

# CROSSROADS

VOL. 70, No. 11

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

NOVEMBER 2014

## WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY—10:30 A.M.

## FROM THE INTERIM PASTORS DESK

NOVEMBER 2014

**November 2** Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost  
*Holy Communion, Deacons Fund,  
Food Trunk Offering*

**November 9** Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost

**November 16** Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

**November 23** Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost

**November 30** First Sunday of Advent

~  
*"We always give thanks to God for all of you and  
mention you in our prayers"*

*1 Thessalonians 1:2*

As we enter this season of Thanksgiving, I want to take the time to say "thank you!" As I look over my journal from this past year, I find numerous notations of all of you and the way you have made God's presence known in my life, in the life of one another, and in the life of this world.

Thank you for sharing your struggles and joys with me. I am constantly touched and moved by your willingness to share what is going on in your life, and I want you to know that I hold your life dear. AND you constantly show me the gift of God's presence in our life together!

Thank you for your wisdom. I have had numerous experiences where I saw only the problem, the difficulty, the impossibility, and yet you get up and ask "what's next?" In fact, the other day I wrote, "Church people! They always see the possibility in an ending." Or should I say, "You guys trust the resurrection!"?

Thank you for your courage. The past two years have not been for the faint of heart. Self-evaluation, listening, and visioning require putting aside one's old habits and assumptions and fearless soul searching. Yet, you have entered this process and engaged the challenge, confident in God's presence and guidance. You show me that God is indeed faithful!

Thank you for your patience. This has been a time of waiting—waiting and listening for God's guidance and wisdom. Your faith in God's time and faithfulness inspire me.

And so, I say, "Thank you!" You are a blessing to me, and many others. I hold you in prayer, and I thank God every time.

*Susan*

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### 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.

**NOVEMBER  
BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES**

- 2 Cheryl Bogert
- 3 Emily Brown Petro and Emma Jelliffe
- 8 Al Hébert
- 12 Darrel Croot
- 15 Priscilla Jelliffe
- 17 Denise Gajadhar
- 18 Bill Matthews and Emily Strickland
- 19 Nicole Strickland
- 21 Dana Humbert Lott
- 29 Rebecca Ayres Schwartz

**THE CLASON GROUP**

The Clason Group is our no-commitment and all-ideas-welcome pre-service get together. This fall, we are looking at the prophet Ezekiel, a Biblical madman who spoke of UFO's and dry bones, of Apocalypse and the need for justice. Join us as we tackle some of the most impossible passages of Scripture. 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, November 2. If you have any questions, talk to David Vintinner.***

~

**LECTIONARY READINGS**

- November 2:** Josh 3:7-17; Ps 107:1-7, 33-37; or Mic 3:5-12; Ps 43; 1 Thess 2:9-13
- November 9:** Josh 24:1-3a, 14-25; Ps 78:1-7 or Wisd of Sol 6:12-16 or Amos 5:18-24; Wisd of Sol 6:17-20 or Ps 70; 1 Thess 4:13-18; Matt 4:13-18
- November 16:** Judg 4:1-7; Ps 123 or Zeph 1:7, 12-18; Ps 90:1-8 (9-11), 12; 1 Thess 5:1-11
- November 23:** Ezek 34:11-16, 20-24; Ps 100 or Ps 95:1-7a; Eph 1:15-23; Matt 25:31-46
- November 30:** Isa 64:1-9; Ps 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Cor 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

*To the Members of The First Congregational Church of  
Stamford, Connecticut:*

This is to inform you that the Annual Fall Church Meeting will be held on Sunday, November 9, 2014, immediately following morning worship. The meeting will be held in the Church Parlor.

The purpose of this meeting is to:

1. Discuss and vote upon the 2015 church operating budget, prepared by the Budget Committee and approved by Prudential Council.
2. Consider the following amendment to the bylaws: Strike the word ' lease' from Article VII Section B 4 b, page 9, which directs the work of the Board of Trustees:

....the board shall be responsible for:

*The transaction of the secular business of the church, including financial matters in accordance with Article IX, except that it shall have no power to buy, sell, ~~lease~~, transfer, or encumber real property unless so authorized by two-thirds vote of those active members present and voting at a meeting of the church.*

3. Receive a report on the Capital Campaign
4. Receive an update from the Visioning Task Force
5. Receive a report from the Moderator
6. Consider any other business that properly comes before the church congregation.

Wishing you peace, love, and joy,

Pamela Shadford  
Moderator

Kathie Laug  
Clerk

**Community Thanksgiving Dinner**

**Thursday, November 27, 2014**

**First Congregational  
Church of Stamford**

**Walton Place, Stamford,  
CT 06901  
(Between Bedford and  
Prospect Streets)**



**All are welcome**

- 12 Noon** Interfaith Worship Service  
**12:30 p.m.** Social time with Refreshments  
**1 p.m.** Family-style Turkey Dinner  
 (There is no charge and no collection at the Thanksgiving dinner.)

**Call the First Congregational Church Office at  
(203) 323-0200 by 12:00 noon,  
Wednesday, November 26, for reservations,  
directions, rides, shut-in meal delivery.**

## FROM OUR STEWARDSHIP BOARD

### *What is Stewardship?*

My dictionary defines it as management for others. Management is something we can all understand but for whom is our stewardship directed?

In this church, I see us as being stewards for two groups.

**First**, we are stewards for ourselves, the members and friends of First Congregational Church in Stamford, in this place in these days. We are a faith community. We care for each other, in times of plenty, and in times of want.

**Second**, we are also stewards for the others in the wider community to whom we minister. Last Sunday in worship, I spoke about the Vo family, Chin, Thu and Tuan, whom this church sponsored upon their arrival in the United States from Viet Nam in 1991. Betty and I have been blessed to continue to be their symbolic contacts this community of Christians who met their plane when they first arrived on our shores, full of fear yet also full of hope. They and their extended family send their greetings to all you!

None of the things that this church does as a community could be done by any person alone, or by any small group of people. It takes all of us working together to do the work of our church community.

We act as stewards for our church community when we give of our time, talent and treasure. All are gifts to us from God, and by giving back to our community, we are good stewards who give back some of what God has given us.

Our church community, however, cannot survive on our time and talents alone. It needs our treasure, our money, to continue to exist.

Pledges are support that our church can count on. Please join Betty and me, your Board of Stewardship, and your other elected church leaders, and pledge to this church for 2015 on Stewardship Sunday, November 9.

*Steve Ayres*

## COUNCIL



## CORNER

The Council met on October 14. The church has received several donations in memory of Ernie Siladi. The Council decided to use some of that money to pay for preparing booklets on the history of our congregation using information from the Visioning Committee. The booklets could be used as gifts for new members and departing members as well as being placed in the church library and the public library.

The Fall Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, November 9 after worship. It will take place in the parlor with light refreshments. The main item of business is to discuss and vote on the 2015 budget as prepared by the Budget Committee. There will also be a report from Rob Godzeno on the work of the Visioning Committee.

On the recommendation of the Board of Nominations, Anne Firmender was appointed to the Board of Missions.

Special events coming up this month include:

"*The Alchemists*" concert on November 1, our Community Thanksgiving Dinner on November 27, and the Greening of the Church on the first Sunday in Advent-November 30.

### REVIVE

*Revive*, our young adult discussion group, continues to meet monthly. Our monthly attendance has been hovering at about six people with a good core group of attendees, and we've begun brainstorming for ways to broaden our reach and our impact.

If you know anyone who might like to join us, I would be happy to reach out with a personal invite, if you send me the person's name and contact information to my email address: [rmgodzeno@gmail.com](mailto:rmgodzeno@gmail.com). Also, if you think of any ways that we can serve the church and the community, I'd love to hear those ideas as well.

Thank you for your support of this ministry!

*Rob Godzeno*



You are the SALT of the earth...  
You are the LIGHT of the world....

Sometimes when we are in a “mission” frame of mind, we can imagine that WE are LIGHT and SALT of the earth and actually that is what we strive to be. But it’s always good to connect with other groups that are beacons of hope and love, and who challenge us to be more than we expected.

Neighbor’s Link is one of those “beacons” and on October 6, 2104, FCC’s Mission Group met at their home base on Selleck Avenue in Stamford. They serve the Latina immigrant population through holding English classes, helping with jobs for day laborer’s, translate for parents’ at teacher conferences, and offer social activities for people of all ages. Key to their service is listening first to what the people want rather than assuming they know. There are opportunities for churches to participate in their mission. We are exploring some possibilities...so stay tuned!

Another ‘up-close’ experience of mission is happening at FCC with our South Sudan water project. Reading “A Long Walk to Water”, hearing stories from Nya, and putting money in our containers every time we use water are all ways that put us in touch with the lives of others in need. Don’t forget to bring your containers full of change to Worship on November 2. The children will bring them to the Communion Table.

And finally, we have another opportunity to be a part of missions in our annual Neighbors In Need collection. This is a special UCC offering that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. November 23, 2014 will be our day to share whatever we can.

Our next meeting is November 12<sup>th</sup> at Gini House at 4 Elmcrest Terrace in Norwalk, the new home of Families in Recovery. Please join us (and bring some baby wipes?).

Your SALT shakers and LIGHT bearers,  
*Paul Bingaman, Anne Mochulsky, Warren Richardson, Tephilla Ponnuthurai, Jean Meyer, Maureen Matthews*

## HATS OFF!

Many thanks to:

- Karen and Amalia Garzon
- Warren Richardson
- Jennifer So Godzeno
- Emma and Penny Lange
- Logan Paige
- Lisa & Georgia Baurele
- Lori Constantine



They all 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 boxes of cereal. easy-open cans of soup, meals, tuna and fruit
- All small toiletries
- White socks

**Please bring donations on Sunday, November 2. Downtown EATS this month is November 8. Collections will be ongoing on the first Sunday of each month.**

**Thank you for your continued generosity!**

## BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Our next selection continues the art theme with *The Art Forger* by Barbara Shapiro. In this book, young artist Claire Roth agrees to forge a stolen Degas painting in exchange for a one woman show at a renowned art gallery. It is a thrilling novel about seeing – and not seeing – the secrets that lie beneath the canvas. It will be discussed on Monday, December 1.



The January book is *Americanah* by Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. This is a novel of love and race centered around a young man and woman who face difficult choices and challenges as they negotiate our modern globalized world. The story spans three continents and numerous lives.

We meet in the church parlor at 7:00 PM. All books are available in 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



We will be exploring some local parks in the neighboring town of Darien.

The **November 9** walk will be in Cherry Lawn Park. It is a gentle walk by a pond, gazebo, stone bridge and the Darien Nature Center. Led by Karen Davis.

The **December 14** walk will be at Woodland Park Nature Preserve. This 65 acre park has a trail system with ponds, a stream, footbridge, archaic stone wall, and ornamental plantings. Led by Kathie Laug.

Meet in the church parking lot at noon. Dress for the weather including appropriate footwear and bring water and a snack.

Talk to *Kathie Laug* if you have any questions.



## A SPECIAL CONCERT ANNOUNCEMENT

On Saturday November 1, 2014, 7:30pm, FCC is presenting The Alchemists, featuring Gene Bozzi, percussion; RJ Avallone, trumpet; & Timothy Alexandre Wallace, piano & organ. This will be an evening of classical, original and improvised music, including music of Bach, Rachmaninoff and Liszt. There will be a free-will donation with proceeds to benefit the Organ Fund for the new Allen digital organ, which is to be dedicated to the memory of Lois and George Clarke.

Music will include Johann Sebastian Bach's famous *Toccatina in D minor*, but with a twist; the much beloved Rachmaninoff 18th Variation from Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini; and Franz Liszt's amazing *Mephisto Waltz*. In addition there will be the world premiere of a new piece composed especially for RJ Avallone by Wallace: Aria for Trumpet; and improvisations. All in all, there will be music covering a 300 year span!

RJ Avallone has performed at FCC for at least the past 3 years for our Easter service and is a very talented musician who performs regularly in New York and all of New England. Gene Bozzi is the Principal Timpanist with the Hartford Symphony. Gene is the creator, artistic director, and drummer for the HSO Jazz and Strings Series. He also teaches percussion at Wesleyan University and Trinity College, and serves as the music department chair at the Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, Connecticut's largest Arts Magnet High School.

So don't miss this wonderful opportunity to hear some great music and for a wonderful cause!



**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN CELEBRATION  
EPIPHANY SUNDAY IN THE EVENING  
JANUARY 4, 2015**

The bell tower lighting is restored, and the bell rings again!

We hope to order a new organ in January, to be installed in time for Easter!

Landscape architect Steve Wing has submitted preliminary drawings for grounds improvements!

With over \$38,500 in contributions received since May, including 12 gifts from new pledgers, and about \$11,000 more expected by the end of 2014, we will be only about \$9,000 short of our final goal of \$118,000. Thank you to all who have supported the Capital Campaign to date. If you have not yet done so, please join in by submitting your pledge, or better still, your check!

Mark your calendars for a special *Epiphany Sunday celebration* for all ages on Sunday evening, January 4, 2015!



Capital Campaign Committee  
Jean Meyer, chair; Wendy Avirgan; Steve Ayres

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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!**

