picnic on the Green

This Fall's Music Theme: Make a Joyful Noise!

The fall season's musical offerings will include Sunday morning worship, special events and services, as well as the premiere of the "Music at First Congregational Church" series.

Our season's theme, "Make a Joyful Noise," is inspired by the diversity of our music program and newly formed music series. The program is expanding the rehearsal and singing opportunities for those students in the Junior Choir, as well as an expanded bell choir program to include members of the Junior and Senior choirs. Wednesday nights are music nights, so check out the schedule and come and sing:

Beginning September 9, on Wednesdays the Primary Choir (with Joe D'Eugenio, Karin Arai, and Karen Petit) rehearses from 6 to 6:30 p.m. The Junior Choir (with Joe, soprano section leader Patricia Barbano, and soloist Megan Stephan) rehearses from 6 to 7:15. The Senior Choir (with Joe and Patricia) rehearses from 7:30 to 9:30.

Our music ministry offers three vocal choirs for children and adults of all ages. The choirs provide great musical experiences for all as well as opportunities to participate in the worship life of the First Congregational Church.

The Primary Choir is composed of children in grades K-3. Rudimentary concepts of music are introduced, including pitch association and simple rhythms. Music is learned by rote.

The Junior Choir is for boys in grades 4-8 or 9 (whose voices have not changed) and girls from 4-12. The choir focuses on basic music notation and concepts of melody, tempo, and dynamics. They also gain familiarity with the church's hymnal and fundamental structures of Christian worship. The choir sings once a month during worship as well as for other special services throughout the year.



The Senior Choir, for adults of all ages as well as high school students in High School, is the crux of the music program. It performs a wide range of music that reflects the diverse musical

background and tradition of our congregation. The choir leads the congregation in hymn singing and provides special music to enhance the worship experience.

The Handbell Choir program is expanding this year to include adult ringers, members of the Senior Choir, and children in grades 4 and up. It will continue to be directed by Marianne Beckmann, assisted by Joe D'Eugenio. The choir will rehearse specific Wednesday evenings before playing twice in the fall, and twice in the spring. A full schedule of the season will be available in September. You do not need to read music to ring.

A New Music Series

The church's newly established 2009/2010 Series will feature four musical events highlighting several guest artists as well as our own Senior Choir. The series offers something for everyone, including traditional, contemporary, jazz, and gospel music. Each of these four events is unique and should not be missed.

November 8: Guest Artist David Morgan will perform at an Interfaith Concert at 7 p.m.

Graduating from the University of New Orleans Jazz Studies department in 1992, David Morgan studied jazz where jazz was born under piano legend Ellis Marsalis. He has since performed with musicians from jazz great Wynton Marsalis to rocker Peter Dinklage to cabaret vocalist Diana Canova. At First Congregational Church, he will offer an interfaith concert in the sanctuary.

December 20: The annual Service of Candlelight Lessons and Carols will be held Sunday, December 20, at 4 p.m. This year's Candlelight Lessons and Carols service will match scripture and poetry, to be read by Scripture By Heart, with music to tell the story of Christ's birth through song and word. Traditional carols, anthems, and hymns will be sung by our Senior Choir and congregation.

February 13, 2010: Guest Artist Kelly Mittlemen will present a "Soul Cabaret" on Saturday, February 13, at 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Mittlemen recently sang with jazz legend Maynard Ferguson. She is currently working on her second CD of

original music. Kelly, of Redding, was named an honorable mention runner-up in the jazz category for the 2009 International Songwriting Competition.

Summer 2010 (date to be announced): Our annual Music on the Green brings members of our congregation and the larger community together onto our historic green for a picnic followed by a live band to listen to and dance. Next summer's band will be The Heartbeat Dixieland Jazz Band. They were such a hit this past summer (despite the rain that kept a lot of people away), that we asked them to come back and play the green again next summer.



Memorial Music Sunday

Every year, the Memorial Music Sunday service honors the memories of those who have died. The Senior Choir sings an extended choral work that offers hope, comfort, and inspiration to the congregation. This year's Memorial Music Sunday will be November 1 at a single 10 a.m. service. The music will be Leonard Bernstein's beautiful "Chichester Psalms," for choir, soloist, organ, harp, and percussion, as well as other anthems composed by American composers.

Have You Remembered
First Congregational Church
In Your Estate Planning?

Notes from the Executive Board

Here is a summary of action at the July and August Executive Board meetings.

As the result of much thought, discussion, and work by the staff, and taking into account input from formal meetings and informal conversations with church members, Jeff Braun and Alison McCaffrey were pleased to propose a draft church calendar of events for 2009-2010 at the July Executive Board meeting.

The calendar is designed to follow the natural ebb and flow of church seasons, recognizing Advent and Lent as the pivotal events. This draft calendar served as the foundation for a more detailed discussion at the August Executive Board meeting and will be a good tool to help shape church programs in the future.

Currently Executive Board has three At-Large members (David Hostage, Kathy Duffendack, and Jim Louys) who speak for several church groups. The purpose is to facilitate communication and give these church groups a voice at Executive Board. David, Kathy and Jim have been looking across the church to make sure all groups are represented and have made some recommendations to Executive Board for non-aligned groups, and to better align groups with the function they provide at the church. Several changes were suggested.

The next step is for all boards and committees to take this information back to their groups for feedback, to be discussed at the September Executive Board meeting. Kathy Duffendack

volunteered to speak at meetings about this topic; please contact her directly to schedule this.

Here are the dates for upcoming congregational meetings: **Sunday, September 20** – Congregational Meeting on Preliminary Budget (informational only;-no vote) **Sunday, December 6** – Congregational meeting to vote on final budget. **Sunday, January 24, 2010** – Congregational Annual Meeting (snow date: Monday, January 25).

Henry McNulty has agreed to coordinate communication activities, both internally (such as the Parish Post) and externally, such as providing news about First Congregational Church to media outlets.



Oberammergau 2010

It's not too late to make your plans for the late June 2010 trip to Italy, Switzerland, Austria and Germany for the 2010 performance at Oberammergau of the Passion Play.

Our itinerary also includes a ride on the famous Glacier Express train; a 7½ hour railway journey across 291 bridges, through 91 tunnels and across the Oberalp Pass.

The trip is being arranged through King Travelways Travel Agency and booked through Collette Tours. Please let us know of your interest (call 272-5323) as soon as possible. The trip is limited to 40 participants.

Giving Hearts, Giving Thanks

Is it a coincidence that pledge season comes during the lead-up to Thanksgiving? Definitely not! What these two expressions of spirit have in common is that they're both traditionally focused on the harvest, when God's bounty to us is most evident.

That's where our roots are, at least, though whether we choose to reflect our heritage, tying our generosity toward the church explicitly to our thankfulness toward God, is not so clear cut. But if we do not reflect on our reasons to be thankful during Thanksgiving season—then when will we?

There is a case to be made that this is the best time of the year to register our gratitude. Perhaps our kids are starting a new grade at school, or even a new school. Many of us have just come back from summer holidays and see afresh the work that we do and the position we've achieved (or been blessed with). For some of us, September is the end of the fiscal year, and while it may have been a difficult year, it's ending with an up-tick and brighter days ahead. Things seem fresher, more sustainable in autumn than during the cold, lean days of winter, or during those frenetic days of spring when school keeps grinding on and everything is trying to merge into summer, but can't yet.

Most of us have felt thankfulness in the past, and have tried to express our gratitude, perhaps even in our pledge to the church. Most of us, we suspect, come to church as a part of our act of devotion

and appreciation toward God for the good things that have come to us. But have we done enough? Have new mercies of God come to us in the past year? Do things keep getting richer, more rewarding? If we are living the dream in Cheshire – and statistics say that most of us are – shouldn't we be focused at this time of year in returning God's generosity to the extent that we are able?

The national norm for Protestants giving to their church is 2½ percent of annual income. In Cheshire, the average household income, according to census figure, is more than \$100,000, but the average amount of those who pledge in this church is \$1,935 – less than 2 percent. Many of our current members don't pledge at all.

The church is a busy, spirit-centered place, but it is not well endowed financially. Last year, with recession uncertainty bearing down upon us, we had to cut the budget by \$50,000 after the pledges were counted. This year, if we are truly aware of our blessings, the return of our thanks to God should make that unnecessary.

During September and October, the Board of Stewardship hopes to heighten your sense of the urgency of your generous pledge of your resources for 2010. Our collective acts of devotion and gratitude are what will see us through. Your giving, as always, is an expression of thanksgiving toward God for his blessings.

The Board of Stewardship

7 @7 Fellowship Dinners

Getting to know fellow church members and friends in our large and ever changing congregation is a daunting task; some might even say impossible. However, God calls us to be a church community in the richest sense of the word. And to do that, we need to get to know each other.

Our church family is now grouped into 12 geographic areas called “Church Life Communities,” or CLCs for short. You can find your CLC on the map in the Parish Hall. Gathering ourselves into the Church Life Communities is not meant to divide us, or to keep us from knowing others in the other CLCs. We hope instead these CLCs will help us to know one another better, connect in fellowship, and reach out and care for one another.

This year, we offer “7@7 Fellowship Dinners,” where members in each CLC will have the opportunity to gather in groups of 7 to 9 for a meal in each other’s homes in the months of October, January, and April for dinner. The better we know one another, the better we can be the church God calls us to be.



Bereavement Support Group

The Bereavement Support group meets on the last Thursday of every month in Room 10 at 7 p.m. We invite those who have has suffered a loss of a loved one and are struggling with grief to come and share their burdens. This is a quiet time of sharing with each other the pain and sadness that comes with loss. It is

sometimes the telling and retelling of those feelings that helps us move through the journey of grief. It often helps just being with others who are going through similar circumstances.

Regardless of where you are in your own journey, please feel free to join us. If you have any questions, call Jan Garthwait at 272-5915.



Be a Church Officer

As we all think of the ways in which we provide time, talent and treasure to support God’s work at our church, please think about ways in which you would like to use your time to serve as a church officer, or a member of a church board or committee. Officers and members of church boards must be members of the church.

The Nominating Committee will provide information about openings, and welcomes your interest in learning more about the positions or volunteering to serve. There are more than 160 positions for adults and youth on all of the boards, committees and offices. At least 70 of these must be filled this year. Terms begin after the church’s Annual Meeting at the end of January.

If you would like more information on how you can best serve our church, speak with a member of the committee: Will Arpaia, Sharon Brenneman, Ford Cole, Jan Cowles, Karen Gravino, Rich Grudzias, Joyce Mulholland, Carol Warner, and June Webster. Or you may e-mail Carol at carolwarner@snet.net.

Christmas Fair Baskets

Your help is needed for our Christmas Fair! 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.

We are looking for baskets with a theme (for example: Lego blocks, art supplies, hobby items, chocolate, coffee, handcrafted items, books) or themes with no basket (sand pail filled with beach supplies, Christmas box with ornaments, restaurant gift certificate with a bottle of wine, grocery gift card with a reusable shopping bag, baby supplies in a diaper bag, etc.)

Here are three ways to help. 1. Creative: you build the basket, deliver it to church, ready for bidding. 2. Not so creative: if you are not feeling creative, but would like to help, we can build a basket, box or pail with items you donate. 3. Wannabe creative: 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. RSVP to Patti Dickinson (271-7003) to hold your spot.

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

On July 29, the Albrechts, Jan Cowles, Todd Skrzyniarz, Joe, Kelly and Jan Garthwait went to Columbus House to serve more than 85 guests our now-famous meatloaf dinner. We were so grateful to the faithful and generous cooks who provided plenty for us to serve. We had a wonderful assortment of pies-every single piece was taken, and we received rave reviews. One guest even requested our meatloaf recipe!

Many thanks once again to all who make this possible time after time: Sue Chatfield, Terri Adesso, Angela Mitchell, Sally Ziegler, Nancy Turner, Carolyn Brown, Christine Fitzmaurice, Lisa Canas, Shirley Albanese, Betsy Mule, the Albrechts, Martha Lape, Donna Mead, Carlee Moldenhauer, Stacey Groshart, Marilyn Gordon, Nora Adams, Beth Eichelman, Beth Ross, Pam Euerle, and Kirsten Sullivan. After our trip to New Haven, Ken and Pam Euerle hosted a meal at their home for the crew-a blessed time of good food, fellowship, and fun! We always welcome new additions to the crew so give Jan Garthwait a call at 272-5915 if you'd like to join us. Our next meal there is on September 30.

Hospitalized?

If you are hospitalized, or you know someone else in the congregation who is, please tell First Congregational Church. Federal privacy laws now prohibit hospitals or nursing homes from telling us the names of patients.

‘Healthy Women’ Meeting

The group “CT Women of the UCC” invites all women across the state to gather for its fall meeting: “Healthy Women, Healthy Environment” at Asylum Hill Congregational Church in Hartford on Saturday, October 3. Registration and lunch will be \$14.

There will be an opportunity to choose one of two workshops: Learn and ask questions concerning women’s health issues, led by area physicians; or become informed about the environment and the impact of the chemicals in items we use every day, led by informed activists.

Lunch will be served. There will be all sorts of interesting displays, including books, SERRV items, prayer shawl and chemo cap instructions, cosmetics, Church World Service items, and more.

Information and registration forms will be posted on the lobby bulletin board in early September. Call Martha Lape, 272-9327, or email her at mlape@aol.com with questions, or if you need a ride.



‘Sacred Conversation’

The Fall Session of the 2009 United Church of Christ Connecticut Conference Annual Meeting, to be October 23 and 24, offers a special opportunity to participate in a “sacred conversation” on racial issues. The Keynote Speaker will be the Rev. Geoffrey Black, the new General Minister and President of the UCC. The meeting will be at Middletown High School.

Lectionary for September

Sunday, September 6: Proverbs 22: 1-2, 8-9, 22-23; Psalm 125; Isaiah 35: 4-7; Psalm 146; James 2: 1-17; Mark 7: 24-37.

Sunday, September 13: Proverbs 1: 20-33; Psalm 19; Isaiah 50: 4-9; Psalm 116: 1-9; James 3: 1-12; Mark 8: 27-28.

Sunday, September 20: Proverbs 31: 10-31; Psalm 1; Wisdom of Solomon 1:16 - 2:22; Jeremiah 11: 18-20; Psalm 54; James 3: 13 - 4:8; Mark 9: 30-37.

Sunday, September 27: Esther 7: 1-10, 9: 20-22; Psalm 124; Numbers 11: 4-29; Psalm 19: 7-14; James 5: 13-20; Mark 9: 38-50.

Thank You!

Thank you for your kind concern regarding my cataract surgery, which went smoothly. My sincere appreciation for your kindness and concern. May God bless you all.

Sam Wang

Thank you very much for the beautiful ceremony and baptism of our daughter. It was truly a wonderful day. Thank you also for stopping by our home; it was great to see you!

Rob, Marisa, and Gianna Silas

Thanks to everyone for your prayers, cards, phone calls and visits during my recent illness and hospital stay. We are fortunate to have such a caring and supportive church staff and congregation.

Gary Warner

Parish Care Summer Report

Here is what your Parish Care Committee and its volunteers have done this summer:

Baptism/Births: There were two baptisms during the summer. A plaque was given to each family commemorating this special event in their lives. A baby blanket was also received by a family.

Bereavement – The Bereavement group continued to meet on the last Thursday of the month in Room 11 at 7 pm. If you have suffered the loss of a loved one, please join this group. It has proven to be very helpful to those who attend – no matter where they are on their grief journey.

Cards & Telephone – Many cards and phone calls were sent/made to those in the hospital, were ill, needed encouragement or congratulations. Because the Parish Care Committee didn't meet, and exact numbers are not known now.

Caring Visitors – Caring Visitors have been visiting and bringing joy and companionship to five people.

Chores – Two chores were done for two very happy members of our church. John Bates did a wonderful job. He is looking for more work, so please call him at 272-6389 if you have something small you would like him to do.

Meals – Exact summer numbers are not yet compiled. Marianne Eagleson will be the coordinator for September and October if you require a meal. We are in

the process of redesigning the way meals are handled. After many years of being a very gracious provider of a freezer, Lynn Ryan will be taking a long overdue rest from the Freezer Ministry. There are no thanks big enough for the Ryan family for providing freezer space. We will keep you posted as to how you can continue to help this very important ministry.

Prayer Pagers – Six of our pagers were used during the summer.

Rides – A driving report will be presented next month.

Stephen Ministry – Since May, a total of 126 hours were spent by six Stephen Ministers, who gave of their time to nine Care Receivers. If you or someone you know could benefit from having a Stephen Minister, call Sue Chatfield (235-6294) for a consultation.

Parish Care Coordinator – I have been busy entering data into Church Windows and attending both staff and Pastoral Care meetings. Considerable time was spent on the Christian Life Communities project that was started by the Rev. Alison McCaffrey. Together we have completed the technical part of this project and it is now ready to be used by the congregation. There will be more about this wonderful community project in the future.

The Parish Care Coordinator spent a total of 77 hours this summer.

Donna Mead, Parish Care Coordinator
248-9576 donna.mead@comcast.net

Milestones

In the Life of Our Church Family

Weddings:

Erin Casey and Eric Pope, June 6

Cassie Novak and David Maliar, June 19

Krissy Sienkowski and Jordan Dorsey,
July 18

Bernadette Luster and Michael Cropp,
July 18

Baptisms:

Gianna Karyn Silas, daughter of Robert
Anthony Silas and Marisa Silverman Silas,
June 28

Cadence Reese Fasano, daughter of
Marc Christopher Fasano and Kara
Dickinson Fasano, July 19

Austin Blake Mosebach, son of Kelly
Ann Mosebach, on July 19

Ava Whitney Watts, daughter of
Whitney Carter Watts and Gina Mesite
Watts, August 2

Deaths:

Phyllis Fetscher, mother of Nancy
Brunetti, July 21

William Ryan, father of Walt Ryan,
August 8.

What's happening
at the church?

www.cheshirecongregational.org
and select "Calendar"

More Thanks

Just a quick note to thank so many people for their cards and kindness during my operation and recovery. I am home and doing well, albeit I am on a cane for a while. Rehab is going well, and I will be walking the trail with the dog in no time. Thanks again especially to Bobbie Porter for two days of delicious food, and Alison for her visits. Jan Cowles showed up in my room at Rehab three or four times, and last but not least, Jeff who called a couple of times.

Addie Marx

A note of thanks for the card signed by members of our congregation. It was waiting for me when I arrived home from the hospital and was greatly appreciated. Also, my heartfelt thanks to Jeff for his uplifting visit in the hospital. He is truly a spirit-filled man. God knew what he was doing when he sent him to our church.

Warren Raynor

Thank you so much for all of your prayers and caring during my mother's illness, and since her death. It has been a blessing to be part of an extended church family who demonstrate God's love in caring for each other. Your calls, notes, cards, e-mails, prayers and meals have been such a comfort to our family during this difficult time. I was very touched that Alison was able to come to Long Island for my mother's funeral, and to be part of our luncheon with family and closest friends in celebration of my mother's life. Thank you all for your love, caring and compassion.

Nancy, Todd, Dave and Karen Brunetti