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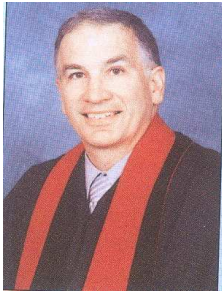
**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

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## THOTS FROM TOM



Our church has long supported outreach missions, and we have done well with them. In 2003 we hosted an Iranian refugee couple whom we resettled in Sacramento California, and since 2004 members of our church have participated in a mission trip to

the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, and two people from our church have gone to Nigeria on three occasions as participants in the Christian Medical Fellowship medical trips.. The church has created a special group to facilitate these trips called "Seeds of Hope."

Recently, I became involved in a situation that provides an opportunity for outreach, literally in our parking lot. This opportunity for outreach so near to our doors evolved from what started out as a contentious relationship that I had with youth who were skateboarding in our parking lot, on our church steps, and on anything else they felt like using. Over the years I have chased dozens of youth away after they damaged our church steps, flower planters, parking lot curbing, shed roof and doors, railings, windows, office entryway, and flowerbeds. To my often heated requests that they scam from the church property and not skate there again, I was often met with profanity, threats, and gross disrespect. This changed about two months ago. At least several times a week I asked the skate boarders to please not skate on the concrete parking space curbs because they were chipping them, and to please not move the curbing into the parking lot. Each time I made these requests, the skaters respectfully apologized for their behavior and replaced the moved curbs to their former location at the head of the parking lot spaces.

Last May I met Kimberley Fontaine, a resi-

dent of East Hampton who has formed the Village Center Community Corporation to try to create a skate park in the village section of East Hampton. She had come to our Church Council meeting to request permission to use our parking lot for people to park who were attending the first annual Skate Jam to be held at Center School in August. Kimberley explained to me that she was working with the skateboarders to find a location for a skatepark, and was helping them to develop and learn leadership skills that she had been trained to teach after attending a leadership training seminar. The results of the leadership training have become very obvious to me as I have been talking with the boys. Because of the respect the boys who are a part of the skatepark committee have for our church and its people, I have renewed my efforts to assist them, by working with them to develop safe skating guidelines for our parking lot. Currently, the boys who belong to the skatepark committee have committed with me to not skate anywhere but on the pavement, and to avoid skateboarding near parked cars, on stairs, steps, rails, curbs, roofs or anything else that is not the parking lot asphalt. They are working hard to build more credibility with the town and the church, and are working hard to build relationships with others and earn respect, and be good, responsible citizens.

Recently the church was the victim of more vandalism, and I learned that it was done by skateboarders who are not a part of the skatepark committee. I am grateful to the efforts of Rick Walker, who discovered the vandalism, and repaired the damage. The skatepark committee members were quite upset by this vandalism, because they appreciated that this kind of destruction to church property threatened their future use of our church parking lot, and it also demeaned their efforts to build good relationships with the church and town. I had an opportunity to meet with some of the youth who

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are not a part of the skatepark committee, and urged them to join the skatepark committee, so that they could fully participate in the positive youth activities afforded by Mrs. Fontaine's efforts, and unfortunately, they declined to join. Skatepark committee members have agreed in principal with me and Kimberley Fontaine to report any future vandalism, and to encourage those youth who use our parking lot for skateboarding who are not a part of the committee to join it.

I am hopeful that the church's outreach to the young people who are a part of the skatepark committee will result in some positive relationships for the young people and for the church. I am also hopeful that those who are not a part of the skatepark committee, who are not respectful of the rules established for the safe use of the parking lot, will decide to join, and be respectful of the church, its members, and its property.

This is a new venture for us all. If you would like to know more about the young people using our parking lot for safe skateboarding, please speak me, or to Art Marsden, who has also been in positive conversations with Kimberley and the boys who belong to the skatepark committee. Hopefully, together, we can make a positive difference in the lives of these boys.

Peace,

Tom

## **NEIGHBORS IN NEED OFFERING**

On Sunday, October 7 our church will observe the United Church of Christ's Neighbors In Need Offering. One third of this offering supports the Council of American Indian Ministry. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the United Church of Christ's Justice and Witness Ministries to support those striving to address injustices in our country and around the globe. There is an offering envelope in this Chatter for the offering; and there will be inserts in the Sunday bulletins, which describe the programs supported by this offering. Handouts are also available in the narthex.

## **NEW MEMBER FORUMS**

Two New Member Forums are scheduled for those wishing to join our church. The Forums will be held on two successive Tuesday evenings, October 9 and 16, from 7 to 8 p.m. New members will join the church on Sunday, November 4 during our morning worship service. If you wish to join the church Nov. 4, please notify the church office or speak to the pastor.

## **SYMPATHY**

Our parish family extends our love and sympathy to the DeCoursey family on the death of Mary's father, Edmond LeDoux, on September 13.

## **EAST HAMPTON FOOD BANK**

Did you know that you can donate unused SHAWs points to our local food bank? You can drop them off at the SHAW's courtesy desk, drop them off at the Food Bank on Monday or Thursday (9:00 – 12:00), or you can put them in the COSA box at church and we will deliver them for you. COSA also collects supplies for the Food Bank. There is a basket outside the church office where you can leave your donations. Currently the Food Bank is in need of:

- Pasta
- Canned fruit
- Cereal
- Coffee
- Rice
- Tuna



## CHRISTIAN

EDUCATION

### Y2K CALENDAR

Wednesday October 3

5:30-6:45 pm

Bring \$3 for pizza

Friends Welcome!

Wednesday October 17

5:30-6:45 pm

It's Almost Halloween Tacos Night

Bring \$3 for make your own Tacos!

Friends Welcome!

### SEEDS OF HOPE 2008

Informational meeting about our  
mission trip to the

Pine Ridge Reservation 7/19-7/25

Sunday October 21 after worship

in the lounge

All interested High School age and Adults  
are welcome to attend

### COSA NEWS

#### CROP WALK

Sunday, October 14<sup>th</sup>

COME WALK WITH US!

Lace up those walking shoes and join us on Sunday October 14<sup>th</sup>, for the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual CROP walk. Registration begins at 12:30 and the walk will start at 1:00. In the past 21 years we have raised over \$100,000, with over \$25,000 going to our local food banks in East Hampton and Marlborough. Let's make this our biggest year yet!

You may help us in several ways. First, you may sign up in Fellowship Hall after Sunday services, to become a walker. Secondly, you may become a sponsor for a walker. Walker's names will be displayed on footprints in Fellowship Hall. We also need people to be crossing guards at the intersections on our route. Lastly, join in the spirit and cheer on our walkers as they help make a difference.

### HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

COSA is sponsoring a group work day on Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup> to help Marie, and her two children, Ryan and Kaitlyn build their dream home. They have waited a long time for a home of their own. Scheduled tasks may include: painting, trim, sheet-rock, siding, building back porch, front porch, retaining wall, setting electrical outlet boxes, pulling wires, installing heating panels, etc. You will be trained on what to do and how to do it! If you are interested please see the COSA table during Coffee hour, or contact the Magoons at 365-0590.

### SCRIP PRE-PAID CARDS ARE BACK!

Want to support our Seeds of Hope 2008 mission trip to the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota without spending a cent? Every Sunday beginning October 7th we will be taking orders for pre-paid/gift cards for hundreds of merchants you already frequent. You purchase the same merchandise/service card you would from the retailer at the full face value. You spend it or give the card as a gift and Seeds of Hope receives a percentage of the face value from the merchant! How great is that?

Stop by the table in Fellowship Hall to pick up the most recent list of businesses that participate in this win-win program. Cards ordered on Sunday will be available for pick up the next Sunday.



## **PONY EXPRESS OUR INTENTIONAL GIVING CAMPAIGN**

Hello congregation! Fall is a time when all our committees are in full swing, Church school is up and running, Crop Walk, the church fair and fall dinner groups are making preparations.

Fall is also the time when we begin to put out the word that our Pony Express pledge drive is gearing up. This intentional giving drive is set to run from October 28<sup>th</sup> through November 18<sup>th</sup>.

The success of this drive is in all our hands. The generosity you embrace during the pledge drive and the subsequent fulfillment of those pledges form the basis of the good works this church is capable of.

When we speak of the missions and ministries of our church, many think back on our many accomplishments in the community. We help stock the food and fuel banks, we send people to aid the plight of the Lakota, we aid in the construction of Habitat for Humanity shelter.

While we should be rightfully proud of our good deeds, none of them would be possible without the church building, the Sunday worship, the music and our church school. By giving generously during the Pony Express intentional giving drive we insure that our basic organizing principle, our faith, is maintained.

The future of our church, established in 1748, depends on you. When we look at what our annual budget is, it is made up of many items supported at this time by 130 families or individuals. The reality is that to keep our church going equates to about \$35 a week from each family, exclusive of any fundraising or almost depleted endowments. The current average weekly pledge is \$22.

Last year, we accomplish a miracle; we were able to end the financial year for the first in 12 years with a small surplus. We should be able to do it again, but it depends on each of us to use our time, talent and resources to make this happen.

When the Pony Express campaign begins, please consider the price of faith.

## **COUNCIL**

Our church provides spiritual nurturing for all of us. We all have a place here and God is waiting for us all to live up to our potential. In Tom's messages last week, he shared that we all have strengths and talents to contribute and ways we can make this a thriving church active in local and worldly missions. Our church is experiencing some amazing growth. I am here to give a 'state of the church' address as we begin our program year. Most committees have full slates and projects for the year are in order. One area of the church that has been significantly under staffed for some time is our Stewards committee. Due to the diverse and extensive responsibilities of the current Stewards, a sub-committee of Council has been exploring ways to better share the work of this committee. After much discussion and with the blessing of Council, the Stewards committee has been restructured.

We will now have a finance committee that will function much like the old Stewards committee. It will be primarily responsible for the budget. There will be a subcommittee to lead our intentional giving campaign, which is the Pony Express drive at the present time. The restructure will be rounded out with a Building and Grounds subcommittee that will handle the church's building needs.

This plan will offer two benefits. First, it will allow a much more equitable sharing of responsibilities. The responsibilities will be shared with a larger group. Second, it will cut down the time people are in meetings. It will allow people to focus on and work in areas of the church they like and are good at. It is an opportunity for more people to be involved. Twelve people have already stepped

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up to serve on these committees and there's room for more. Let me leave you thinking about where your calling is in our church? What is God calling you to do?

Soon our annual 'Opportunities To Serve' survey will be available for you to complete. Many hands make for light work, new friends and a chance to make a difference. After all...We ARE the church. Let's work together and make it the strongest it can be. We can be whatever God calls us to be.

Are you listening?

### Financial Committee

Jerry Day  
Steve Gephard  
Mavis Gee  
Dave Kelsey  
Tim Quackenbusg  
Scott Jackson

### Building and Grounds

Sub Committee Volunteers to date

Brian McLellan  
Lance Crouch  
Lynda Tinney  
Jesse Hazen  
Tom Morariu  
Whitney Fielding  
Rick Walker  
John Hage

### Intentional Giving

Sub Committee Volunteers to date

Karen Evertson  
Bill Evertson

## STEWARDS' REPORT

Last week, Tom's sermon reflected on "somebody else". The "somebody else" that was to do something that actually was all our responsibility.

Our pledging shortfall was over \$10,000, by the end July: by the end of August, it was over \$15,000. God does not send a bill. It is in our own hearts that we fulfill our obligations to our faith. As individuals we need to look into our hearts and make decisions about what obligations we honor. Those obligations, made in private with God are vital. Can our church family turn their back on these promises that are more real than a bill in the mail?

### ( THE LIGHTER SIDE )

A Sunday school teacher asked her children as they were on the way to church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."

A little girl was sitting on her grandfather's lap as he read her a bedtime story. From time to time, she would take her eyes off the book and reach up to touch his wrinkled cheek. She was alternately stroking her own cheek, then his again. Finally she spoke up, "Grandpa, did God make you?" "Yes sweetheart," he answered, "God made me a long time ago." "Oh," she paused, "Grandpa, did God make me too?" "Yes, indeed, honey," he said, "God made you just a little while ago." Feeling their respective faces again, she observed, "God's getting better at it, isn't he?"

"Now don't you feel better"



## UNIQUE BOUTIQUE

Items are needed for the fall fair Unique Boutique. We are looking for your "no longer needed" treasures, such as: dishes, china, glassware, linens, figurines, wall accessories, pictures & frames, jewelry, baskets, corning ware, Pyrex, etc. **WE ARE NOT COLLECTING: TOYS / SPORTS EQUIPMENT / GAMES / COFFEE MAKERS OR SMALL, SIMILAR APPLIANCES.** Please place your items in a box or bag, marked "UNIQUE BOUTIQUE" and leave them to the left of the church office door. Thank you.

## FALL FAIR

Mark your calendar for Saturday, October 20 which will be the one day Fall Fair event.

To be held 9—3 pm ( The Fair will not be held Friday as in the past, but just Saturday ).

Many hands will be needed to make this church fair a success.

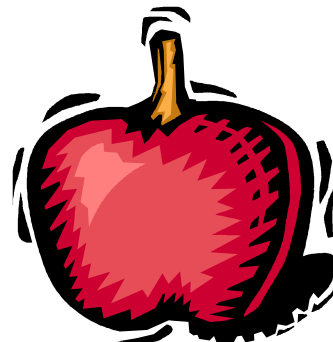
More information will follow or contact Deb McLellan at 267-4544 for more information.

## HOLIDAY VENDOR FAIR

Our 3rd Annual Holiday Vendor Fair is fast approaching. On Saturday, November 3rd, from 9:00 to 2:00. You can begin, continue, or even finish your holiday shopping in Fellowship Hall.

Stop by to visit some of your favorite vendors, such as Mary Kaye Cosmetics, Tastefully Simple, Lia Sophia and Silpada jewelry, Pampered Chef and Tupperware. There will also be pocket books and Usborne Books and those yummy Lyman Orchard pies to order. So, whether you've almost finished or haven't even thought about holiday shopping, plan to visit Fellowship Hall and look around. You may find just the right gift for that certain someone on your Christmas gift list.

## EVERYTHING APPLE FEST



Everything Apple Fest is right around the corner. Saturday, October 20, will be here before we know it. Many hands are needed to make this fair a success. Set up will be Thursday 10/18 and Friday 10/19 between 6-9pm. All pie bakers, submit your Apple pie's for our pie contest. 1st, 2ND and 3rd place prizes will be awarded. Entry forms will be in fellowship Hall.

Unique Boutique items are still needed, "your no longer needed treasures" such as: dishes, wall accessories, pictures and frames, china, glassware, linens, figurines, baskets, corning ware. No small appliances, no toys, games etc.... Please place your items in a bag or box, marked "Unique Boutique" and leave it to the left of the church office. We are still in need of handmade goods. Pre-order your Church cookbook, Makes a great gift...A table will be set up every Sunday after church, stop by and see how you can help make this fair a successful event.

We are still accepting monetary donations for Emma's Fudge.

Thank You, Deb McLellan & Jo Ann Ewing

## Note from Editor:

For those who have an article they wish to put into the Chatter, please e-mail the article to me at [j.gerkey@sbcglobal.net](mailto:j.gerkey@sbcglobal.net) or leave it in church office by 3rd Sunday of each month.