



The Church Bell

The Federated Church of Christ
Brooklyn, CT



Sunday Worship
Sunday School
10:00 AM

Office Hours
Tue Wed Thu
9:00 AM - 12:30 PM

February 2017

Notes from Pastor Mary

In the gospel of John, Jesus' first recorded miracle is the transformation of water into wine at one very lucky couple's wedding in Cana after the demand for libations outpaced the supply. However, Jesus saves the day, as it were, or at least the wedding, by providing this overflowing gift to amply respond to a need.

At some point, the water in those jars became wine, with the whole process becoming an inside joke between Jesus and those servants as the chief steward gives all the credit for the quality wine to the groom, who had no idea where such praise was coming from. The story is recorded as Jesus' first sign of many, and kicks off the gospel of John's story about Jesus, the Son of God and Source of Living Water and Abundant Life.

But what is the sign, exactly? Can there be more than one in this story about abundance, surprising provision? I think there can. For while the wine was universally proclaimed to be the best anyone had ever tasted, it came from humble origins and underwent a mysterious transformation in water jars set aside for purification. Not only was the water transformed, but the jars

themselves were transformed as well. In Orthodox Jewish tradition then and still today, water is set aside in special pitchers for purification and cleansing rituals. Any other liquid would contaminate the jars for purification purposes. The miracle-containing jars in the story could now no longer be used for cleansing, but would have to be used for a new purpose entirely. In this case, to hold the joy and happiness of a God who loves to party and loves it when those who are created in the divine image celebrate love.

The empty water jars had served their purpose: they had been the means of purification for people going through the rituals of religion, but had perhaps lost the spark;

lost the brightness and spirit of new wine. Now these jars were waiting to be filled with vitality and anticipation for what other amazing things

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Articles **18th**
each month to:

ChurchBell@FCCBrooklynCT.org

Pastor: Rev. Mary L. Apicella
Christian Education Director: Therese Carpentier

Worship Accompanist: David Gonzalez
Secretary: Aimee Cooney

God can do with jars and pots of any size. Our church is not unlike one of these water jars: our traditions, rituals, and practices have served us well. We have done good, faithful work for the gospel of Jesus, and continue to do so even as times change. We don't know what changes, for better or worse, lie ahead. What hidden abundance lies within our sacred traditions, ready to be transformed, in this hour, like the water in the great stone jars?

We may well be in the process of becoming jars of wine instead of water – becoming a community that follows Jesus' lead to create get the party started and keep it going by creating an atmosphere of genuine welcome, well-being, and love so that others see the party going on here and all the fun we are having, and want to join in.

This will mean some of the priorities and practices in our past that we have done well may need to undergo a transformation to keep all of us fresh, relevant, and energized.

Jesus stands ready to transform and re-fill our empty jars to the brim with hope, prayer, joy, and persistence and draw from them as we go about caring for each other, singing songs, preparing coffee hour, talking to friends and visitors, and keeping connected by all manner of ways so that everyone feels respected, appreciated, and heard.

As we continue in this season of Epiphany, may we be transformed in ways that we as individuals and as a

congregation can't imagine until one day we realize what was just plain water is now the wine of compassion, celebration, and invitation, filling us to the brim and overflowing for all to taste and realize the glory and delight of God.

Annual Meeting

The annual report for the Federated Church was passed out at worship on January 15, and electronic copies emailed out to the congregation. Any minor updates - such as those additions to the Nominating Committee report, can be found on the website, under "Publications" www.fccbbrooklynct.org/documents.html

As a reminder, the annual meeting takes place during service on January 29, 2107, with a pot-luck supper afterwards.

~ Mark Rollins - Moderator

Partyline

It is with great sadness that we note the passing on December 30th of long time member and friend, Shirley Leach. Shirley had spent the last year or so at Colonial Health and Rehab so we have not seen her for some time. Her friendly and cheerful spirit will be greatly missed.

Francis McNally is still recovering at Westview but making progress. Hopefully he will get home soon as he has been laid up since December 2nd.

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Partyline (continued)

Doris Heimall, Carolyn Otto's mother is also recovering at Westview. She fell on January 2nd and cracked some ribs. She is making good progress and expects to be home soon.

Gerry Babbit has been housebound lately with should issues. We miss her and hope she is up and about.

Steve and Kathryn Stellitano have a new grandson, Julian who was born on January 18th to Nick and Gena. He weighed in at 8lbs 13 oz and was 22 inches long. His big brother, Sawyer is very happy- even though he thought Tink was a better name for the new baby.

And Evalin Berris has a new great grandson! Waylon James was born to Holly and Elliott Hayden on Thanksgiving Day. He weighed 8.lbs 4.6 oz and was 21 ¼ inches long. I think that makes 11 greats for Evalin!

~ Kathryn Stellitano

Christian Education

Happy New Year to all and I hope that this year is filled with blessings for you.

Thank you to all who helped make our Miracle of Jesus event a success. We are hoping to improve on some of the stations that we offered at this event, therefore we are asking if anyone has any type of wool spinner

or table top looms that we could use at our next event.

We received an email saying how appreciative our Adopt-A-Family was when they received their gifts. Mom could not believe how generous people could be. Thank you to all that made this family have a nicer Christmas.

March 1st is Ash Wednesday- the start of the Lenten season. We will be having our annual Joyous Noise Collection starting during lent.

Thank you for being so supportive in all that we do. God bless!

~ Therese Carpentier

Deacons

It is transition time again as those who have faithfully served on the Deacons open opportunities for others to minister. Missy Ennis is going off the board as her work and family demands have increased. She has given the board new perspectives and energy. We will miss her. In February new Deacons will be joining our team. Among the changes will be the In Care Group Deacon. Please keep the Deacons, particularly your care group Deacon and Pastor Mary updated particularly when a loved one is sick. Your care group Deacon is the one that would have contacted you if worship is being canceled. (continued)

Instead of that wake-up call you can in addition to Channel 3 closings, call the church office to check for cancellations. Cancellations will be on the voice mail. An email blast will also be sent to everyone on the email list. Please tell your In Care Deacon if you would prefer a telephone call.

One of the ministries of the Deacons is supporting Pastor Mary and families at funerals and memorial services. Our out reach in this tender time as a representative of the congregation is particularly important for families that may not have been active at worship.

Check out the Wednesday mornings study group on women in the Bible lead by Melissa Wilson.

Wednesday evening 5:30 to 7 supper and prayer facilitated by Lee Lambert has been a very meaningful experience. Everyone is welcome.

We are updating the Directory and adding folks to each Deacon's In Care Group. Your Deacon in particular, all the deacons and Pastor Mary need you as a community to minister for each other by letting us know of pastoral needs. It is a blessing when one of you or someone calls on your behalf to update us.

Deacons: Missy Ennis, Lee Lambert, Sandy Motasky, Carolyn Otto, Melissa Wilson, Mary Ann Thomen

~Mary Ann Thomen

Loving God, Hear Our Prayers...

Loving God, hear our prayers...

- For the family of Todd (TJ) Allen, grieving his death, and for the Wiesmore family, as they also grieve for their son and his actions that have hurt so many.
- For healing and comfort for the communities of Thompson and Killingly after a fire damaged the Thompson Congregational Church, and the unexpected deaths of students and school administrators in Killingly.
- For the healing of our nation's heart, and the strengthening of our collective compassion for one another.
- For the family and friends of Richard Baril, who passed away January 13th.
- For the family and friends of David Lawton, who died unexpectedly on January 8th, leaving behind his wife, three sons, and a community who will miss him dearly.
- For the family and friends of Elaine Tapio, who passed away January 3rd.
- For the family & friends of Shirley Leach, who passed away December 30th.
- For the family and friends of Dani Dunford, who passed away just before Christmas after a short battle with cancer. She leaves a 19 month old daughter and 7 year old son, and is the niece of Lee and Ann Lambert.
- For Doris Heimall, recovering after a fall over the holidays.
- For Ruth, Don Wilson's sister, and healing for an infection.
- With Victoria for her son, Jesse, and healing for her ex husband, Ernie and friend, Dee.

- For Ruby, that her shoulder pain would be eased.
- For Dacia, her family and medical team as decisions are made and implemented for her Stage 4 cancer diagnosis.
- For Emalyn, great-niece of Carolyn Otto, still receiving treatments for leukemia and for future rounds would be more successful.
- For 4 year old Ava, undergoing chemotherapy for cancer.
- For Jane, Jean's sister-in-law, also undergoing chemo treatments for cancer.
- For John Wilcox.
- For Leland, and all who are struggling with addiction and drugs, that they would find and receive help and find loving reconciliation in relationships with loved ones.
- For the millions of people displaced and fleeing as refugees from violence, and for the children who endure the traumas of war, and who face insecurity of food, shelter, and safety.
- For peace in our world, and that all the world would experience the saving love of God.
- For the blessings of children in worship who remind us to be glad when we come to God's House for worship.
- That it is in the love of Jesus that we find salvation and for the opportunities to share that love with others.
- For parents and family, shelter, food, and love.
- For all the ways we glimpse the love of Jesus in the actions of others.
- For this loving and supportive church family who blesses others with the power of prayer.

KBIC

The **Killingly-Brooklyn Interfaith Council** held its monthly meeting at the Temple on Wednesday, January 17th. Ten representatives from seven faith communities were in attendance.

The Reverend Jane Hall, who lives in Pomfret, and who had served as Deacon at Trinity and LaSalette, was ordained a priest of the church in December. She may be assisting at St Albans. There was discussion as to whether as the "new gal" she would have to take the joint Easter service at Allen Hill in Brooklyn. (Sunday 6:00am April 15th.) Pastor Jon will discuss with her the option hosting the noon time Good Friday Service on April 14th at Davis Park.

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Gracious God, we give you thanks...

- For laughter and joy that bring worship new life.
- For family and church family.
- For the presence of God's Holy Spirit at work in our lives and in the lives of our loved ones and friends.
- For the gifts God gives us daily.

KBIC *(continued)*

Westfield is now hosting the 3rd Friday of the Be Our Guest Suppers. Westfield also collected \$330 for the FuelBank from it's "Longest Night" observance of Christmas on December 21st. This Blue Christmas themed ceremony attracted seventy or more other than regular Westfield members.

St Joseph's gave out 48 Christmas baskets over the holiday.

Pastor Lisa of St John's discussed a recent fatal crime involving two local teenagers in Sterling. Pastor Lisa and other counselors are trying to manage the grief and confusion of their teen aged friends.

Earl reported that with the \$300 coming in today from the Westfield collection and \$1282 from the initial Fall Appeal letter, the Fuel Fund bank balance was about on par with other years; 2013 = \$5021, 2014 = \$4901, 2015 = \$5803, 2016 = \$4616, and 2017 = \$4616. This should last us through the worst of the winter as more households use up their Federal allotments through ACCESS. Fuel Oil prices may be going up this winter according to Mary Ellen.

The Council will hold a Spring Fuel Bank Concert on Saturday March 11th (snow date March 18th) to restore Fuel Bank funds to assist households in the chilly Spring. Last year the Concert (free will offering) and the silent auction raised over \$1500 for the Fuel Bank.

Last year's Concert was well attended and enjoyed. Each Faith Community is invited to prepare a basket for auction (no wine bottles please...) and deliver it to Betty and Gene Merow over at the Sunshine Shop on Upper Maple by Friday the 10th at the latest. We also hope each community can come up with some performers who could entertain for about ten minutes or so (three songs). We would like to hear back from people by about the 5th of March about performances. The Concert will allow for a couple of intermissions to allow folks to check whether their bid has been overtaken. We will have baskets and hundreds of dollars in local gift certificates as in the past. See Earl if interested.

Sound systems and ads were discussed. A program listing donors to the auction will be prepared.

The World Day of Prayer will be celebrated at the Danielson Methodist Church, Saturday, March 4th at noon, A Phillipine luncheon and theme service will be presented.

Pastor Jon notes that the Ester Egg Hunt is set for Saturday, April 15th from 10:00am at Davis Park. Over a thousand people came. This year they will supply an additional 2,000 eggs making a total of 10,000 plastic easter eggs. There will also be a pancake breakfast that Saturday morning featuring the Easter Bunny.

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KBIC (continued)

Again this year there will be an ecumenical Ash Wednesday Service conducted at the new St John's Lutheran on Route 12 south of Danielson. Pastor Jon will assist in hosting. All faith communities are welcome to join in. The service will be on March 1st at 7:00pm.

There will be "Farewell Blue Grass Concert" as a fund raiser for the Northeast Community Kitchens (started by Rev Ralph Sequine) It will be held at the First Congregational Church in Woodstock on February 25th at 7:30pm. There will be a poster in the Narthex.

St John's will host a dinner for Veterans at the VFW in Danielson on Saturday April 1st at 5:00. Vets eat for free. Otherwise \$10 for tickets, with proceeds going to local vet coffee houses, etc.

St John's will also host the food packaging event again this year. In the past our kids have raised change during Lent to help pay for the product. This year we are also being asked to set up a team of twelve to run a table the afternoon of the event for one hour. (See Earl) The event will be scheduled after Easter.

Earl reported that another refugee family is being brought into the county through the Windham County UCC Association. A multi bedroom house has been secured and is being furnished.

We are in touch and have advised then that we stand ready to help this new family as we have been helping to support the first family.

Our next meeting will be at St John's on February 21st at 1:00pm

<p>Federated Church of Christ 15 Hartford Road, PO Box 204, Brooklyn, CT 06234 Office: (860) 774-9817 Pastor: (860) 774-3761</p> <p>Find us on FaceBook: www.FaceBook.com /FederatedChurchBrooklynCT</p> <p>UCC Interim Eastern Regional Minister: Rev. Tom Clough 860-928-0765 toms@ctucc.org</p> <p>ABC of Connecticut Executive Minister: Rev. Judy Allbee 888-236-5421 jallbee@abcconn.org</p>
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February 2017 Calendar - [www.federatedchurchbrooklynct.org / calendar.html](http://www.federatedchurchbrooklynct.org/calendar.html)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29 Annual Meeting 10am Worship 11am Pot Luck lunch	30 Deborah W - bday 9am Office Hours	31 9am Office Hours 7pm Choir Practice	Feb 1 9am Office Hours	2 George G birthday	3	4
5 10am Worship	6 9am Office Hours	7 9am Office Hours 7pm Choir Practice	8 Carolyn O - birthday 9am Office Hours	9	10	11
12 10am Worship 11:30am Christian Educa 11:30am Deacons	13 7pm Executive Board 9am Office Hours	14 Valentine's Day 9am Office Hours 7pm Choir Practice	15 Jean B - birthday 9am Office Hours 7pm Trustees	16	17 Bell articles due Earl McW - birthday	18
19 Shirley B - birthday 10am Worship	20 Presidents' Day Jacob O - birthday Robin B - birthday 9am Office Hours	21 9am Office Hours 7pm Choir Practice	22 9am Office Hours	23	24	25
26 Lynn B - birthday 10am Worship	27 Garland T - birthday Patricia M - birthday 9am Office Hours	28 9am Office Hours 7pm Choir Practice	Mar 1 Doris C - birthday 9am Office Hours	2	3	4

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