



KIT



(KeEping In Touch)

A Newsletter of the

The First Church of Christ, Congregational, United Church of Christ

55 Church Road • Clinton, Connecticut 06413-2050

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MAY 2012

Dear Friends in Christ,



One of the many benefits of membership in the Alban Institute, a center of learning and leadership development for clergy and congregations, is their email newsletter every week. This past week an article entitled, *A Spirit of Hospitality*, written by Mark I. Pinsky really grabbed my attention. Each week Alban offers one of a superb collection of stories that describe how faith communities welcome and affirm people with disabilities. This is not only the right thing to do but also helps congregations recognize that they are made better and stronger by the gifts of all people.

This particular story focuses on the Nickleville Presbyterian Church in western rural Pennsylvania. When care providers for people with intellectual disabilities brought their members to some area churches, the group home residents were asked not to return! A few church members had found the newcomers' sometimes noisy behavior disruptive or felt uncomfortable because of the visitors' physical characteristics or their difficulty in speaking.

While dealing with this very painful rejection, the caregivers then contacted the Rev. Sue Montgomery about holding a worship service

for the residents at the Nickleville Presbyterian Church. This congregation was very receptive. Rev. Montgomery uses a wheelchair as do several other members. The church's spirit of hospitality and inclusion also extends to people who are dealing with questions of sexual identity, who have served prison time, and who struggle with addiction.

Rev. Montgomery acknowledged that some church members were nervous about the new ministry and a few confessed that they were afraid of the newcomers. But four leaders made the commitment to the ministry that the church called *Training Towards Self Reliance*. Two years into the program, the group home residents are considered active participants in the congregation. During Sunday morning worship services, they are no longer thought of as visitors but are part of the extended church family.

They also have created and lead worship services on Tuesday mornings. They read the Scriptures, some with much assistance and others almost unaided. Some have played the piano or sung solos. Others have assisted with morning prayers. The group home staff members and church members assist in teaching appropriate worship behaviors, such as

remaining quiet during prayer, finding hymns in the hymnal, and assisting with the offerings.

The following words are direct quotes from Mr. Pinsky's article:

"We have watched a young man be transformed from a passive, unresponsive participant to one who now actively participates in a variety of ways," Rev. Montgomery said by way of example. "This wouldn't have happened without hands-on support being given to him during worship. Worship in this ministry, as it should be in every congregation, is a time of communal nurture."

"Is it easy?" Rev. Montgomery asks. "No, but the spirit of inclusion is there, and that can never be destroyed. Are there difficulties? Yes, but tolerance, understanding, and acceptance of differences overcome all the uncertainty and discomfort among regular congregation members. Have we had people afraid? Yes, and they chose to keep their distance. The fear is that at their ages and frail conditions they might be hurt by aggressive behaviors. Their fears are respected and acknowledged. The [group home] staff work with the men and women, and with that staff cooperation, we are assured that everything will be done to support both the men and women with the aggressive behaviors and the members of our congregation."

The congregation also changed the ways it conducted worship. "Our speech is slowed to match the speech patterns of the men and women with difficulties speaking," Rev. Montgomery said. "We have learned to slow down. The Lord's Prayer is recited much more slowly and is no longer a running of the Indianapolis 500 in speed and pace."

This is a very inspiring story of how a church offers hospitality and inclusion by welcoming and affirming people who may seem "different." This story challenges us to overcome our concerns and fears and to be open and tolerant of others who in turn help us to grow in our minds, hearts, and spirits. It can prompt us to look for ways we can expand our own church's ministries so that all who reside in our community, along the shoreline, and beyond will feel that they have a place here. Jesus would approve.

~Yours in Christ,

Pastor Chris Horvath

Our Joys and Concerns

We offer our love and prayers to **Ida Pendleton** at the death of her husband, **Graham**, or "**Red**," as he was known to all of us, on April 6th. Red was a longtime and faithful member of First Church, who left his mark not just on our hearts but on every room in our church – evidence of his stewardship of time and talent, Red was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great grandfather and a great friend. We will miss him! We also offer our prayers and sympathy to **Joanne and Chris Pavlopoulos** and family at the death of Joanne's mother, **Evelyn Mono**.

For Being Kind

submitted by Stewardship Committee

If you would give a gift to Jesus –
Give it to the poor of earth;
If you would serve His love and missions –
Serve by deeds of Christian worth;
If you would give Him gifts of comfort –
Comfort others, with His grace;
If you would dry His tears of sorrow –
Dry them on another's face

Every act of love and kindness
You bestow on one, in need,
Is a precious gift to Jesus
And a service, in His creed.
Give of heart and hand and spirit
Every gift you can afford
For – in giving unto others –
You are giving to the Lord.

~Michael Dubina



The SUNDAY WOMEN spent our April meeting remembering our dear friend Red, so we will study that month's lesson in May. The readings from the Serendipity Bible are **Mark 11: 12-19** and **Romans 13: 1-7** on the subject of **Corruption/Abuse**. **Come one; come all** to the East Kitchen on May 20th. We gather at 8:15 for food and fellowship, followed by lively discussion.



ATTENTION, GOLFERS!!!

The Sixth Annual Silver Lake Golf Tournament to benefit the Silver Lake Conference Center will be held Tuesday, June 5th, at the Lyman Orchards Golf Club in Middlefield. We have had a great group from our church go every year.

The tournament begins at 9:00 a.m. with a modified shotgun start. Registration starts at 7:30 a.m. with a breakfast at 8:00. A luncheon and awards ceremony and plenty of prizes follows the outing. The cost is \$160 per player. If you are interested, please speak to or email Pastor Christ – pastorchris@firstchurchclinton.org.



**MEMORIAL FLAGS
DEDICATION**
Front Lawn • May 20th
following worship



**CHURCH
SCHOOL**

There will be an **open registration** for church school year 2012-2013 on **May 20th** during fellowship hour.

And ... **save the date** – June 10th is **Children's Sunday**. There will be a picnic after the service and members are requested to bring a favorite dish to share.



Clinton Town Hall

May 3rd ☆ 12 noon – 1:00 p.m.

Capital Campaign Fundraiser BUY-A-STEP!

To replace the front steps and hand rails into our church

No limit on how many can be purchased

Please note "steps" on the memo line of your check.

And, of course, any amount donation is always very much appreciated.

For more information see Laurel Iaccarino or Josh Snow.

from the choir loft...

The beautiful season of spring reminds me of one of our beloved hymns, *For the Beauty of the Earth*. It was written by Folliot Pierpont as a tribute to God's creative brilliance. Pierpont was born in Bath, England, on October 7th, 1835. One day when he was about 29, Pierpont found himself walking in the countryside on a warm spring day, overwhelmed by the colors, the beautiful landscape and the Avon River cutting through the countryside. He wrote the lovely poem to be used primarily for communion services in the Anglican Church, but when it crossed the Atlantic, it quickly became associated with the American Thanksgiving holiday. In his original version each verse ended with: "Christ, our God, to Thee we raise/This our sacrifice of praise." That line was eventually changed to: "Lord of all, to Thee we raise/This our hymn of grateful praise." This is one of only a few hymns devoted purely to giving thanks. One of the strange things about the 'attitude of gratitude' is that we tend to exhibit it in reverse proportion to the number of blessings received. The more we have, the less thankful we are. Ralph Waldo Emerson observed that if the constellations appeared only once in a thousand years, imagine what an exciting event it would be. But because they're there every night, we barely give them a look. One of the Holy Spirit's works in our lives is a gradual reversal of that twisted pattern. God wants to make us people who exhibit thankfulness in proper proportion to the gifts and blessings we've received. Whatever the season of the year, this hymn is a way for us to give thanks to God for not only the beauty all around us, but also, the family and friends in our lives. (from *Then Sings My Soul*)

~ Joyce Baxter

**JUNE KIT
DEADLINE**

Noon • Thursday, May 17th,
at the Church Office or emailed to
janeat@firstchurchclinton.org



Friday, May 18th **HUSKY HELPER DAY – PART 2**

We're looking forward to the second annual *Husky Helper Day* on May 18th, when Morgan School students will be performing community service projects throughout the town, including here at First Church.

This year's plans for the expected 11-12 students include ...

- Making Shepherd's Pie to be frozen for Soup Kitchen and Summer Fair.
- Sorting, trimming, and counting postage stamps and boxing for delivery for the Shoreline Community Women (SCW).
- Sorting, trimming, and counting the *Campbell Soup* labels and *Box Tops for Education* labels for delivery to the Clinton School system.
- Sorting and trimming used card fronts for shipment to St. Jude's Children's Ranch or eBay sales. Boxes for St. Jude's will be weighed, taped, and prepared for shipment. Boxes for eBay will be photographed first and then packed.
- Weighing aluminum tabs, and boxing for shipment to the Shriners and/or SCW.
- Trimming shrubs, trees, plants in the courtyard
- Mulching the flower beds
- Turning over pew cushions in the sanctuary



MISSION CAR WASH

Saturday, May 12th • 9 a.m. -3 p.m.
behind "old" police station
(across from Church)

Support our young people!

ON DUTY ... MAY

Acolytes 5th – 6th

Lectors

May 6 Pastor Chris
May 13 Filled
May 20 Filled
May 27 NEEDED

Fellowship Hour Hosts

May 6 Confirmation Class
May 13 Filled
May 20 Filled
May 27 NEEDED

Flowers

May 6 Diaconate
May 13 Filled
May 20 Filled
May 27 Filled

Soup Kitchen

May 23 Filled

Greeting Cards Filled

Communion Bread

May 6 Filled



You're Invited!

**89th Anniversary Celebration
of St. Stephen's A.M.E. Zion**

(the Rev. Charles Woody's church)

Sunday, May 20th • 3:00 p.m.

31 Rogers Street • Branford

Pastor Chris will be preaching!

Suggested Food Bank Items MAY



Unsweetened Cereal • Soup
Toothbrushes • Toothpaste



*Items are distributed through
The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries.*

Lectionary Readings from the United Church of Christ Calendar

May 6th

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 8:26-40
Ps 22:25-31
1 John 4:7-21

John 15:1-18

Abiding in Love

May 13th

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Festival of the Christian Home • Mother's Day

Acts 10:44-48
Ps 98

1 John 5:1-6

John 15:9-17

Friends Together

May 20th

Seventh Sunday of Easter

Rural Life Sunday

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26
Ps 1

1 John 5:9-13

John 17:6-19

Guided in Prayer

May 27th

Pentecost Sunday

Acts 2:1-21 or Ezek 37:1-14

Ps 104:24-34, 35b

Rom 8:22-27

John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

Spirit for All

Wear Red to Church!



Red is the color of fire and so symbolizes the presence of God. It is the liturgical color for **Pentecost**.

CLASS OF 2012

Please share your good news with your church family by noting your achievement on the sign-up posted in fellowship hall. We will include your name, where you're graduating from, and what's next in your future in the June or July-August KITs ... and, **if you're graduating from high school this year ... look out below** ↓



Abraham Pierson Scholarship

In 1996 in recognition of the importance of providing funds for education beyond the high school level, the Diaconate established the Abraham Pierson Scholarship in recognition of the work that this minister of our church (1694-1707) began when he became the first teacher and rector of what is now Yale University. This scholarship of \$500 is awarded in December for use in the second semester.

Guidelines for the scholarship are:

- The applicant must be a member of The First Church of Christ, Congregational, Clinton, Connecticut.
- The applicant must be a graduating high school senior with plans for furthering his/her education.
- The applicant must be active in church activities. A detailed list of such activities must accompany the application letter.
- An application letter is to be sent to the Diaconate stating (1) What my church means to me and (2) What I mean to my church.
- The applicant must submit a letter from an adult, non-family member of this church (other than the pastor or a current member of the Diaconate Board) which states his/her knowledge of the applicant's participation in and dedication to church work.
- The applicant must submit a letter of acceptance from a post-high school educational institution.
- **The deadline for applications is August 31st** of the year of high school graduation.



Summer Fair
at First Church

August 10th and 11th

The Summer Fair is right around the corner – August 10th-11th! We need your participation in one (or more!) of the following areas to ensure a successful fair:

1. Pre-Fair work & set up
2. Friday Fair Day
3. Saturday Fair Day
4. After fair take down & clean up

Please look over the sign-up sheets in fellowship hall and volunteer for the areas that interest you. The more help we have, especially during the fair days, the more everyone will be able to enjoy not only working in their booth, but getting out and checking out the rest of the fair, eating a meal with their families, chatting with friends, and visiting church and exhibitor booths.

the Summer Fair Committee

Got connections???

The **Silent Auction** needs your help with donations for this summer's fair. We are looking for members ...

- who have connections for tickets to any kind of sports or cultural event ...
- who have connections for gift certificates for services, i.e., legal, accounting, chiropractic, painting, plumbing, electric, handyman, lawn or yard services, septic, tree services, anything else you can think of – we are open to ideas ...
- who have connections to area recreation such as skiing, climbing, sailing, fishing, etc.

Past history confirms that these are the items we get significant bids on. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.~ *the 2012 Silent Auction*



Middlesex County Diaper Drive

From Mother's Day, May 13th, to Father's Day, June 17th, we will collect diapers and/or dollars (and cents!) for the **Middlesex County Diaper Bank**, which can purchase diapers in bulk and as a non-profit agency. In the past two years we have collected 29 packages of diapers and \$255 and 15 and \$670 respectively. The challenge is there – **let's do more!** Please designate checks by writing "Diapers" on the memo line.



2012



2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
APRIL 29 8:30 Confirmation 10:00 Worship/Church School 11:15 Fellowship Hour 4:00 GSA #60504	APRIL 30 10:00 <i>Mom's Morning Out</i> 7:30 Al-Anon	1 7:00 GSA Leaders 7:00 CS Pack 7 [FH]	2 9:30 Morning Circle 10:00 Cancer Survivors 6:00 GSA #62221	3 6:00 GSA #60505 7:00 Senior Choir 7:00 BSA Troop 7 [FH]	4 10:00 Al-Anon	5 Nn-7:00 FH in use
6 HOLY COMMUNION 8:30 Confirmation 10:00 Worship Sacrament of Baptism 10:00 Church School 11:15 Fellowship Hour 11:30 C.E. Committee	7 10:00 <i>Mom's Morning Out</i> 3:00 GSA #62081 7:00 Al-Anon Dst 7:30 Al-Anon	8 6:15 Pack 7 Tigers 7:00 Pack 7 Dens 7:00 GSA Leaders 7:00 Personnel	9 9:30 Morning Circle 7:00 Pack 7 Committee	10 7:00 Senior Choir 7:00 BSA Troop 7 [FH] 7:00 Pack 7 Den	11 10:00 Al-Anon 5:00 Rehearsal 6:00 GSA #62879	12 10:00 Wedding & Reception
13 MOTHER'S DAY 8:00 Men's Bible Study 8:30 Confirmation 10:00 Worship 10:00 Church School 11:15 Fellowship Hour	14 10:00 <i>Mom's Morning Out</i> 7:00 Troop 7 Cmte 7:30 Al-Anon	15 6:15 Pack 7 Tigers 7:00 Pack 7 Dens	16 9:30 Morning Circle Nn-9 p.m. FH in use 7:00 Church Board	17 Ascension Day 12 Nn JUNE KIT DEADLINE 6:00 GSA #60505 7:00 Senior Choir 7:00 BSA Troop 7 [FH]	18 8:00 HUSKY HELPER DAY 10:00 Al-Anon	19
20 8:15 Sunday Women 8:30 Confirmation 10:00 Worship 10:00 Church School Flag Memorial Dedication/Lawn 11:15 Fellowship Hour 11:30 Building & Grounds/ C.E./Diaconate/Missions/ Music/Nominating	21 10:00 <i>Mom's Morning Out</i> 3:00 GSA #62081 7:00 Crew 7 7:30 Al-Anon	22 6:15 Pack 7 Tigers 7:00 Pack 7 Dens	23 9:30 Morning Circle 5:00 Soup Kitchen/UMC	24 7:00 Senior Choir 7:00 BSA Troop 7 [FH]	25 10:00 Al-Anon 5-10 Pack 7 Mother-Son Dance	26
27 PENTECOST SUNDAY 8:00 Men's Bible Study 10:00 Worship WEAR RED TO CHURCH! 11:15 Fellowship Hour	28  7:30 Al-Anon	29	30 9:30 Morning Circle	31 7:00 Senior Choir 7:00 BSA Troop 7 [FH]	JUNE 1 10:00 Al-Anon	JUNE 2

Church Staff

The Reverend Dr. Christopher C. Horvath, Pastor
Joyce Baxter, Director of Music
Jane (Jane-a-t-c) Woodmansee, Church Secretary
Dan Flaucher, Sexton

WORSHIP AT FIRST CHURCH

8:00 a.m. Worship resumes June 17th-September 2nd, 2012
10:00 a.m. Worship Service every Sunday
*childcare available during 10:00 worship for infants to age two
during Church School year*

We are



Sacrament of Holy Communion
Celebrated the first Sunday of each month

10:00 a.m. Church School
September 11, 2011 – June 10, 2012
3-year-olds through Grade 9

Accessible

11:15 a.m. Fellowship and Refreshment Hour

The church and fellowship hall are handicapped accessible.

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Church Office:

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Fax: (860) 669-9602

Office Hours:

Monday–Friday: 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Saturday: 9 a.m.–12:00 noon

For security reasons, the parish house is locked during lunch hour – usually 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Office errands are usually done before or after lunchtime. If you need access to the building or Jane-a-t-c at mid-day, please call ahead.

www.firstchurchclinton.org

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED