

CROSSROADS

VOL. 74, No. 4

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

APRIL 2016

WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY – 10:30 A.M.

SERMON SERIES FOR EASTER SUNDAYS THRU MAY 1ST – JESUS IN TRANSITION

- April 3** **Second Sunday of Easter – Communion**
“Walking and Talking”- Luke 24:13-35
Holy Communion, Deacons Fund
and Food Trunk Offering
- April 10** **Third Sunday of Easter**
“Seeking and Believing” – John 20: 19-29
- April 17** **Fourth Sunday of Easter**
“Come and Have Breakfast”- John 21: 1-14
- April 24** **Fifth Sunday of Easter**
“Try Again” - John 21: 15-19
12:00 noon – Annual Meeting
- May 1** **Sixth Sunday of Easter**
“The Great Commission” – Matthew 28: 16-20

FROM THE PASTOR’S DESK

Hi, FCC.

Happy Easter, FCC! In the liturgical calendar the month of April is the Easter Season. It lasts fifty days until the great celebration of Pentecost, which is May 15 this year. This Easter Season our worship will be focusing on Jesus’ resurrection appearances.

In other news, you will have the chance to sign up for “Meet the Minister” meetings this month. These will be small group meetings in church members’ homes. I hope every one of you will take the chance to share what you love about FCC and your dreams for the future.

See you in church!

Pastor Todd

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.

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

On May 2, we will discuss The Aviator's Wife by Melanie Benjamin and Gift from the Sea by Anne Morrow Lindbergh. The first book is a vividly imagined novel of the complicated marriage between Charles Lindbergh and Anne Morrow which reveals both its dizzying heights and its devastating lows. The second book is a beloved classic in which the author draws inspiration from shells on the beach to reflect on life.



The next book will be Ordinary Light by Tracy K. Smith. This is a quietly potent memoir by a Pulitzer prize winning poet that explores coming-of-age and the meaning of home against a complex backdrop of race, faith, and the unbreakable bond between a mother and daughter. Date to be announced.

We meet in the church parlor at 7:00 p.m. All books are available in the church library.

See Kathie Laug if you have any questions.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP



"The Annual All Church Spring Banquet, sponsored by Women's Fellowship, is coming up soon! Be on the lookout for more info. If you have any questions, please see Linda Peters during hospitality time after church."

Annual Reports Deadline

Please send your report to the church email address by Monday, April 4.

THRIFT SHOP NEWS



We are happy to report word has gotten out about our being open the third Saturday of the month. Last Saturday, March 19th saw the largest number of customers since we began the new hours. With this new customer base added to our faithful Thursday group we are considering being open all year long! Our ARI volunteers continue to come in on Thursday afternoons to help fold and straighten the rooms. We very much appreciate their work. March was a very busy month in the Thrift Shop, not only did we have two holidays, St. Patrick's Day and Easter, but our annual half-price sale on winter items. Now it's time to bring out our spring items.

As always we thank all who support us.

The Thrift Shop Committee

*Candice Bryan, Helga Downing, Anne Firmender,
Jan Fuechsel, Kathie Laug, Elfriede Mallin,
Jean Meyer, Linda Peters, Pam Riley*

Thrift Shop Hours

**Thursdays 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
3rd Saturday of the month 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

APRIL BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

6	Sam Richardson
7	Annie Matthews Nardi
13	Tara Sileo, Dawn Brusco
17	Logan Peters
19	Melissa Warner
21	Virginia Atkinson
25	Linda and John Peters, anniversary
28	Joe Bryan
30	Bob Signore

COUNCIL



CORNER

Prudential Council met Wednesday, March 9th. We heard a presentation from Debbie Shapiro of Kids in Crisis, about National Child Abuse Prevention Month (April), and we were please to approve her request to use our lawn to display a banner. We will host their event on our front lawn on Sunday, April 3rd at 1 PM.

We thank the building committee for their continued preparation for renovations to our building. Currently they are focused on retaining an architect. The timeline for work is unsettled because Copperline Partners is still in discussions with the City of Stamford regarding the scope and timeline for their project.

Pam Shadford, Bob Meyer, Wendy Avirgan and our bookkeeper, Terry Oravetz, continue work on the Treasurer transition from Wendy to Pam, and changes to the bookkeeping software and procedures, which we hope will simplify the recordkeeping in the future. If you see any of these folks, please be sure to say thank you for this important work!

Our spring Annual Meeting will be Sunday, April 24th after worship. If you are a church officer or chair a board, please be sure to get your annual reports into the church office by April 4th to be published in a booklet for the Annual Meeting.

We heard a report from Bob Godzeno on the slate of volunteers Nominations has prepared for the Annual Meeting and approved the slate to be presented at that meeting. A few people volunteered during the Nominations Fair on March 6th. Thank you to everyone on Nominations for your faithfulness in doing this work and to everyone who has volunteered to serve our church.

The SIRS group is prepared and funded (thanks to a \$10,000 gift from an anonymous donor) to receive a refugee family in Stamford. Thank God that this group was able to organize themselves with representatives from many different faiths and community groups in Stamford and get approved in record time!

The Stewardship campaign continues with an increased pledge goal of \$150,000, since we have surpassed the original goal of \$140,000. Pledges help us count on your support and plan our budget and activities accordingly. If you have not yet pledged your financial support to the church for 2016 and would like to do so, please see Steve Ayres.

The Trustees report that the current tenants of our parsonage are interested in buying it. Appraisals are being conducted to determine a fair price.

We look forward to our next meeting on Wednesday, April 13th, with Pastor Todd!

Respectfully Submitted,
Rob Godzeno, Moderator
Anne Firmender, Clerk

(continued next column)



Serving Another in Love Together with
Love Inspiring Great Hope Today

“Jesus' basic justice agenda was simple living, humility, and love of neighbor. We all have to live this way ourselves. From that position, God can do God's work rather easily.” Richard Rohr

Doesn't it seem incredible that *God could actually be doing God's work* when we live simply, with humility and loving our neighbor? It's almost as if God needs us! That's what mission means and as your Mission Board, we search out ways that we feel God is directing FCC. Here are some ways God is working:

1. SIRS (Stamford Interfaith Refugee Settlement) is preparing to welcome a family who has suffered the loss of home and country. We expect to hear very soon about the family coming to Stamford. In the meantime, we are still collecting clothing, food, toiletries and other items that they will need. If you would like to help with this please let Jean Meyer know. Also, we want to plan local outings for the family so they will get to know the area. If you can help, contact Jean.
2. The “Mission Trip” is taking shape. You might have heard that the term “mission trip” is being questioned. One blogger, Craig Greenfield, offers some alternative names for our time with the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Reservation in South Dakota:
 - Vision (or Exposure) Trip** – a focused intentional time where we ask God to open our hearts to the plight of the poor. What the eye has not seen the heart cannot grieve over.
 - Learning Exchanges** – a time when our theology and understanding of the world is rocked to the core and deconstructed. When we travel as learners, eager to have our minds expanded and preconceptions challenged, we will not be disappointed.

(continued on next column)

If you would like to support the Vision/Learning Trip (or would like to suggest a better name!), please let us know. There's still plenty of room.

And, finally, on May 7, 2016, you are invited to join the Mission Board in a morning of reflection on what it means to welcome the stranger. 9AM to 12 NOON. More info will be available soon.

Anne Firmender, Anne Mochulsky, Corrine Taylor, Jean Meyer, Maureen Matthews, Warren Richardson, Katie McAllister

MISSION TRIP 2016



Join the 2016 journey to the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Reservation. Talk to Jean Meyer or John Jelliffe if you would like to learn more about this trip.

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:

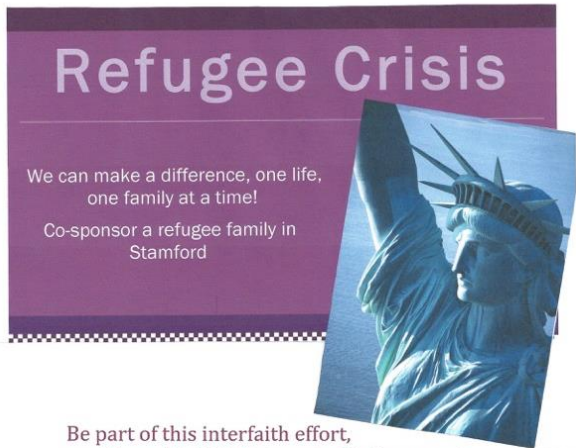
- Cereal and easy-open cans of soup and tuna

Please bring donations on Sunday, April 3. *Downtown EATS* this month is April 9. Collections will be ongoing on the first Sunday of each month.

Thank you for your continued generosity!

SIRS

Stamford Interfaith Refugee Settlement



Be part of this interfaith effort, working with IRIS, Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services, to re-settle a refugee family into the Stamford Community.

Contact SIRS at fcstamford.org or call 203-323-0200

Re-design Committee...

We have been meeting every 2-4 weeks since we were charged with the responsibility to look at ways to redesign our space into a beautiful multi-functional space. We first met with and received input from members from different aspects of church life. Susan Gibson and the deacons represented the worship part of the church; we met with the Thrift Shop Ladies, members of hospitality, the memorial garden and outdoor landscape team, CE members, Peggy from the office staff, Tim and members of the music board. We wanted to hear what they would need in a newer, smaller, redesigned space. We have done off site visits to other churches to get ideas on the how they redesigned their space. We have had walk through meetings in our church with various contractors, mechanical engineers and architects. We have set out to bid proposals for an architect and construction company. After receiving 6 architect proposals and 3 construction proposals, we have selected 2 architects and 1 construction company to come in for an interview with the committee. We will keep you informed on the progress we make. We welcome questions and comments.

Your Redesign Committee,

Lisa Bauerle, Peter Birch, John Jelliffe, Pam Riley,
Pam Shadford and Diane Sileo

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Crossroads is published monthly by
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