

CROSSROADS

VOL. 70, No. 9

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

SEPTEMBER 2014

WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY—10:30 A.M.

FROM THE INTERIM PASTORS DESK

SEPTEMBER 2014

September 7 Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
*Holy Communion, Deacons Fund,
Deacons Fund Offering*

“he went up into the mountains by himself to pray.”
Matthew 14: 23

September 14 Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

The summer days wane, and the fall is ahead. School supply shopping has begun. You can even sense a little more hurrying and scurrying in the air. Have you started to make all your fall plans? Have some of you even begun your Christmas shopping?

September 21 Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Now, I want to encourage you to not speed up too quickly, and to set aside Saturday, September 13 for a retreat. The Deacons and the Vision Team have developed a wonderful day away for us. The retreat, *“FCC Pilgrimage to the Sea: Unearthing the Values that unite Us in Christ”*

September 28 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

This is an opportunity for you to pause, reflect, pray, and share how you see God’s love and grace taking shape in your lives and your community. This important time will guide you as you discern your future and prepare to call your new pastor.

This time of year can begin to feel like a race and a treadmill of activity. Let’s start our journey this fall listening to the “still speaking God.”

Susan

~

You're invited...



The Deacons of First Congregational Church in cooperation with the Visioning Committee invite you to spend the day with us at the beautiful Vikingsborg Estate on Long Island Sound in Darien as we host a very special event:

FCC Pilgrimage to the Sea:

Unearthing the Values that Unite Us in Christ

The day will begin at 9:00 a.m. and will be finished by 3:00 p.m. Together, we will prayerfully contemplate the values we hold and how we live them out in our lives. Retreat facilitator, Jeanne Peloso will guide us through a spiritually enriching day of prayer, meditation, contemplative reflections and creative activities.

A light buffet breakfast and sit down lunch will be served. It will be a day of fellowship and community building that is not to be missed!

For more information and to sign up -- contact any of the Deacons - Joe Belisle, Elaine Pope-Joffrion, Lynda Stack or Russ Bulkley

Saturday, September 13th | **Convent of St. Birgitta**
4 Runkenhage Rd, Darien, CT

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.

**SEPTEMBER
BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES**

- 5 Marla and George Heath, anniversary
Emmalee Carreras Gaines
- 9 Pam Groeschner, Jessica Tenca,
David Vintinner
- 10 Peggy Watson
- 12 Steve Ayres
- 13 Jose Padilla
- 14 Jean and Bob Meyer, anniversary
- 15 Regina Perry
- 16 Louise Carlson
- 17 Alex Siladi
- 21 Sean William Wells
- 22 Jean Meyer
- 23 Anne Firmender and Sam Jelliffe
- 24 Heather Anderson Carr
- 28 Janna Fuechsel-Winfrey
- 29 Terry Hyde and Rebecca Ayres Schwartz

LECTIONARY READINGS

September 7: Ex 12:1-14; Ps 149 or
Ezek 33:7-11; Ps 119:33-40; Rom 13:8-14;
Matt 18:15-20

September 14: Ex 14:19-31; Ps 114 or
Ex 15:1b-11, 20-21 or Gen 50:15-21;
Ps 103:1-7), 8-13; Rom 14:1-12; Matt 18-21-35

September 21: Ex 16:2-15; Ps 105:1-6, 37-45 or
Jon 3:10-4:11; Ps 145:1-8; Phil 1:21-30;
Matt 20:1-6

September 28: Ex 17:1-7; Ps 78:1-4, 12-16 or
Ezek 18: 1-4, 25-32; Ps 25:1-9; Phil 2:1-13;
Matt 21:23-32

THE CLASON GROUP

The Clason Group is our no-commitment and all-ideas-welcome "Sunday school class." The Clason Group will convene upstairs in room 309 on the first and third Sunday of each month, at 9:45 a.m. **Next meeting is Sunday, September 7.** *Talk to David Vintinner if you have any questions.*

AH, SEPTEMBER!

September has arrived – though we don't know where the summer went! As we reconnect after vacations, travel and time away, our program year begins now with new opportunities for spiritual growth and education as well as service possibilities.

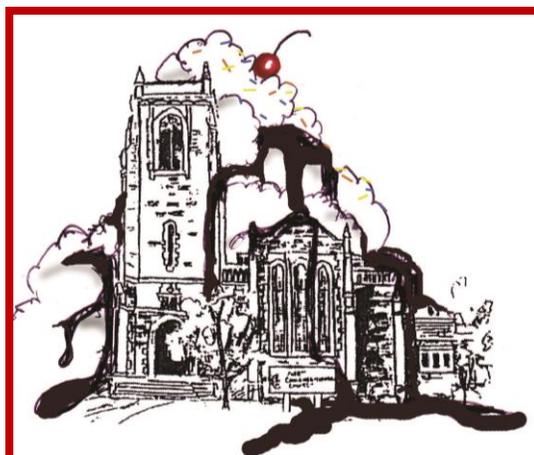
We begin by returning worship to in the Sanctuary on September 7. And with that, Sunday School begins for our children, the choir will be back in the choir loft, and Rev. Gibson returns from vacation and study.

The first Sunday after Labor Day has been dubbed Rally Sunday – forever?! With that gathering Sunday, we're morphing into Rally Sundae with ice cream and toppings for fixing during our hospitality time after worship. If you haven't signed up to bring your favorite topping, let the office know what you will bring to add to the fun. For obvious reasons, we'll serve and enjoy our creative sundaes in the dining room downstairs.

The following Saturday, September 13, FCC's Pilgrimage to the Sea, our all church retreat, at the Convent of St. Birgitta in Darien is planned. Our Deacons and the Visioning Task Force have been working to plan a thoughtful, enriching day in this beautiful spot. There is a limited capacity there, so make your reservation – the sign-up sheet is in the Parlor or online.

And that's just to start off September! Rally round! See you in church!

Pam Shadford, Moderator



**It's Time for
Sundae School!**

It's that time of year again – you guessed it – Rally Sunday! And because we had so much fun making sundaes last year – we're going to do it again this year! Here's how it works: You bring your favorite topping (sprinkles, cookies, caramel, pickles – OK, maybe not pickles) and we'll supply the ice cream! We'll let you combine them any way you want and we promise not to tell your diet coach! So bring your sweet tooth on

Sunday, September 7th

because after church we're going to celebrate the end of the summer and the beginning of our church year with some serious sweet eating!

FCC-Stamford - We're Glad You're Here!

First Congregational Church
Walton Place
Stamford, CT 06901

Crossroads is published monthly by
**THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT**
Member of the United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation
Walton Place, Stamford, CT 06901
Telephone: 203 323-0200 / Fax: 203 348-2270
www.fccstamford.org / fccstamford@gmail.com

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!**





(SERVING ANOTHER IN LOVE TOGETHER)

SUMMER SALT SEASONING

Though we never stop being the salt of the earth, the SALT mission group took a little break and didn't meet in August. Some plans for our new church year together include:

- *Locally:* continuing to meet in places of ongoing mission around the Stamford area. You are always welcome to join us as we learn about the healing works done by our neighbors and find ways to support them.
- *Nationally:* preparing for our Mission Trip in 2015. We will meet to discuss the details very soon.
- *Globally:* educating ourselves about the ongoing crisis in South Sudan and the needs of the people there. We hope to have an 'all-Church' reading of a book that will appeal to our youngest and oldest.

We will also be making a decision about our continued service to the New Covenant House. We have been cooking a meal for the guests of this program for many years. However, the WE who have been cooking is dwindling to a very few. This may be a mission activity that we have to discontinue. No one wants to stop a good work but sometimes we have to face our limitations. If you want to take responsibility for planning, buying the food, and organizing the cooking team, please speak to Helga Downing. A decision will be made by the end of September.

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

HATS OFF!



Many thanks to Helga Downing, Anne Firmender, and Lynne Koellner, 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:

- Easy-open individual soup or meals, tuna, small boxes of cereal
- All small toiletries, especially shampoo & lotion

Please bring donations on Sunday, September 7. Downtown EATS this month is September 13. Collections will be ongoing on the first Sunday of each month.

Thank you for your continued generosity!

COUNCIL



CORNER

The Council met on August 6. After a summer of beautiful weather and worship in the chapel we are ready to return to the sanctuary and a full schedule of fall activities. The first event will be Rally Sundaes on September 7 with ice cream sundaes and other treats after worship. We welcome the return of the choir and participation of our young people in the service that day.

The Deacons and the Visioning Committee are sponsoring a retreat on Saturday, September 13 at Convent of St. Birgitta in Darien. It is called "FCC Pilgrimage to the Sea: Unearthing the Values that Unite Us in Christ". Please plan to attend this event which will be spiritually enriching on a personal level as well as moving us forward into the future as a congregation. The Deacons are also hosting a special "Cafe Church" Sunday on September 21 to continue the discussion of the theme from the retreat.

Other events on the calendar this fall include a Visioning Workshop after worship on October 5, our annual Stewardship Campaign beginning on October 20, and the Fall Annual Meeting on November 9 which will also be Stewardship Sunday.

Kathie Laug, Clerk

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

The Interestings by Meg Wolitzer will be discussed on Monday, September 15.

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 October book will be *The Goldfinch* by Donna Tartt. Based on a real painting of a goldfinch by a 17th century Dutch artist, this book won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2013. It is a novel about the trauma of loss, the yearning for love and companionship, the craziness of lonely adolescent youth, the transcendence of beauty and the power of art. Discussion date to be determined.

We meet at 7:00 p.m. in the church parlor. 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.*

SECOND SUNDAY WALK



The September 14 walk will be at Selleck Woods in Darien, led by Karen Davis who describes it as "super easy." If you've been thinking about trying the walks, this might be a good one to start with! We meet in the parking lot after worship. Talk to *Kathie Laug* if you have any questions.

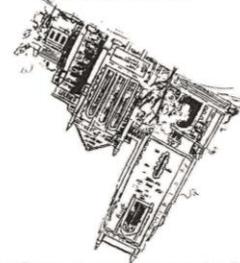
A 'NOTE' FROM THE MUSIC MINISTRY!



Timothy Wallace, organist and choir director, along with the Music Ministry, choir and section leaders, will be back in the sanctuary on *Sundaes* Sunday, September 7. If you would like to join us and sing in the choir please come to the parlor for a light snack at 8:30 a.m., then rehearsal at 8:45. We'll provide you with a red robe, a music folder and a place to sit. If you have any questions, please call the church office at 203-323-0200 or give me a call. We look forward to having you join us "*With a Voice of Singing!*"

Peace and harmony,
Linda Peters, Music Ministry chair

We're turning
this service on its
head...



Join us for a very unique service hosted
by The FCC Deacons!
On Sunday, September 21st
the entire service will be conducted in our parlor!
We will continue our
"FCC Pilgrimage to the Sea" theme
from the previous weekend and our own
Rob Godzeno
has graciously agreed to deliver the sermon.
We are calling it

Café Church!

So on that Sunday -- make your way to the parlor,
make yourself comfortable, help yourself to some coffee,
fruit or a muffin and settle in for what is
sure to be a different and spiritually fulfilling Sunday!

Capital Campaign Report

Your 375th Anniversary Capital Campaign committee (Jean Meyer, Wendy Avirgan and Steve Ayres) is pleased to report that we have received 46 pledges to date, including eight new pledges and two increased pledges.

Based on the revised Capital Campaign goals announced at the annual meeting in May, we have collected about \$81,500, almost 69% of our new and final goal of \$118,000. We still need about \$36,500 (31%) more by December 31, 2014. We sent out ten reminder letters in early August. We also were delighted to send fifteen letters to donors who had paid their pledges in full.

Project	% of \$\$ received to be allocated	Cost Estimate
A. A new sanctuary organ	70%	\$78,000
B. Bell tower renovations	20%	30,000
C. Continued upgrades to landscaping	10%	10,000
Totals	100%	\$118,000

In June, the Board of Trustees signed a contract for the purchase of a new sanctuary organ, and in July we paid 50% down (\$39,160) on that purchase. Rob Godzeno spoke about the new organ, to be dedicated in memory of his grandparents, Lois and George Clarke, in worship in June. His remarks were published in the July *Crossroads*.

Our ever-diligent Trustees have also contracted for bell tower renovations at much less cost than estimated, thanks especially to Trustee David Vintinner who personally surveyed the bell tower.

Finally, Trustee Stuart Constantine is working on the landscape upgrades, and welcomes both your ideas and your help.

There are several current church leaders, other active members and friends who have not yet pledged or donated to the Capital Campaign. Please do so soon, either by using the pledge cards below the Capital Campaign thermometer in the hallway outside the parlor, or just by writing "Capital Campaign" on your check's memo line. We thank you!