



CHURCH STAFF

Thomas L. Kennedy, Pastor	267-6540
Jill Walker, Director of Parish Life, Development and Education	267-7180
Carol Westcote, Director of Music & Church Secretary	267-2654
Jerry Gerkey, Chatter Editor	267-9513
Church Office	860-267-4959
Fax Number	860-267-7424
E-Mail Address	cceh@juno.com
Website	http://www.cc-eh.org

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

P.O. BOX 237, Main Street
East Hampton, Connecticut 06424

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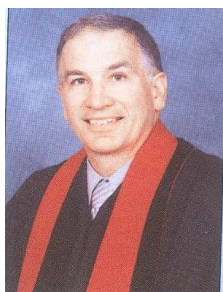
May

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHATTER

2007



THOTS FROM TOM



Where's the snow???

Finally, warmer weather has arrived, just in time for spring! It is about time. Some parts of New England, including Connecticut, have seen snow quite late into April this year. In fact, as glorious as the day of Easter was, it was one of the coldest that I can remember. It was a beautiful sunny day, but it was very cold down by the lake! Now we bask in the glorious warmth of spring, and look forward to the rebirth of nature as our trees and flowers bloom, and our lawns turn green and grow.

As you look through this *Chatter*, you will see that the arrival of spring is being greeted at our church with many activities. One that I want to particularly highlight is our annual planning workshop, to be held on Saturday, May 19, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

As of press time the workshop is still in the planning stages, but this year the focus will be on looking ahead strategically at our future, and what the church wants to accomplish and *be* in the years to come. The working theme for the workshop is *God is Working Here...How May We Serve?* As your pastor, I need a clear picture from you regarding how we are being called over the next few years to serve Christ in East Hampton. I like the energy that is abounding in our congregation, and I want us to build upon that and sustain the Spirit that exists here. I also believe that we need to take a hard look at the way our boards and committees do their work, and discern if the way that work is being done is satisfactory. One of our major boards feels that the way that it is doing its work is not satisfactory, and could possibly be changed, and so we need to take a look at that, and

the rest of our boards and committees, and make some plans for how we can do our administrative work more effectively and efficiently.

This workshop is open to *all* members of the church, and not just to those who are serving on boards and committees. We need ideas, dreams and visions from everyone, so please put the date on your calendar. We will be finished by noon, so that you can get on with the rest of your day. It is hoped that the workshop will yield some ideas and directions that may be pursued in further explorations this coming fall, under the direction of our Church Council. Come, be a part of this exciting process!

Thanks! Have a blessed month!

Tom

New Members Joining June 3

For those who are considering joining our church, the next opportunity will be on Sunday, June 3, during our morning worship. There will be two New Member Forums that prospective members need to attend prior to joining, and they are scheduled for Tuesday May 1, and Tuesday May 8. Both meetings will be held from 7 to 8 p.m. If interested in joining, please call the church office at 267-4959 no later than Friday, April 27.

Pastoral Mediations Committee

There will be a meeting of the Pastoral Mediations Committee on Tuesday, May 15, beginning at 7:00 p.m. The Pastoral Mediations Committee serves under the guidance and direction of the Board of Diaconate and works to support and evaluate the ministries of the church. On May 15th

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the committee will hold an evaluation of the ministries of the church and the role of our pastor. If you have any concerns or comments, please see one of the committee members, Joyce Chamis, David Kneeland, Pete Standley, Lorraine Barlow, and Jackie Hooper-Hage.

Middlesex Association Spring Annual Meeting

The spring annual meeting of the Middlesex Association of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ will be held on Monday, May 21, 2007 at the Haddam Neck Congregational Church (408 Quarry Hill Road, Haddam Neck). Fellowship and refreshments begin at 7:00 p.m., followed by worship at 7:30 led by the Rev. Jim Simpson, pastor of Haddam Neck Congregational Church. The business meeting will follow after that, concluding at 9:00 p.m.

PARISH NEWS

It's Twins!

Congratulations to Ann and David Selger on the birth of Sierra and Zachary who arrived on Sunday, April 15, weighing in at 5 lb. 3 oz. and 4 lb.10 oz., respectively. Big brother Evan is excitedly waiting to help care for his new siblings. Best wishes to all!

COSA NEWS

Thank you 2006-2007 COSA members; it has been a busy year and I appreciate all your help in support. A special thank you to Eileen Atkinson and Kristen Warzecha who have been on COSA for the past 8+ years; your knowledge and experience will be greatly missed. Thank you to all the other 2006-2007 COSA members. It has been a busy and successful year and I appreciate all your help and support.

Blankets of Love/Tools of Hope

The Church World Service Blanket of Love and Tools of Hope programs create a rainbow of help and hope each time the right tool is placed in the hands of people in need. Ordinary things that we often take for granted like blankets, clean water, education, tents, garden tools, seeds – can make a world of difference for people devastated by tragedy, as well as those working to build a better life for themselves and their communities. Be a part of this beautiful rainbow of caring. **COSA will be taking donations for the Blankets of Love Program April 29th, May 6th, and May 13th** to honor or remember special women in your lives. We will be taking donations in June to honor or remember a special man in your lives. Look for the COSA table during coffee hour.

LOOKING FOR BOARD MEMBERS

The Board of Stewards is looking to fill two vacancies; a two-year commitment and the other would start in May for a full three-year term. The board recently changed its meeting day and now meets the third Sunday of the month at 11:30. The By-Laws state that the Board of Stewards shall have as its sacred trust the care and custody of the real and personal property of the Church. We develop and propose the annual budget, manage the annual intentional giving campaign and as well as the raising of funds, for the support of the Church and its programs. Our other major focus is on church property, the building, equipment and property.

Current members include: Scott Jackson, Lance Crouch, Brian McLellan, Jessie Hazen, Karen Evertson, Tim Quackenbush and Ed Loveland. If you think are interested, please give me a call with any questions.

Karen Evertson, Chair 267-6840



Y2K Calendar

Wednesday May 2nd and 16th
 5:30-6:45 pm
 Bring \$3 for pizza

Year end Picnic

Wednesday May 30th
 5:30-6:45
 Hot dogs, chips and juice provided
 Bring a dessert to share
 This will be the last meeting till Fall!

Women's Potluck

Monday May 7th
 6:30 pm at the home of
 Jean Loveland
 78 Spellman Point Rd 267-6522
 Bring a dish to share and join us for
 conversation and fellowship

Kudos Korner

The following church mice were busy sprucing up our building for Spring and deserve mighty thanks: the "mystery mouse" that snuck in during daylight hours no less and planted the pansies in our flower beds! The flowers brought much needed color to our late blooming season.

Thanks to the following for refinishing our restrooms, cleaning closets, de cluttering storage areas and other acts of general clean up: Claire Crouch, Allison Cowen, Ben and Andrew Hill,

Charlie Schaub, Ricky Wellman, Colin Parker, Mike Dolde, Jed Dolde, Lorraine and Mel Barlow, Scott Jackson, Jerry Gerkey, Rich Wellman, Karen and Bill, Evertson, Rae Strickland, Peter Aarrestad, Tom Kennedy and Jill Walker.

Thanks also to Helen and Dave Curlyo for lending a Helping Hand by providing rides for a church member.

Special Thanks to Rick Walker for being resident spouse on constant call to our Parish Life, Education and Development Director. At any given time on any given day a request goes out for this or that to be built, moved, disposed of, cleaned, lifted, enhanced, picked up from somewhere, delivered to somewhere or borrowed from somewhere and not once has he said "no-do it yourself"! I love you Rick, and Happy Anniversary #4 on 5/31!

Calling All Church School Teachers!

Team Teachers will be needed next year for our Church School and perhaps you are hearing that call?! By teaching with a co-teacher you are in the classroom once or twice a month. All materials are provided and you're sure to have your own Bible awareness thing going on while you plan your lessons! If you've ever considered teaching then give Jill Walker a call to talk more at length about this ministry.

TAG SALE TAG SALE TAG SALE

Saturday May 5

9:00 - 1:00

Proceeds benefit Seeds of Hope
 Gently used items can be brought to church
 by
 Thursday May 3(No clothing please)

Seeds of Hope Things to Re-Member

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****Thanks to everyone that came to the Pizza Fest and purchased Raffle Tickets!
 ****Bottles and cans are still being collected in the Furnace Room
 ****Flamingo Flockings can be reserved in Fellowship Hall on Sundays or by calling Cyndi Shirshac at 267-8194 (see separate article for more information)
 ****Save your Shaw's receipts and put them in the box on the Seeds of Hope table in Fellowship Hall. Shaw's will donate 1% of the face value to our mission trip
 ****Next meeting is Monday May 21 at 7:00 in the lounge. ALL payments are due!

**Jonathan Miller Team
 (Jonathan is Jill Walker's son)
 17th Annual Cystic Fibrosis Walkathon
 Hosted by our church
 Saturday May 12
 Walkers wanted!!**

Registration 11:00
 4 mile walk begins at 11:30
 Rain or Shine! Door prizes!
 Lunch and tee shirts provided for all walkers
 Support crew needed for set up, registration table, crossing guards, serving lunch and clean up.
 Sign up in Fellowship Hall to walk or help out
 Come be part of something vital, encouraging and significant. Jonathan's team has raised over \$175,000 for medical research from our previous walkathons. Collect sponsors or just come out and show your support by walking with us. See Jill or Rick Walker for more information.

**Open Air Market
 Rain or Shine Saturday May 26
 9:00-2:00 on the church lawn
 Annual flowers, shrubs, hanging flower baskets,
 vegetable plants, perennial plants, produce,**

maple syrup and sugar products, crafts, vendor booths,
 Breakfast, lunch and snacks available all day!

Some vendor spaces are still available for crafts and homemade products. Contact Rick Walker for information at 267-7180. Volunteers are needed the day of the event for set up, customer service, and clean up. Wagons are needed to help transport purchases to vehicles. Sign up in Fellowship Hall to help with this fun event!

**UCC General Synod
 Hospitality Cookies Needed**

UCC churches from all over the state have been asked to provide cookies for attendees at the General Synod in Hartford June 21-26. We have volunteered to provide 50 dozen cookies of any type. The cookies need to be packed in plastic containers (we will provide these) so that they can be stored and transported with little breakage. Sign up in Fellowship Hall to bake 2-3 dozen cookies minimum. Cookies must be at church by Sunday June 17th so they can be delivered to a designated church on Monday June 18th. Containers and labeling instructions will be available Sunday mornings beginning May 13th. See Jill Walker with any questions. Happy Baking!

Old Home Day News!

Strawberry Shortcake Booth

The Strawberry Shortcake Booth will be set up on the Center School field all three days of our celebration (July 12-14th). Deb Robinson is back as our coordinator and has done a great job of creating an outline of what has to be done and when. Deb will need biscuit bakers, strawberry preparers, set up, servers and clean up people each day.



Silent Auction Update

Our church will be holding our annual Silent Auction Thursday July 12th thru Saturday July 14th. The Team Captains that are steering this event are: Cindy Abraham, Art Marsden, Anita Guerin, Rae Strickland, Tom Morariu, and Bill Evertson. Each of these people is coordinating one aspect of the auction though there is certainly some overlap! . Everyone is asked to begin procuring items to be auctioned off.

Some ideas for locating donation items are: re-gifting if you have a new item that just needs a different home, soliciting from someone you know that has access to something people would love to have, or donate goods/services of your own. Host a Tupperware. candle, crafts, household collectibles, etc. party and then donate some of the Host/hostess items you earn to the auction.

Items can be brought to church on Sundays beginning May 13th. Bring the item to the storage room next to the furnace, fill out a donor form and attach it to the item with the provided tape. Call Art Marsden(267-2853) if you have an item that needs to be picked up. Art will also be able to tell you of other item drop off places (member homes) that may be more convenient for you to use.

2nd Annual Market on the Green

Rick Walker will be coordinating the market on our lawn, which will be held on Saturday July 14th only. Vendors are invited to apply to set up a booth for the day. Booths are for crafts, homemade products, specialty items but not flea market wares. People will be needed to help Rick supervise the use of our parking lot as we will be asking for a \$3 donation to park in our lot during Old Home Day.

Soon you will be asked to help with these events by working a shift, assisting with set up, take down, follow up or closure details. You can sign up in Fellowship Hall later this month or respond with a resounding "Yes, what can I do" when you receive a phone call!

Old Home Day is our time to celebrate the life we are blessed with in East Hampton. If we all help out with our church events there will be plenty of time to enjoy all the festivities. The Parish Life Committee thanks you in advance for your assistance with our fun events!

The Flamingoes are Landing!

You can hire the Seeds of Hope Flamingo Flock to grace the lawn of someone you would like to celebrate or irritate and help our mission trip to South Dakota! The flock consists of 12 classic pink plastic flamingoes and they can roost for 3-5 days depending on demand. The flocking fee is \$15 and is on a first come basis. Pick up an application in Fellowship Hall on Sunday mornings or call Cyndi Shirshac at 267-8194 to reserve a flocking soon! Flockings are available for May thru early July only.

Looking Ahead to June....

*** June 2nd- 5:30-10:30 pm Seeds of Hope Dancethon (see separate article)
 ***Sunday June 3-Church Family Sandwich Lunch to welcome all our new members from this year
 *** Sunday June 10th-Youth Sunday Worship Service and Ice Cream Social
 ***June 21-26- UCC General Synod in Hartford. Ongoing events and gatherings. Check the web at ctucc.org/synod2007 for times, information and to register to volunteer.
 We are hoping to have a bus available to go to the all synod worship service celebrating 50 years of UCC on Sunday June 24. App times are 1:00-5:00. More information in the June Chatter, but save the date!

STEWARDS

Research Anyone?



As many of you at home are noticing, your electric bills seem to be going up and up. So to are the Church's. At our last meeting, we began to wonder if there is someone within our Church family who has an interest in researching what the church may need to begin to think about as energy costs continue to raise.

If this is something that may interest you or you are already knowledgeable and are willing to share your expertise, please contact Karen Evertson at 267-6840.

Work Party Update

On Saturday, April 14th, over a dozen folks showed up to renovate our restrooms. We put in new fixtures and made them handicapped accessible. A member of our Church family donated the fixtures and we were even able to add a few new towel dispensers to our two kitchens. A few of us took everything out of the furnace room, swept, cleaned and replaced items, dodging others working on replacing light fixtures and the restrooms. We also had a crew polishing as well as moving tables as we prepared to "auction off" our old heavy wooden tables. We went home tired, a bit dusty and grimy but happy with the improvements. A BIG THANK YOU to all who helped make the day a grand success.

Karen Evertson

Budget Update

We are moving into our busy fundraising season and hoping that many of you will assist in making them as successful as ever. As you may remember, our budget is built on these fundraisers to balance our Church expenses. The most recent financial report for the end of March shows that intentional giving (pledges) and loose plate are "off". That is to say, what we expected either by history or by commitment is falling behind our

expectations. On the other hand, Shares of Faith, our initiative to close the gaps between expenses and anticipated income has continued to slowly grow.

So, the message is do what you can to share your time, talent and resources during this busy fundraising season. The Open Air Market, the Tag Sale, the Golf Tournament, the Silent Auction, Parking Lot, Vendor Fair and the Strawberry Booth could all use your help.

Karen Evertson

SHARES OF FAITH

OK – I'm a cheerleader – I just don't have the pom poms and I've lost my sex appeal years ago (if I ever had any). Still, I wonder why it is that many of you have not jumped at the opportunity to buy a few Shares of Faith. Yes, we have sold \$3375 worth, and that is a great fundraiser by our churches standards.

We have plenty of clever people in our congregation and our deficits have been reduced by their efforts. I salute Betsy Gates for her Vendor Fair and Rick Walker's Spring Open Air Market. Karen Gallmon's efforts on Church Dinners are also instrumental in community awareness of our Church and our missions. I can't miss Nancy Taylor and Tina Chapone for their leadership of our annual Church Fair. Oh Crap (can I say that in Chatter) I'm going to forget someone. Stewards have engaged the whole community with the new Golf Tournament. – YES – I'm not mentioning many of you, but this is really not about you or me because -

Suddenly, at least for the last two years, we break even. Hey – Things are going great. Lets give these folks I mentioned a rest and just pony up. We can keep this streak going. Buy these Shares – Buy these Shares – Shiss – Boom – Baa. - Thanks – Bill Evertson – Moderator and resident cheerleader.

The East Hampton Congregational Church's cheerleading team to date – Aarrestad,



Barlow, Berkenstock, Walker, Lincoln, DeCoursey, McLellan, Evertson, Rafus, Tinney, Quackenbush, Strickland, Shirshac, Guerin, Curylo, Edward, Pettengill, Baletto, Evans, Gephard, Hazen, Mandigo, Prince, Russo, Dainiak, Newhall, Mearman, Hage, Kneeland, Shumbo, Byrne, Christopher, Jackson, Gerky, Bartel, Raad, Westcote, Begin, DeFrancesco, Tkaczyk, Gee, Provost, Loveland, Robinson, Dolde.

Its time to join the team
Shares of Faith are available in \$50 increments

Do you have a Share?

COUNCIL

I am reporting on the Council meeting held on March 27th. Several of the 2007 confirmation class visited the meeting and we tried to convey what it is we do; which is sometimes hard to describe. Our confirmands hopefully came away with a sense that Council is an arena where we strive to hear and understand not only the concerns of our standing committees but represent a vision of where our Church can reach with it's generosity and faith.

The Shares of Faith initiative was discussed and an update is provided elsewhere in the Chatter.

Also discussed was the recent Rivereast article concerning veterans desire to update and possibly install a new memorial to fallen East Hampton vets. Since the Church was mentioned as a possible site for this memorial we are seeking more information on this.

A suggestion that the Church consider an earlier start time for summer worship was forwarded to Deacons for discussion.

Dates to save – May 12th is our Cystic Fibrosis walk – please walk in support for this worthy cause. Volunteers for staging the event are also welcome.

May 19th is our annual Leadership workshop – This is a valuable opportunity for any one in the Church to come and discuss our visions

for the coming year and beyond. I would like to emphasize that this discussion does not revolve around committee planning and is open to the whole Congregation.

On a personal note; this is my last month of a three year tenure as Church Moderator. I cannot begin to describe the gratitude I feel toward those who have entrusted this position to me. As a fairly simple soul pursuing my woodworking and art, I felt ill equipped to interject my opinions into the running of a Church in existence since 1748. One thing I have come away with is the feeling that the more I gave the more I received. Bless you all!
Bill Evertson

BELLTOWN OPEN GOLF TOURNAMENT AUG 21ST

Save the date for a great time, all golfers welcome from beginners to pros .

