



The Church Bell

The Federated Church of Christ, Brooklyn CT



United Church of Christ and American Baptist Churches U.S.A.



Worship and Sunday School on Sunday at 10:00
Office Hours: Tues–Thurs, 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

June 2014

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The Church Bell is a forum for the church, and input from you is always welcome.
Articles *must* be e-mailed to the Pastor or to the secretary's office at federated.church@snet.net
by 11:00am on the Third Wednesday of every month.

Notes from Pastor Mary

As the weather warms up and the days grow longer, I am finding that I am outside and getting my hands dirty planting a vegetable garden. This year, I hope the “crops” at our house will yield cucumbers, squash, peppers, and even some juicy, red tomatoes (that, put between two slices of white bread and a little Duke’s mayo, taste like heaven!). Growing the various plants from tiny seeds into flourishing plants takes work, as all gardeners know. I’m hoping the rain and sun cooperate, making conditions just right for a healthy and abundant harvest. And in all of this work of digging, preparing the soil, and watching over the little seedlings, I am reminded of how ministry is at times like caring for and working in a community garden. A community garden requires many hands to care for the soil and plants so that all are able to enjoy the harvest, which preserves and empowers the idea of the priesthood of all believers, so that no one must bear the burden of care alone.

The metaphor of ministry as gardening is especially fitting given our newly created Memorial Garden beside the chapel building. This space has been transformed into a landscaped pathway with beautiful plants and bushes that will bloom all summer around a pear tree, with two benches given in memory of all the loved ones who have been part of our church community, and in particular in honor of Ruth Briere. Yet this garden could not have come into being without the participation of the many people who helped plan, design, pay for, and create the space for it. **Thank you** to everyone who made the dream of a Memorial Garden a reality. Everyone is invited to continue to grow the garden through the seasons and years by bringing perennials or other plants from your yard to the church, to continue the blessing and ministry of gardening on our common ground for worship.

As just one example of many to come, the memorial garden gives all of us at Federated Church a chance for leadership in ways that invite others who may not have seen ways to contribute their skills to the life and work of the church to do so. Sharing the commitment to care for our garden is an opportunity that empowers *all* of us to be more open and forthright with one another about the vision for our church. I think it is true that when people feel like they have a stake in how the church presents itself to the world, the better the church will foster lasting connections among members who will in turn invite others to witness “grace at the crossroads.

Pastor’s Discretionary Fund

Did you know that the church is part of a network of congregations in the Brooklyn and Danielson area that work together to provide aid to individuals who need some help covering expenses?

The Pastor’s Discretionary Fund is the way that we as a congregation are able to help our neighbors meet their needs for food, transportation, paying bills, and rent. In this small but meaningful way, our church is living out Jesus’ call in Matthew 25 to care for “the least of these who are members of my family,” recognizing that all people are beloved to God.

Any donations made to the discretionary fund come directly to the pastor and go into an account reserved only for requests for assistance. Donations made to the fund are not part of your yearly pledge, but are a freely given offering. Please prayerfully consider the discretionary fund as you make your plans for giving to the ministry of our church. ~ Pastor Mary

Women's Group

The Women's Group wishes to thank everyone who helped make our recent Plant and Bake Sale such a success. Thanks to all of you who baked, bought and helped out on Friday, Saturday or Sunday we were able to raise almost \$1500. The plants were gorgeous and the weather was cooperative.

Happily the sale was a success since the Women's Group disbursed over \$2000 during the month of April. Money was sent to the New England Baptist Missions, UCC Missions, the International White Cross for health kits, Relay for Life, the Haitian Fund, our own Pastor's Discretionary Fund. and the Memorial Garden Project.

The Women's Group has paid the \$100 fee and completed the paperwork for the Northeast District Department of Health for a nonprofit Food Permit which is good through December 2014. This enables the church to host fundraising events with food. No health permits needed.

Believe it or not, the Sugarplum Fair is just about 6 months away! Several of us are working on projects of all kinds. We hope there are some sewing, knitting and crocheting going on. We are always collecting jewelry and Christmas items also. Why not choose a theme for a raffle basket and spend the summer and fall accumulating the goodies to go into it?

The WCGCS has decided to meet on Wednesday, June 4th at 9:30am to give the chapel kitchen a good cleaning. It does not get used as frequently as in the past and is looking a little bedraggled. Come by and give a hand if you are in a cleaning mood. You don't have to stay the whole time. The coffee pot will be on and I am sure some goodies will appear.

Our next meeting will be Monday, June 9th at 1 PM in the chapel conference room. We would love to see you there.

Deacons

- Deacon for the month of June: Diane Schreiner.
- If you would like a hard copy of the Bell, ask Diane.
- This month's communion offering will be given to Relay for Life.
- Thank you Earl McWilliams for the carnations given on Mothers Day and the dedication
- of the Memorial Garden.
- Thanks to Ruby Babcock for the rose given to Finn Clark at his baptism on May 11th.

Christian Education

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their generous donations for the Joyous Noise collection. We surpassed our goal of 300 dollars by over 100 dollars.

June 15, 2014 will be Children's Sunday – mark your calendars!

I will be accepting names of graduates from all levels for honorary mention during our Children's Sunday Service.

The children will be busy preparing some fun activities to be showed during our special Children's Sunday service so attendance is important. Thank you for all you do. God bless and enjoy this wonderful season of spring.
Therese H. Carpentier (CRE)

Ad Hoc Group

The Ad Hoc group formed a couple of months ago. It consists of Kathryn and Steve Stellitano, Missy Ennis, Hope Barton, Earl McWilliams, and Maria Fitze. Its purpose is to help coordinate fund raisers and efforts on behalf of projects which come up and which are not the specific responsibility of any standing committee. It also maintains various lists of volunteers for various on-going church functions such as mowing the lawns, the coffee our, etc.

An example of "ad hoc project" was the recent creation of the memorial garden. This effort involved the contributions of the Women's Group and about two dozen of our members, and was overseen by the Ad Hoc Group. It was an exercise in consensus building and reflects the ideas and hard work of many of us, and the artistry of Ian MacDonald.

Examples of fund raisers are the recent yard sale, held in conjunction with the plant and bake sale, which netted the church general fund \$250, and the on-going sale of commemorative pens crafted from the old copper beech that was taken down a few years ago. Donna Salmon came up with the project, and our group, led by Maria Fitze, has sold thirteen pens so far, raising \$130 for the general fund.

Plans are well along for an "Antiques Appraisal Fair" that we hope to sponsor in late June or in July. Qualified appraisers have volunteered their time and talents and an advertising plan is being developed.

We are always happy to welcome new members to this Ad Hoc Group.

Party Line

So pleasant to have positive news to report!

- Lucy and Jim Stuyanski's granddaughter, Paige Stuyanski recently competed at the Junior National Gymnastics Meet in Jackson, Mississippi. She placed 9th in the nation on the balance beam!!! Paige is a freshman at Woodstock Academy and is with Deary Gymnastics.
- Mo Girard's great granddaughter, Anisa Carrabello, has received a scholarship to attend a creative writing program at Wesleyan University in Middletown, CT. The Center for Creative Youth offers four weeks of intensive study in the arts to talented high school students.
- Shirley Leach's daughter, Maggie will be back in Connecticut this month to attend her grandson, Ocean's graduation from high school. He will be attending college in Ohio this fall.
- It was so nice to see Debbie Wright in church recently with her son, Hunter who was born on Christmas Day.

PIANO, GUITAR, and FLUTE LESSONS

David Gonzalez is accepting new students.

He is most proficient in piano, guitar, and flute, but he can teach almost all instruments.

For further information, see David in church or call 860-377-1287.