



# The Church Bell

The Federated Church of Christ  
Brooklyn, CT



## May 2016

**Sunday Worship**  
**Sunday School**  
10:00 AM

**Office Hours**  
Tue 10 AM - 3 PM  
Thu 1 PM - 4 PM

### *Notes from Pastor Mary*

As springtime (finally) settles upon us, I am finding myself wanting to clear the space around my mind and heart as well as my garden patches in order to plant new seeds that will nourish the mind, body and the spirit. Thanks to careful tending, the sprouts of string beans, tomatoes, and summer squash are starting to poke through the dirt as they soak up the heat from the sun still nestled in their flats and planters by the windows in the house. Just a few more weeks until all danger of frost has passed and they can acclimate themselves to the outdoors, continuing to grow and produce as those seeds were intended to do.

But this work of preparing the garden spaces outside has gotten me thinking, can I say that tending my own "inner garden spaces" has been as important? One way I check in with myself and my spirit is by turning to poetry. Mary Oliver is one of my favorites; she has a way of saying exactly what I'm thinking with fewer words and it still sounds just right.

"Praying" is one of my favorite poems - one that challenges as well as comforts, encourages as well as

corrects my over-eagerness to get everything "just right" with God... saying the right thing in the right way isn't nearly as wonderful to God as an open, receptive spirit that is willing to listen.

I hope you find the poet's advice helpful as I have, as you move through all that the seasons of life and creation present to you.

#### **Praying**

*It doesn't have to be  
the blue iris, it could be  
weeds in a vacant lot, or a few  
small stones; just  
pay attention, then patch*

*a few words  
together and don't  
try*

*to make them  
elaborate, this  
isn't  
a contest but the  
doorway*

*into thanks, and a  
silence in which  
another voice may  
speak."*

*- Mary Oliver,  
Thirst*

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Articles 18th  
each month to:  
ChurchBell@FCCBrooklynCT.org

## Missions

The Haitian Health Foundation received 90 cans of tuna fish, 25 pounds of peanut butter and 24 suitcases from our Church members in time for their quarterly shipment of donated supplies to Haiti on April 16th. The next shipment will head out in late July or early August. So we will be collecting more items between now and then. Tuna (*packed in oil*) and peanut butter and bar soap can be left in the baskets in the Narthex. Suitcases can be left by the garage door. Thanks to everybody for this on-going support.

The Missions Committee is planning a big Church yard Sale for Saturday, May 7th from 9:00am to 12:00 noon, with the Women's Group's annual plant and bake sale. Set up and clean up volunteers will be needed. Any sale items you might want to donate can be left with the Thrift Shoppe on Thursdays, Fridays or Saturdays. Items can also be brought in on Sunday and given to Sue or Earl. Earl's truck would be available for hauling "some" items.

~ Earl McWilliams

## Coffee Hour

The Coffee Hour Sign Up Sheet is looking very nice though May 15th. May 22nd and 29th and most of June is available for some generous souls out there - sign up soon!

Thanks to everyone who has helped with Coffee Hour recently!

## W.C.G.C.S.

The March Lasagna dinner was a great success! We made just over \$900 at this event - thanks to the support of all of you kind people who baked cakes and purchased dinners.

In March, the Women's Group paid their \$550 quarterly pledge to the Church budget and Missions, donated \$400 to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund, and sent a \$100 donations to the KBIC and the Haitian Health Fund. We also made our yearly contribution of \$250 to the American Leprosy Foundation. This is the amount necessary to cure one person of Hanson's disease.

And now - the **Mother's Day Plant & Bake and Yard Sale** on May 7th! We need baked goodies. If you are generous enough to bake, you can drop goodies at church on the morning of the sale, starting at 8 AM. You could also leave them in the church kitchen on Friday (give me a call to make sure I know they are there).

Plants will be available for sale on Friday from 2 - 5 PM in my garage at 88 Gorman Road Brooklyn, near the school. You could bring baked goods at that time and get first pick of my stock! Or come to the sale at church on Saturday morning until noon. Call me if you have any questions: cell 860-208-6088; home 860-774-9210.

We are also in great need of helpers on the day of the sale itself. See Earl or myself if you could help out for even an hour or two on Saturday.

~ Kathryn Stellitano

## *Partyline*

Congratulations and warm hugs to the Heon family! Sabrina Zahn will be officially adopted by Shana and Rob Heon on May 2nd. At that time she will be changing her name to Luna Heon-Zahn.

Mo Girard is still waiting for surgery on her neck that is scheduled for early May. She is trying to stay healthy and avoiding crowds until that time.

Lori Bailey Rajchel is also still recuperating. She is anticipating hip replacement in the future, hopefully sometime during the summer.

Jean Burdick's granddaughter, Tristan has finished her program at UConn and has started her nursing career at UMass Medical Center. Her 4 month old great grandson, Levi is also coming along well after a scary stay at the hospital.

The Geers and the Nichols recently took a trip with the Canterbury Senior Citizens to Lancaster Pennsylvania to see "Samson" at the Sights and Sounds Theater.

How nice to see Lucy Stuyanski back from Florida. Now we know spring is really here!

~ Kathryn Stellitano

## *Deacons*

To strengthen connections between the Deacons and the Federated Family, we have divided the congregation into Care Groups. Each Deacon has a care group of about 10 families. We held a Meet and Greet

your Deacon during coffee hour on April 17 & 24. For those who were unable to participate, each Deacon will make an effort to connect by phone or in person. Mistakes happen and if *you have not been contacted by a Deacon, please let us know*. We are hoping that knowing your Deacon will make it easier to keep the church family updated. New Church directories were passed out. Check to be sure your information is correct. Please let your deacon or pastor Mary know when you want a pastoral visit or telephone call.

As the number of deacons is less, our duties are spread to fewer people. We will be more intentional about asking for help from the congregation. Each of us have different gifts and we would appreciate folks signing up for duties such as greeter or liturgist. We will be asking for help taking collection and serving communion. We are always grateful for the hands that put away the chairs, tables and dishes after coffee hour. Two year old Mackenzie does her best to pull her chair to the closet. For those folks who are more comfortable participating by just being there, we are grateful for your gift of presence.

We are planning for upcoming special services for Pentecost (May 15) and outdoor worship in the memorial garden (May 29).

Deacons Missy Ennis, Lee Lambert, Sandy Motasky, Carolyn Otto, Melissa Wilson; submitted by Mary Ann Thomen

### *Loving God, Hear Our Prayers...*

- For Brantley, a 1 year old who is undergoing back surgery.
- For Ruth, Don's sister, who has been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.
- For Mo, whose surgery was postponed due to other health complications.
- For Cole, born prematurely, and his parents; co-workers of Shana H.
- For Victoria and her family on the death of her father, Toni.
- For Dee and Jeremiah and their family, experiencing internal conflict and seeking what's best for all and God's presence in their lives.
- For those whose choices and mindsets cause others pain.
- For loved ones who struggle with addiction.
- For Graham, Steve and Mike, that they would experience God's saving presence and grace.
- For Joan and her family, as she recovers from triple bypass surgery.
- For Robin and Ellen's health and wellbeing.
- For Lori, continued healing from surgeries and return to good health.
- For Richard W., whose cancer diagnosis is terminal.
- For Shirley L., in Westview Rehabilitation and Nursing Home.
- For Barbara R., who is suffering from cancer, for Sherron F., and all who are fighting cancer and other illness.
- For our families to be guided and comforted by the God's presence in transition and in all situations.
- For all who are grieving loss of loved ones and livelihoods after earthquakes in Ecuador and Japan.
- For the millions of people displaced and fleeing as refugees from the violence in Syria and other countries in the Middle East, and for the nations around the world receiving them.
- For all who are struggling with addiction and drugs, that they would find and receive help and find reconciliation in relationships with loved ones.
- For our nation still in need of healing from racism, prejudice, and violence.
- For peace in our world.

### *Gracious God, we give you thanks...*

- For Don's Aunt Holly's recovery
- Levi's continued recovery from a respiratory virus.
- That in Jesus Christ we have strength for today and hope for tomorrow.
- For the joys of music and the leadership of David and our glorious choir.
- For this loving and supportive church family who blesses others with the power of prayer.
- For the service, bravery and courage of our military veterans.
- For the people in our lives who remind us of God's love and presence, even in the midst of struggle.

## Christian Education

Thank you to all who generously gave to the Joyous Noise Collection for the Kids Care Project. We collected a total of \$409.94. A big thank you to Earl McWilliams who took the change to be counted and exchanged for paper.

June 12th will be Children's Sunday. Please mark that on your calendars. We are planning for that service and it is important to have regular attendance from the children to ensure a beautiful service that day.

We are also gathering names of all of our graduates (big and small) to honor them on Children's Sunday. Please submit your graduate's name to Therese Carpentier, Cindy Rollins or Kathryn Stellitano

Happy Mother's Day to all the moms from the Christian Education Committee. May God bless you all abundantly.

~ Therese Carpentier

### Federated Church of Christ

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## WBPotFCoCMtM

What Being Part of the Federated Church of Christ Means to Me

"When I was a teen, I remember attending youth fellowship. We travelled to other churches in area towns to unite in meetings. I spent a week at a youth church camp one summer. These were highlights of my youth."

~ Therese Carpentier, Director of Christian Education 08 '10

## Giving by Getting

Some church members offer a service, that can help our church.

Case in point, Randall Motasky (where this idea came from) is a carpenter/wood craftsman above reproach. So if you needed say a cabinet repair, or a deadbolt installed, he may be able to do it. There is no charge (you supply all the parts), and you donate to the church any amount as recompense.

The Geer family has a wonderful vacation home in West Dennis, MA, available to rent. It sleeps up to 6, and weekly rentals run from 3 PM Saturday to 1 PM the next Saturday. It's about a 9-minute walk to South Village, and a portion of the rental fee is donated to the church. Contact the Geers at 860-774-5755.

If your computer hard drive fails, it may not really be 100% dead (it could be "mostly dead" like in *The Princes Bride* movie). Mark Rollins has a kit that may be able to recover documents/photos (he's batting about .500 now). 617-281-8309

