

CROSSROADS

VOL. 70, No. 7

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST), STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

JULY 2014

WORSHIP IN THE CHAPEL—10:30 A.M.

- July 6** **Fourth Sunday after Pentecost**
Holy Communion, Food Trunk and
Deacons Fund Offering
- July 13** **Fifth Sunday after Pentecost**
- July 20** **Sixth Sunday after Pentecost**
- July 27** **Seventh Sunday after Pentecost**

SUNDAY FLOWER MEMORIALS



To donate flowers for our Sunday worship service, contact the church office for more information or to request a form. The cost for a bouquet to decorate the chancel is \$60. Checks should be made payable to FCC Stamford with "Flowers" in the memo section and may be mailed to the church or placed in the offering plate on Sunday. Please contact the office for open dates.

FROM THE INTERIM PASTORS DESK

JULY 2014

Summer is upon us, and if we are honest, I know that church attendance drops off as people take vacations and trips. Now oddly enough, this has me thinking of the UCC saying, "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here."

I love this saying, because it proclaims our extravagant welcome. But, I've also begun to wonder what that means for us as people of faith. We aren't just about coming to church. We are people who are sent into the world to share the presence of Christ—a world that is not always welcoming.

And so I'd like to leave you with this thought as you take your vacation. "No matter who you are or where you are sent on life's journey, you carry the presence of Christ." And the presence of Christ that you carry can be a source of comfort, strength, and challenge to whomever you meet in your travels. I pray you experience God's strength as you travel through these summer months.

Susan

*Beginning July 6 through
September 1, Labor Day
weekend, we begin
worship at 10:30 a.m.
in our Chapel*

COUNCIL



CORNER

JULY

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Faith Quinlan Vintinner
- 3 Susan and Vincent De Simone, anniversary
- 5 Charlotte Smith
- 8 Shaun Strickland
- 11 John Michael Jelliffe
- 13 Emily Humbert
- 14 Virginia Peters
- 15 Robert Phillips
- 16 Amalia Garzon
- 20 Candice and Joe Bryan, anniversary
- 21 Barbara Arata
- 22 Dudley Jenkins, Tephilla Ponnuthurai
- 25 Cindy Richardson
- 28 Percilla Kirklewski and Kathryn Sawabini
- 30 Cecily Christian

LECTIONARY READINGS

July 6: Gen 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67;
Ps 45:10-17 or Song of Sol 2:8-13 or
Zech 9:9-12; Ps 145:8-14; Rom 7:15-25a;
Matt 11:16-19, 25-30

July 13: Gen 25:19-34; Ps 119:105-112 or
Isa 55:10-13; Ps 65 (1-8), 9-13; Rom 8:1-11;
Matt 13:1-9, 18-23

July 20: Gen 28:10-19a; Ps 139:1-12, 23-24 or
Wisd of Solomon 12:13, 16-19 or Isa 44:6-8;
Ps 86:11-17; Ps 86:11-17; Rom 8:12-25;
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

July 27: Gen 29:15-28; Ps 105:1-11, 45b or
Ps 128 or 1 Kings 3-5-12; Ps 119:129-136;
Rom 8:26-39; Matt 13:31-33, 44-52

The Council met on June 18. Susie Townsley, former Connecticut Conference minister, led us in a discussion on past and present conflict in the church with the goal of formulating a plan to deal with future conflicts as they arise.

A deposit has been placed on a new organ for the sanctuary and work will soon begin on caulking and sealing the stained glass windows as well as the restoration of the bell tower.

The Council appointed Jen Godzeno to the Board of Christian Education. Dawn Bruscoe and Anne Mochulsky have agreed to join the Thanksgiving Dinner team next year to help co-chairs Ellen Taylor and Warren Richardson.

The end of June saw five new members join the church, Music Appreciation Sunday, and our participation in the Stamford Art Walk. Starting on July 6, we will worship in our air-conditioned chapel starting at 10:30 a.m. each Sunday.

Kathie Laug
Clerk



Saturday, June 21 was a glorious day outdoors and a happy successful one in our church dining room.

Co-chair Thea Tenca and I want to thank the generous volunteers who manned the colorful booths, and helped so much to make the Fair a success - Wendy Avirgan, Mary Jo Godzeno, Elizabeth Jenkins, June Washiewicz, Sonia Ryan, Helga Downing and Charry Boris. We sold a great number of our stored toys, and are pleased with the results – at this writing \$1,128.71!

The proceeds will be divided between a local charity serving children and the church Capital Funds Campaign. Many thanks to those who came to purchase and especially to the workers.

Barbara Arata

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Walton Place
Stamford, CT 06901

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Keep us informed!

**If you are hospitalized, please call the
church office and let us know.**

**We would like to include you in our
prayers and visit you!**

SALT
(SERVING ANOTHER IN LOVE TOGETHER)



Update on Mission Activity

In the spirit of Maya Angelou's words, FCC has been "leaping fences" to reach those in need both locally and around the world.

- Ralph and Elaine Murray challenged FCC to support women and children in South Sudan flee from the unsafe refugee camps. The congregation not only matched the Murray's gift of \$2500 but exceeded it by \$5655!
- Seven people helped clean up the Northfield Cemetery on May 17th.
- A contract was signed for the Simply Smiles Mission Trip to be held August 1-8, 2015.
- SALT/Missions Board prepared the meal for the New Covenant House of Hospitality on June 21st.
- We participated in the *ArtWalk* event on Bedford St with a tent where young people could make crocheted bracelets and tours were available of the stained glass windows in the church. (Thank you Anne and Tephi!)

There is always more to do than our hands are able. We invite you to join us so that together we will be a Mission Church, not just a Mission Board. One pressing need is for a few people to volunteer as "lead chefs" for the New Covenant House of Hospitality. We won't be able to continue this long time commitment of FCC without this help. Please consider volunteering and speak to Helga Downing.

Peace.
Paul Bingaman, Anne Mochulsky, Warren Richardson, Tephilla Ponnuthurai, Jean Meyer, Rev. Susan Gibson, and Maureen Matthews

THRIFT SHOP NEWS

Our Thrift Shop will be closed for the months of July and August. We will reopen for business on the first Thursday after Labor Day, September 4. Please withhold all donations until August. Many thanks for your continued support.



Barbara Arata for the Women's Fellowship

HATS OFF!



Many thanks to Maureen Matthews, Sarah Matthews and Anne Mochulsky, who worked so well in preparing a wonderful meal this month for New Covenant House. This is a much appreciated service. We are always looking for members of our church who would be willing to help in either the capacity of chef or helper.

If you are one of those people, please come and see me, Helga Downing, or call me at 203-359-0494.

Be part of our church's mission, support *Downtown EATS* by:

- Volunteering to help on the 2nd Saturday each month (10:00 a.m.-1:00p.m.)
- Donating non-perishable food and toiletries

This month the following items would be especially helpful:

- Small or medium boxes of cereal, tuna, individual soup and fruit with pop-up tops.
- All small toiletries, lotion, hand sanitizer

Please bring donations on Sunday, July 6. Downtown EATS this month is July 12.

Collections will be ongoing on the first Sunday of each month.

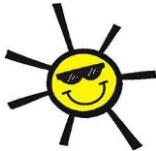
Thank you for your continued generosity!

THE CLASON GROUP
NOW MEETING SUNDAY AT 9:45

2014 brings a new focus for the Clason Group, our no-commitment and all-ideas-welcome "sunday school class." Through the first part of 2014, we will be exploring together "Why we Church." We all have siblings, parents, children or spouses that think churching every Sunday is good thing, and we all have family and friends that think it is a waste of their time. Whichever side you fall on, you are welcome to come and share your understanding of why we church, or to listen to what others might have to say.

Through the spring, the Clason Group will convene upstairs in room 309 on the first and third Sunday of each month, at 9:45 a.m. Talk to *David Vintinner* if you have any questions.

SUMMER 2014 HOSPITALITY



For the months of July and August only three goodies are needed! No coffee or tea is made, so milk is not necessary. Church provides cold cups and napkins. With the drinks, one half gallon of iced tea and two half gallons of juice is required. You can leave them in their containers so people will know what flavor they are drinking. Then – it will take about one half hour to wash, dry and put away the dishes used.

Thank you for doing Hospitality!! It is greatly appreciated!!

SECOND SUNDAY WALKS



The July 13 walk will be to Storm King Art Center, one of the world's leading sculpture parks, in New Windsor, NY, led by Janis Stalhut of the Unitarian Universalist Society. Because it is a 1 hour drive, be prepared to leave by 11:45 and bring a bag lunch to be eaten on the grounds before beginning the walk.

Talk to Kathie Laug if you have any questions.

BOOK CLUB



The Light Between Oceans by M. L. Stedman will be discussed on Monday, July 14. When a baby washes up in a rowboat on a tiny island off the coast of Australia, the young lighthouse keeper and his wife decide to raise the baby as their own. Vivid characters and gorgeous descriptions create a perfect backdrop for this tale of longing, loss, and overwhelming love for a child.

The next book will be *The Interestings* by Meg Wolitzer (date to be announced). This novel follows six teenagers at a summer camp from the height of youth through middle age, as their talents, fortunes, and degrees of satisfaction diverge. The book explores the meaning of talent; the nature of envy; the roles of class, art, money, and power; and how all of it can shift over the course of a friendship and a lifetime.

The books will be available to borrow from the church library. Everyone is welcome to join our group at any time. *See Kathie Laug or Pam Shadford if you have questions or books to suggest.*

INTERFAITH COUNCIL

As your delegate to the Interfaith Council of Southwestern Connecticut, I recommend, if you are not already on their contact list, that you get on the email list of the Council, or on its regular mailing list (if you don't use email). It typically includes notices of and links to various community events and articles of interest about community needs, special services, ministries and programs offered to the community.

To subscribe, go to the website:
www.interfaithcouncil.org, or write to:

Interfaith Council of Southwestern CT,
Box 17262,
Stamford, CT 06907

or call 203.348.2800

Get involved, or at least get in the loop and be informed!

Rev. Dr. Bill Matthews
bardsing@gmail.com

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

As announced at the Annual Meeting on May 4 and in our April 30 letter to members and friends of FCC, the 375th Anniversary Capital Campaign has been extended to December 31, 2014. The focus of the campaign is on only the following three projects:

- 1) A new digital organ dedicated to the memory of George and Lois Clarke;



- 2) Restoration of the bell tower, its lighting, and the machinery that operates the bell;



- 3) Continued upgrades to landscaping, particularly around the parking lot.



By July 1 we expect to have received over \$70,000 of our goal of \$118,000 to fund these three projects, about 59%, and we expect to receive more payments on existing pledges soon. The Trustees have signed a contract and authorized a 50% deposit on the purchase of an Allen Organ (specific model to be determined); Trustee Stu Constantine has offered to be the “point person” for landscape improvements; and we expect that work on the bell tower will begin soon. If you have not already pledged or contributed to the Capital Campaign, we invite you to do so.

Be sure to check the “thermometer” on the church bulletin board as we record progress toward our goal. Pledge cards are under the thermometer. And stay tuned for details on a party in the spring of 2015 to celebrate our accomplishments!

Yours in Christ’s service,

Jean Meyer, Chair, Wendy Avirgan, Steve Ayres
Capital Campaign Committee
Capital Campaign Committee

NEW MEMBER BIOS
SUNDAY, JUNE 22, 2014

Allegra Palevich was born in Frankfurt Germany and adopted by two loving parents. She was raised in Greenwich and attended the Second Congregation all Church. She grew up with a mentally ill brother which led to a career in the mental health field. After graduating from UCONN, she worked as a case manager with adults having various disabilities ranging from autistic to schizophrenic. She then met Juan at a bar fifteen years ago and got married in 2009. She got laid off several years ago and decided to have a family. All of this time they only attended on Christmas Eve. They then had a daughter named Lia, and made the decision become members of a church somewhere. Allegra volunteers at the Stamford Hospital where Father Peter Dora recommended going to the First Congregational Church. Taking his advice was a blessing because the church reminded her of childhood and is the perfect place for Lia to learn about God.

Juan Nieves was born and raised in Stamford and is the youngest of seven children. His parents are from the mountains of Puerto Rico and came to America to give their children an opportunity for a better life. He was poor growing up and his father had to work many jobs to support the family. Juan was raised going to the Catholic Church. His family converted to Born Again Christians after one of his siblings had some trouble with the law and "found Jesus". Because of their strict beliefs, Juan did not attend church anymore. He got a job with the City of Stamford. While on a break from work plowing snow, he decided to go have a bite to eat and met Allegra. As you already know they got married and had a baby. Juan also wanted to raise Lia going to church. He felt strongly in his heart that he wanted to find a church that accepts everyone for who they are. After attending a service at the First Congregational Church, he felt that is was a good match for himself and his family. The rest is history.

Katie McAllister is an attorney in Stamford, where she lives with her husband, Chris Paone, who is a parishioner of St. Maurice Catholic Church. Katie grew up in the UCC tradition as a member of the Wellesley Hills Congregational Church in Wellesley, Massachusetts and spent summers attending church with her grandparents at the Somesville Union Meetinghouse on Mount Desert Island, Maine, where Chris and she were married in 2013. After Katie's job brought them to Stamford last summer, she decided to seek out a similar church in our new town. She was initially drawn to FCC because of this common tradition and the warm welcome this church extends so unconditionally to all. She is delighted to be joining this community and look forward to getting to know all of you.

Jen Godzeno is pleased to join FCC 10 years after first visiting the church as Rob Godzeno's college sweetheart (now wife after being married in FCC's sanctuary in 2009). She and Rob met through their campus Christian fellowship at Amherst College, where she studied music (voice, theory) and neuroscience. After over 5 years in NYC (including time as a graduate student at Columbia University), she moved to the Glenbrook section of Stamford in February; she is a native of Seattle. Jen is a program director at non-profit Transportation Alternatives, where she works on initiatives that improve traffic safety and promote physical activity on NYC streets. She is passionate about social justice in cities, loves reading Christian theologians, and enjoys globetrotting and being active outside on two feet or two wheels.

Gail Cockrell

Gail Cockrell is a Stamford native, mother of 2, and grandmother of 1 (Chloe). She was reared in the Episcopal church, and she was educated in Catholic schools. She started coming to FCC after seeing the Rainbow Flag. She joins hoping to deepen her relationship with Christ and to instill Christian values in her granddaughter.