



## THOTS FROM TOM

These past few weeks have been challenging at the home front. One of the decisions that we made after buying our house in 1996 was that we needed to remodel the kitchen.

The cabinets featured broken and worn plastic drawer fronts, the floor had cracked and torn linoleum, and the appliances dated back to the 1970's. We saved when we could, but with two children and college expenses, it was a tough go. Finally, after Jordan graduated from Central Connecticut State University several years ago, were able to save more diligently. About a year ago Lois told me that she had enough saved to perhaps do the long awaited renovation. We began an intensive search for new cabinets, flooring and countertops, visiting the big box stores and various design center/kitchen renovation centers. We found a kitchen and bath design center that had all the cabinet, flooring and countertop selections under one roof, along with the capability to install the flooring, cabinets, and backsplash, as well as contract for the electrical and plumbing work, so we signed a contract in December. Our thirty-eight year old kitchen was about to enter the twenty-first century! We had a renovation date of mid-March, which gave us plenty of time to tear down the old popcorn ceiling, remove the wallpaper and do some painting in preparation for the work to come. There were other assignments too, like picking out a sink, faucets and lighting fixtures.

One of the things that we had to do which worried me the most was we had to go up into our attic and clear out and move boxes that we had stored up there. We needed to do this for the electricians who had to run new lines for a second much needed overhead light in our dimly lit kitchen. I confess that I store boxes. Buy a new DVD

player? Put the box in the attic. You never know, you might need to return that DVD player, so keep the box. The same with coffee grinders, coffee makers, computers, printers, VCR's toasters and fans, microwaves, even boom boxes from the 1990's; all the boxes were kept! And now they had to go. I spent a morning throwing boxes out of the hatchway to the hall below, and was I surprised at what I found! I kept boxes for stuff that was thrown out decades ago! The boxes stayed longer than the appliances and gizmos that they originally contained.

As I plowed through the boxes some of them evoked memories of Christmases past. Some still had the tags on them with the kids names on them, gifts put under the tree by Santa Claus. I felt as I parted with those boxes that I was tossing a part of my history away, the memories of long ago, but I could see no sense in keeping them. I comforted myself, as I was sometimes overwhelmed with memories, that this tossing was a very cleansing Lenten thing to do. With the throwing out of all those old, useless boxes, and with the tearing down of the popcorn ceiling and old wallpaper in the kitchen, Lois and I are starting fresh, cleaning out the old, preparing for the new. That is a good way to prepare for Easter, or for Christmas for that matter. During the seasons of Advent and Lent we cleanse out the old, to make way for the new. Christ's resurrection is a rebirth, a new, fresh start. Lent is a time to prepare for that rebirth, that newness. What better way to prepare than to remove that which is old, that which is holding us back, that which we hang onto but which no longer serves any useful purpose?

In a very real sense, I view my kitchen renovation, and the preparations that went into that work, (which have lasted for weeks) as spiritually renewing, as Lois and I do away with the old to

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make way for the new. This has been a very useful way for me to prepare for Easter. Instead of sacrificing, like giving up chocolate, I gave up the useless things, the junk, the stuff that cluttered up my life (and the attic), to prepare for what is to come. My kitchen has served as a useful allegory for me this year as I prepare for Easter.

With the time of Lent that we have left before Holy Week, think about the symbols, the allegories, the parables of Lent that serve you this year as you prepare for Easter. May they serve you as well as my kitchen has served me.

Have a blessed rest of Lent and a glorious Easter!

Peace,

Tom

## SERVICE OF CONFIRMATION

A service of Confirmation will be held for our 2011 Confirmation class on Sunday, April 3. Joining our church this year through the rite of Confirmation are Kate Balletto, Allie Haydu, Tayrn McCabe, Cayla Schaub, Ally Szkoda, and Shelby Zaborowski. Welcome, and congratulations!

## HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Here is our Holy Week Schedule for 2011:

The choir will be singing a cantata titled "One Sacrifice" for our Palm Sunday service. This Joel Raney cantata, with text by John Parker, centers on the events of Holy Week--beginning with Jesus' triumphant ride into Jerusalem with one thousand hosannas filling the air, to the events of Good Friday and the true passion of the one sacrifice, and finally concluding with the joyous celebration of the risen one. The original music is both uplifting and intensely stirring, as the story unfolds in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The service begins at 10:00 am.

A Maundy Thursday Service will be held beginning at 6:30 pm on April 21 with a simple meal and Holy Communion, and the Service of Tenebrae.

The sanctuary will be open from noon until 3:00 on Friday, April 22 (Good Friday) for those who wish to pray and meditate.

There will be an early morning ecumenical Easter service at 6:30 am at Sears Park. Please bring a lawn chair and dress warmly; it is often cold down near the water.

We will be observing our Easter celebration with one service, held at 10:00 am. There will be no child care for this service. An Easter Egg Hunt will be held on the church lawn at the conclusion of the service for children who are preschoolers (age two) through middle school.

## NEW MEMBER FORUMS

For those interested in joining the Congregational Church of East Hampton, there will be a brief covenanting ceremony of joining during worship on May 1. In preparation for that covenanting service, two New Member Forums have been scheduled, for April 5 and 13, both Tuesdays, from 7 pm until 8 pm. If interested in joining, please call the church office prior to April 5.





## FIRST ANNUAL EASTER CELEBRATION OFFERING

For the past 2 years we asked everyone in our church family to give an offering at Easter to fill the deficit in our church budget. We raised the needed thousands due to everyone's generosity and our budget was back in the black each time.

Though still pared back, this year our budget is already in the black! Our annual Easter Celebration Offering can be used as it was always intended- to provide Mission Outreach throughout our UCC denomination. Church Council chose 3 areas for our special offering to support:

\*\*Our own Seeds of Hope Mission Program which this year will be volunteering at UCC Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, MS. A portion of the funds will be used to start a scholarship fund to help defray out of pocket costs beyond fundraising.

\*\*Our CT Conference operates and maintains a year round program center/resident camp named Silver Lake. Many UCC members young and old go to spend a night, weekend or a week being rejuvenated in their faith. There are repairs needed to keep this special place available to the many that use it. Our church was instrumental in starting Silver Lake in 1957 in that our then Pastor James Yee was on the committee that located the property that became Silver Lake!

\*\*Our Churches Wider Mission Fund supports the UCC at the state and national level. This important part of the UCC is always there for us and our sister churches in times of need, such as finding new ministers, providing program resources, advising us on fundraising issues and much more. Part of this funding will also go to the world wide work that UCC supports.

A special offering envelope will be included in the Sunday Bulletin on April 10<sup>th</sup> and April 17<sup>th</sup>. Please prayerfully submit your support by mail or on Easter Sunday when we will come forward during our special offering collection.

Thank you!

Anita Guerin, Chair on behalf of our Church Council

## LOOKING AHEAD...

We will begin collecting items for our Annual Silent Action in May, but it's not too soon to start thinking about what items you would be able to donate this year! Some ideas are-re-gifted items, never been used items, services you can provide, purchased items, antiques and event tickets. Items should have a minimal bid value of \$15. Thanks for your support!

Thanks to Brian McLellan, Gio Vincent, Mel Barlow, Jerry Gerkey, Tom Kennedy, Rick and Jennifer Berkenstock for their assistance in removing the large quantity of water that flooded Fellowship Hall and the downstairs hallway during the rains of March. A new sump pump has been installed that will hopefully limit these types of bonding experiences in the future!

## MUSIC COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENT:

"The Music Committee is holding it's annual, combined TAG SALE / RUMMAGE SALE on Saturday, April 30th from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Donations of Books, Clothing, Household Goods, Tools, Toys, etc. in good condition may be dropped off at the Church after April 17th. (please no computer electronics or stuffed animals.) Thank You."



**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**  
**Y2K Calendar April and May**  
**Wednesday, April 13**

Friendly Pet Show Night

Pets and parents arrive at 5:30 for the show  
 Pets and parents depart after the show! Pick up at  
 6:45

Bring \$4 for pizza

**Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>**

Let's play outside! 5:30-6:45

Bring \$4 for pizza

**Wednesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>**

End of year hot dogs, chips and ice cream

Bring your favorite ice cream topping

No \$\$ required

**Third Grade Bible Sunday**

All third graders will be receiving a Bible during  
 worship on Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. Students and par-  
 ents are invited to join Jill in Fellowship Hall fol-  
 lowing the Youth Meditation to play some get to  
 know your Bible games.

**1<sup>st</sup> Friday, Worship**

**Friday April 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 in the sanctu-  
 ary**

**“Will you be a *fool* for Christ?”**

Join us for our last alternative worship time  
 for this program year.

Casual attire, family and friends welcome

**Annual Easter Egg Hunt**  
 Sunday, April 24 immediately follow-  
 ing worship

2 separate age hunting grounds!

Bring a basket or use one of our bags

**Calling All Good Men!**  
**The High School Class invites YOU to**  
**participate in a**  
**"MACHO MEN'S BAKED GOODS**  
**LIVE AUCTION"**

**Fundraiser for SHADE in Africa**  
**We are sponsoring a female HS student**  
**for a year**  
**Sunday April, 10<sup>th</sup> during Coffee Hour**

Bake your favorite tasty treat for the 1st or the hun-  
 dredth time and bring it to church by 10:00 Sunday,  
 April 10<sup>th</sup>- ready to "show" during preview time  
 (right before the auction). NO female hands on  
 help permitted but any other macho men you know  
 of can assist if needed!

Include a short note with your name and a simple  
 write up about your treat. Previewing will take  
 place for 15 minutes at the start of Coffee Hour and  
 then the bidding will begin. PLEASE sign up in  
 Fellowship Hall on the CE bulletin board ASAP to  
 let us know you're going to participate. We will  
 remind you one week or so before the event. HAP-  
 PY BAKING! See the Dolde's or Jon Baine with  
 questions.

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Women's Potluck Book Discussion Monday, April 4<sup>th</sup> 6:30 PM  
at the home of Jean Loveland- 35 Skyline Drive

"Peace Like a River" by Leif Enger  
Bring a dish to share and join us for fellowship and conversation  
*Never beens always welcome!*

### Kudos Korner

Thanks to everyone that put treats and items into our college care packages. Sunday April 3<sup>rd</sup> is the last day to contribute something and to sign our card. Thanks also to all that donated funds for the mailing costs and/or the purchasing of goodies.

Thanks to Christine Tzkaczyk for creating our Secret Prayer Pals Post Office and to all the students and adults that participated in the program. Thanks to all the Church School students that sang, under the direction of Christine T, during our Family Worship last month.

Thanks go out to all the Confirmands, their mentors and parents who did projects around the church including cleaning, youth group and special event assisting, as part of the Confirmation program.

*Congratulations to all our Confirmation students!!*

Pork Roast Dinner and Fiddlers Concert  
Saturday, April 16  
5:30-6:30 dinner, 6:30 concert followed by dessert

The menu includes boneless stuffed pork roast with

applesauce, rosemary roasted potatoes, spring peas and carrots, Caesar salad, rolls, beverages and dessert. There will be an Easter Basket Silent Auction table and entertainment by Connecticut's Bristol Old Tyme Fiddlers Club.

The cost is \$9 adults, \$8 seniors and youth, 5 years and under is free. Take out will also be available.

Since 1972, the Connecticut's Bristol Old Tyme Fiddlers Club has helped "preserve and promote" old tyme fiddling by playing "old barn-style" square dance tunes like Turkey in the Straw, Golden Slippers and Irish Washerwoman!

This dynamic group of musicians, whose ages range from 12 to 92, play fiddle, guitar, piano, banjo, mandolin, button box, accordion, spoons, harmonica, banjitar and percussion along with wood block and cow bell.

For over thirty years, the Bristol Old Tyme Fiddlers, under the direction of Gerry Lagace, have charmed audiences, with their group and solo playing of old time "toe-tappin' and footstompin' upbeat tunes", by "ear"! Come on out for a wonderful Springtime evening!

### Seeds of Hope Update

\*\* Butter Braid Breads will be available for pick up Sunday April 10<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to all that sold breads or placed orders.

\*\* During April we will be accepting *Shares of Faith* donations to help offset the out of pockets expenses for the trip to Back Bay Biloxi, Mississippi. For every \$5 you donate you will receive 2 tickets for our Door Prize Basket of CT Maple Syrup and Maple Treats (donated by Rick Walker). The winner will be chosen on Sunday, April 17<sup>th</sup> during Coffee Hour.

\*\* Pre paid Stop and Shop cards along with hun-

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dreds of other merchants can still be ordered during Coffee Hour each week, and bottles and cans can be left in the furnace room for recycling.

\*\* Our next meeting will be SUNDAY, MAY 1 (new date) after worship

## COSA MATTERS

The Christian Outreach and Social Action committee is focusing this month on increasing awareness on a church mission called **One Great Hour of Sharing**. We hear about this offering each year. We want to let our Congregation know what this is about and how to get involved. **One Great Hour of Sharing** is one of the four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. For over sixty years, the purpose of **One Great Hour of Sharing** has remained the same: to collect special gifts to assist those in need. Today, projects are underway in more than 100 countries, including the United States and Canada. In the 1990s, receipts exceeded \$20 million annually. While specific allocations differ in each denomination, all use their **One Great Hour of Sharing** funds to make possible disaster relief, refugee assistance, and development aid. In fact this year, a portion of your gift will be used to support relief and rehabilitation work in Japan. Seventeen per cent of the **OGHS** offering is utilized for disaster preparedness and response. Please look for a brochure and offering envelope in this April issue of the Chatter. Your donations make a significant difference in the lives of many throughout the world. Please feel free to mail your offering if you will not be in church on the day of the collection which will be April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Thank you. Another initiative we are supporting is the Nurturing Families Network with Family Advocacy in Middletown. In April, you will be able to take a tag from our giving tree and return it with needed items for new families in our area. We are supporting this project year round and appreciate your donations.

The Food Bank and several other town offices

have moved to the Chatham Corner Building at the corner of Route 16 and Routes 66 (240 Middletown Ave). The Food Bank is located in the back of the building. The new phone number is (860) 267-7300. The Food Bank is open on Mondays and Thursdays from 9am – 12noon and they are ready to accept donations. There are several items that are in short supply. The greatest needs are for:

- Coffee
- Tea
- Laundry Detergent
- Dish Soap
- Jelly
- Mayo
- Ketchup
- Canned Fruit
- Bar soap




Thank you for your continued support.  
Deb Robinson





April

2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 1 <sup>st</sup> FRIDAY - 6:30pm 	2
3 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent <i>Communion Sunday</i>  Confirmation Rehearsal & Breakfast, 9am Worship/ Communion, 10am AA, 8pm	4  Women's Potluck 6:30pm Host: Jean Loveland	5 Tiger Cubs, 6:30-7:30pm  New Member Forum, 7pm Boy Scouts, 7pm	6 Bible Study, noon  Cub Scout Leaders/Parents, 7-9pm AA, 8pm	7 Bell Choir, 6-7pm Sr. Choir, 7:10-8:30pm	8	9 Eagle Scout Court of Honor 6:30pm Ross & Caleb Gates
10 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Bible Sunday Worship, 10am Macho Bake Sale Auction, 11am Deacons, 11:30am AA, 8pm	11  Cub Scouts, 6:30-7:30pm	12  New Member Forum, 7pm Boy Scouts, 7pm	13  Bible Study, noon YZK, 5:30-6:45pm Daisy Troop, 6pm AA, 8pm	14 Bell Choir, 6-7pm Sr. Choir, 7:10-8:30pm	15	16 Pork Roast Dinner 5:30-6:30pm Fiddlers 6:30-7:30pm
17 <i>Palm Sunday</i> Worship, 10am Make-your-own Easter Bonnet after worship AA, 8pm	18	19 Boy Scouts, 7pm	20 Bible Study, noon AA, 8pm	21 <i>Mausday Thursday</i> Service, 6:30	22 <i>Good Friday</i> Office Closed	23 <i>Stoily Saturday</i>
24 <i>Easter Sunday</i> Sunrise Service, 7am Easter Worship, 10am AA, 8pm	25 Mom's Group, 10am	26 Church Council, 7pm Boy Scouts, 7pm	27 Bible Study, noon AA, 8pm	28 Tag Sale set-up Bell Choir, 6-7pm Sr. Choir, 7:10-8:30pm	29 Tag Sale set-up	30 <b>TAG SALE</b> 8am-1pm