

# THE PARISH POST

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

CHESHIRE, CONNECTICUT  
[www.cheshirecongregational.org](http://www.cheshirecongregational.org)

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No. 7

## Summer: A Time for Praise

By Dave Buchan  
Interim Senior Minister

*Praise the Lord.  
Praise the Lord, you that are his servants,  
Praise the name of the Lord. (Ps. 113:1)*

A hawk circles in the air overhead. Yellow buttercups and cheerful daisies mingle by the roadside. A brook meanders in the light and shadow of a lazy summer afternoon. Hickory smoke rises from a barbecue.

Summer is a time to relax and renew. It's a time to rediscover the beauty of the world all about us, the smile of God upon us. And in our delight, it just seems natural to praise God, the God who has called all of this into existence and continues his creative work even today.

Delight just has to find expression in praise. People in love praise each other. Readers praise their books. Hikers speak of the beauty of the mountains and the countryside. Whether it's gardening or baseball, we praise what we value, what we consider important, what gives us joy.

And we also need to praise God. It's not that God is like some vain person who just has to be complimented or told how good he is. That's not the kind of God we find in Christ. It's rather that God is important to us. He has touched our lives and as such our praise to God is just a natural expression of the joy we have found in his creative love.

Katherine Mansfield, overcome by the beauty of the Swiss Alps but lacking religious faith, once wrote to a friend, "If only one could make some small grasshoppery sound of praise to someone." Every Sunday we gather to praise that Someone. And our very act of gathering for worship on a Sunday morning is a witness that there is more to life than just ourselves here.

There is a God of beauty. There is a God who gives us daily life and watches over us, a God who has made us and whom we are called to serve. And it is good for us too. Anger and fear may

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tighten us like a knot and drain away our strength. But praise – the praise of God – is another matter. It opens us up and energizes our daily lives.

Hummingbirds seek and dart among the blossoms. The crack of a bat sings through the park. The sky is blue and cloudless. May our gratitude to God overflow in praise!

This summer we come together to make our own small grasshopper sound of praise to God in worship. See you in church.

*In Christ,  
Dave Buchan*

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## **If You Go Away, Please Pre-Pay**

Here's another reminder – this time, without the Biblical language – that if you're going away for July and/or August, please remember that the First Congregational Church has expenses even in the summertime – whether you're here or not.

If you pay your pledge weekly or monthly, please take time to pre-pay for those weeks so that we won't have a cash flow problem in your absence.

Thanks in advance! If you're not in church during the summer, we'll miss you. But at least our budget won't miss your pledge contribution!

## **Summer Worship Schedule**

**During July and August, and on September 2, there will be ONE service each Sunday at 9 a.m.**

Child care and Summer Church School will be provided.

**Please note that this is a change from last summer's schedule. This year, there is NO Chapel service at 8 a.m., and the Sanctuary service is at 9 o'clock, not 10.**

Summer Preaching Schedule:

Sunday, **July 1:** Dave Buchan

Sunday, **July 8:** Dave Buchan

Sunday, **July 15:** Alison McCaffrey

Sunday, **July 22:** Dave Buchan

Sunday, **July 29:** Dave Buchan

Sunday, **August 5:** Dave Buchan

Sunday, **August 12:** Dave Buchan

Sunday, **August 19:** Dave Buchan

Sunday, **August 26:** Alison McCaffrey

Sunday, **September 2:** Dave Buchan

Note: The last issue of the Parish Post said that this summer's schedule would be the same as last year's. However, the Board of Deacons decided on this new schedule at their June meeting.

## From Visitor to Member: Seeking a Better Way

By Alison McCaffrey  
Associate Minister

Making the transition from interested visitor to assimilated, meaningful membership is not an easy thing to do in any church. Finding one's place in our large church, exploring faith's questions while figuring what God has in mind for each of us, trying to share interests and ideas and connect with others – it's not easy for those exploring membership here, or for new members.

There's got to be a more faithful way.

I am looking for a group of people – newer members, long-time members, and friends and members of all duration – to test drive a couple of ideas about how it is that we are formed in faith and practice, and in turn, live out our relationship with Jesus in our church life together.

This group will gather in late September and journey together through Lent, culminating our time together on Easter. Our learning together will shape my future sabbatical study, and will be incorporated in how we welcome and prepare our new members for our common life as Christ's disciples.

A sign-up sheet is posted on the Parish Life bulletin board along the ramp to the parish hall. Questions? please ask!

*Faithfully,  
Alison*

## *300 dozen cookies?*

Yes, 300 dozen and then some! We did it! Thank you, members and friends, for generously baking more than 300 dozen cookies for our contribution to the recent General Synod in Hartford. The tradition of home-baked cookies at Synod is a long-standing one. As host conference, Connecticut UCC congregations joined together to bake 14,000 dozen cookies for the thousands of visitors and delegates.

## *Parish Life Expo*

Please join us on Sunday, September 16, for the Parish Life Expo at both coffee hours. The parish hall will once again be filled with tables full of people ready to share their small group opportunities, information about upcoming events in the church, and activities to take part in – all kinds of ways to grow in faith and fellowship during the upcoming year. Look for the Parish Life Opportunities booklet available in the late summer.

## *A 'Banner' Year*

Since Advent, a small group has been at work, having fun while creating the seasonal banners on the pulpit wall – visual expressions of the scriptures of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost. With these done, we are ready to add more, and we invite you to join us. Each of us shares what we are good at; there's no need to be a sewer, or an artist. We work together to create what none of us could do alone. If you want to know more, please ask Alison McCaffrey.

## Save the Date: Mission Day Will Be Saturday, October 13

Mission Day 2007 is scheduled for Saturday, October 13. We will be doing small chores (cleaning, painting, yard work, etc.) for four of our Connecticut neighborhood community service agencies. This year, we will help the following agencies:

**Chrysalis (Meriden)** Chrysalis provides a variety of services to anyone who experiences domestic violence. Chrysalis provides shelter, food, and clothing to those who have had to flee their situation. They provide a hotline, case management, child and adult advocacy, counseling, and support groups.

**Columbus House (New Haven)** Columbus House deals with homelessness. The agency provides food at the soup kitchen, shelter, assessments, case management, and many other programs and services such as crisis prevention, self-sufficiency programs, and substance abuse treatment.

**Christian Community Action (CCA) (New Haven)** CCA provides emergency food, housing and support to the poor of New Haven. The agency provides shelter, a food pantry, an after-school program, educational programs, help to those seeking employment, and assistance in efforts to make people self-sufficient.

**Safe Haven (Waterbury)** Safe Haven provides emergency shelter and support services (accompaniment to hospital, counseling, legal and child advocacy, information and referrals) to victims and

survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. (*See “One Woman’s Story” on this page.*)

These agencies provide important help to many people 365 days a year. Let’s do our part to help them continue their worthwhile work. Mission Day is not only a great time to help our neighbors, but to get to know one another better too. It’s a partial day (morning, or morning and early afternoon) of work that is not difficult for us, but extremely helpful to the agencies we support.

A sign-up sheet will be posted at future coffee hours. To express immediate interest in helping at specific locations or for answers to questions, please contact Christine Fitzmaurice at 203-272-1472.

## One Woman’s Story

The Board of Outreach gets lots of mail – some of it hard to read. One of these letters was from Abby, married six years to a well-educated accountant. She suffered years of emotional, verbal and physical abuse at the hands of her husband.

Last year, she called the hotline for Safe Haven of Greater Waterbury, and today she is safe, divorced, attending support groups, and planning to buy a new home with her 6-year old son.

Abby is only one person who now has hope for the future, thanks to the help she received from Safe Haven.

Save Haven is one of the agencies our church supports through the Outreach budget. Our pledges DO make a huge difference in people’s lives!

## **The Words of the Lord, Manifested in New Haven**

Every time there's a fifth Wednesday in a month, members and friends of our church serve dinner in the soup kitchen at Columbus House in New Haven. May 30 this year was a fifth Wednesday, so we were there. On the way to Columbus House, Ken Euerle saw a man standing beside the road with a cardboard sign that said "Homeless, will work for food." Ken pulled over and told the man that there's a place just down the road – Columbus House – serving a good, free meat loaf dinner.

Later, while serving there, Ken saw a familiar face in the line – the man he had spoken to earlier! Seeing him gave us all something special to remember that night, and brought to mind the words of Matthew 25, "... for I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink." If ever Jesus' words came to life in our time, it was then – and sometimes, it just takes a simple invitation, like the one Ken offered.

Many thanks to all who served:  
Ken and Pam Euerle, Ed and Chris Albrecht, Karen Gravino, Jan Cowles, Joe Garthwait, Chris and John Fitzmaurice, Regan Huntley, Debbie Sinning, Heather Musante, Bev Euerle, Beth Ross, Carol Ploch, Emma Norback, Sally Ziegler, Emilee Ziolkowski, Carol Cummings, Patti Dickinson, Barb Grudzias, Ruth MacDonald, Lisa Canas, Beth Eichelman, and Carol Tucker.

*Jan Garthwait*

## **Let's Be Environmentally And Socially Conscious Too**

In our own small effort to "go green" and stop using so many disposable pans, please consider donating glass or metal loaf pans, 13-by-9-inch pans, and pie plates for use making dinners for Columbus House in New Haven.

They can be left in the kitchen marked for Columbus House or given to Jan Garthwait directly. Many thanks to all who make this meal possible every time.

## ***The (Temporary) Return of Martha***

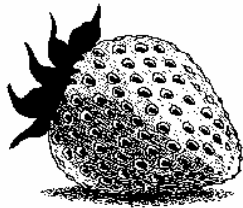
The Trustees' Search Committee is in the process of finding the best candidate for the position of Church Office Administrator.

Until that person is hired, Martha Lape, our former Office Manager, will be in the office handling administrative duties.

**The Church's  
Summer Office Hours:  
8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
(closed afternoons)  
Monday through Friday  
July and August**

## A Thank You From the Strawberry Crew

The Strawberry Festival Committee would like to thank everyone who helped make this year's festival a success! An event of this size could not happen without the work of hundreds of people, some of whom most people never see. The committee appreciates all they did. A



special thank you to all those clean-up people who got soaked bringing all the equipment indoors when the skies opened just as the festival was closing. That's a storm we won't soon forget!

The committee would also like to thank church members and friends who supported us with their small ads for our festival layout in the Cheshire Herald: Kate Altobello, Anthony DePaolo, Bill Barber, Fred and Karen Havlicek, Larry Pivrotto, Wayne Gibbs, Glenn Nowie, Jeff and Linda King, Stuart Post, Bill Meyerjack, Tom Sienkowski, Harry Black, Peter Davis, Roger Olander, Paul Ruszczuk, Kevin Ross, Ken Fackler, and one anonymous donor who wished the festival chairman, Brad Fuller, a happy 50th birthday.

There's a festival every year. If you would like to be a part of the committee, please speak with Brad Fuller, Gary or Carol Warner, Jim Louys, Jessie Waszmer, Beth Ross, Addie Marx or Martha Lape.

## *Parish Care Committee*

There are now more than 100 people involved in parish care, including the ministry leaders. Since January of this year these ministries have done the following:

- Over 80 meals delivered to those who have been ill, families in grief, and the homebound.
- Eleven baptisms with footprint frame reminders of the event, three baby blankets delivered, and one hospital bag of comfort food, shawl, and church items.
- Ten chores, plus a home maintenance guide for the elderly and those living alone.
- Rides are given to two people on a regular basis. We gave rides for about a dozen hospital or doctor visits.
- All six pagers in the Pager Ministry were out for two months, and four of them out the other three months.
- More than 100 cards sent out for anniversaries, sympathy, caring, etc.
- There are now 11 trained Stephen Ministers; most are assigned an individual care receiver.

Looking forward, our Caring Christians Ministry has six trained and assigned people. We are going to be recruiting more resource people to expand this ministry. There is an urgent need to start a bereavement group, so we are seeking information and resources to begin that process. If you can help, please contact Alison McCaffrey. Thank you for all your support and caring for one another.

*Jim Van Der Beek*  
*Parish Care Committee leader*

## Executive Board Report on the June 10 Congregational Meeting

Approximately 100 people attended the congregational meeting held June 10, with Elizabeth Esty as moderator. After an opening prayer by the Rev. Dave Buchan, reports from the search committees were heard:

**Kirsten Sullivan, Chair, Senior Minister Search Committee** – The committee has met with Kent Siladi to understand the search process and has started to meet with the congregation to develop our church profile, including what plans the church has for its future. Specific criteria will be developed before reviewing résumés, interviewing candidates and providing a recommendation to the congregation.

**Chris Cowles, Chair, Director of Youth Ministries Search Committee** – Here are some new procedures and structures being implemented for the Youth Program:

All youth must sign in at every meeting; no youth activities will occur without adult supervision; software for the Youth Database has been purchased and installed; there is screening of Resource Adults; and various training sessions on topics targeted to the Youth Program needs have been held.

As the search has progressed, the team has identified that the position requires more experience and time than originally thought. Because of this, the salary and benefit plan has been reviewed and recommendations for changes have been

made. The position is currently published and posted on six web sites. The team has performed four interviews and is actively receiving resumes and interviewing viable candidates.

**Sara Buell, Member of Office Administrator Search Committee** – With Judy Monarca leaving June 28, the search for Office Administrator is actively underway. The position has been published and posted on the Web. Fifty-five responses have been received, including some from church members, and interviewing is ongoing. Sara also covered the current budget shortfall of healthcare benefits for the Office Administrator.

**Susan Hostage, President** – Susan provided information on research and analysis done by the Personnel Committee, the Budget Committee and the Executive Board to determine what is needed in terms of salary and benefits. She talked about the significant and urgent needs that have led to the proposal to use endowment funds.

**Bob Porter, Personnel Chair** – Bob reviewed how the UCC compensation guidelines and surveys of other Connecticut towns are helping the committee to develop competitive salary and benefit packages. It has been over 35 years since First Church has looked to hire a new Senior Minister who was not an

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incumbent, and Bob said that in this circumstance it is not uncommon to have to make a market adjustment to hire at a competitive rate.

**Walt Ryan, Treasurer**, distributed financial information on salaries, with figures for 2006, 2007 and 2008. He also distributed a list of maintenance items totaling \$151,970 from Trustees. Walt walked through the documents and explained how the \$180,000 would be allocated, if taken from the endowment fund. He also stressed that this would not be a loan, but an outright withdrawal from the endowment.

**Congregational Vote:** Authorize the use of up to \$180,000 through the end of 2008, from the endowment fund, to fund shortfalls in staff and salary benefit packages. The vote was:

Yes: 50 No: 46 Abstain: 4

Due to the closeness of the vote, the Executive Board opted to take this back to Committee for further discussion. The item to reactivate the Parish Care Minister was tabled.

**Follow-up Session on June 12:** The Executive Board reconvened and confirmed to accept the vote from the congregation, but to move forward in a deliberate and thoughtful manner, carefully prioritizing expenditures and using endowment funds only when absolutely necessary. It was determined that a letter would be sent to the congregation to provide more information

regarding the budget needs of the church and the plans for moving forward.

**Input & Suggestions Received from the Congregation:** Since the meeting, members have shared a number of suggestions for consideration by the Executive Board.

Ideas and suggestions are welcome, and may be forwarded to Susan Hostage or any member of the Executive Board: Christine Albrecht, Debra Bond, Rev. Dave Buchan, Kathy Duffendack, Bob Giddings, Mark Hall, Dennis Lape, Ruth MacDonald, Addie Marx, Rev. Alison McCaffrey, Howard Murphy, Bob Porter, Beth Ross, Walt Ryan or Ted Wright.



### **Videocam Operators Needed!**

The church is in great need of adults, or young adults, to help tape the worship service. It's not difficult.

If you can help, please call Betty Pritchard at 272-1133, or introduce yourself to the person in the production booth in the balcony.

# And Now, Here's the Good News!

In this period of transition, as we look toward the future, it's important to not lose sight of what's happening now at First Congregational Church. Answering questions like "Where is God calling us?" and "What has God called us to do?" is made easier if we look at what already has been accomplished.

Sometimes, we overlook all the good that we do because it has become second nature to us.

Consider what is happening at First Church now:

## **Sharing and Growing our Faith**

- Mentoring program with the adults and youth (intergenerational contact and experience)
- Confirmation Program – Opportunity (with their mentors) for a meaningful faith journey
- Personal and faithful approach to membership and embracing members through cottage dinners and shepherds
- Our Youth Program, the really great kids of our Congregation and all of the adults who help out
- Youth involvement with Sunday School teaching, furthering their commitment to their faith
- Church School – great support and supplies for programming. Facilities are amazing – God is surely present there
- Music as a form of prayer and mission
- Easter Vigil and Labyrinth

## **Community of Fellowship and Caring within the Church**

- Men's Breakfast
- Women's Fellowship
- Coffee hour
- Greeters
- Stephen Ministry
- Lasting friendships
- Small Group opportunities for sharing our faith
- Parish Care Ministries (prayer pager, card ministry and more)

## **Extending our faith into the community and beyond**

- 70 years of Strawberry Festival
- Steeple People/ Relay for Life
- Covenant to Care (65 Easter Baskets that include community Girl and Boy Scouts, families, church school classes), 50 Thanksgiving Dinners, meeting basic needs of furniture and clothing for families quickly and generously
- Youth Mission Trips
- Church-wide Mission Days – hands-on support for those who are in need
- The Malawi mission – reaching out in substantive and lifesaving ways
- Monthly food offerings that go to Greater Waterbury Interfaith Ministries and FISH in New Haven
- The 25-plus organizations that are supported financially by the Outreach budget

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- Meals provided to Columbus House residents, cooked and served by First Congregational Church members
- Space provided to the many community groups – such as AA meetings, La Leche and Boy Scouts

### **The “Invisible Threads” that keep us going**

- Our lay leaders who also give many hours of their personal time;
- All the behind-the-scenes activities that keep the church running, by all the unsung heroes who donate their time, gifts and energy – providing gifts to the babies that are baptized, making the banners that hang in the sanctuary, winding the clock, washing the kitchen towels, painting, gardening, repairing and maintaining our historic sanctuary.

And all of this happens with leadership and guidance from our talented and committed staff, who work tirelessly (and sometimes thanklessly), giving all they have – and more.

### **Steeplechase Thanks**

Many thanks to those who came out in support of “Team Steeplechase,” our group at the many fundraisers and the ‘Relay for Life’ event. Due to your support and generosity (and the support of many businesses in the community), the team was able to raise over \$10,000 in support of the American Cancer Society.

## **Church School News**

The theme of Summer Church School is “Galilee By the Sea.” It’s for children from age 3 through 2nd grade. Youth helpers may be in 5th grade and up. The program runs through Labor Day weekend, September 2.

Children will experience how Jesus lived in the Galilee region.

What did Jesus do?  
What kinds of foods did he eat? What kinds of games did he play?



Volunteer Teachers will be needed each week. If you are interested in joining us with your gifts of teaching, please contact Emilee Ziolkowski (755-3390). Please consider checking your calendar and volunteering for a Sunday in the summer.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** Noah’s Ark Nursery is looking for volunteer caregivers to work one Sunday (9:00 single service) during July or August, or on Sunday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>. You would be one of a two person team. Training is provided for those new to the job. We offer child care for ages 6 weeks up to age 3. If interested, please contact Elaine Daly (Nursery Coordinator) at 272-8646 or Debbie Gravell (Commissioned Minister of Christian Education) at 272-5323.

## What Do Our Children Learn in Church School?

Have you ever wondered what the various Church School programs are at First Congregational Church? Here's a rundown:

**Nursery:** Babies and toddlers learn about God's love through playing with our wonderful trained caregivers.

**Preschool 3 through 1st grade:** We use Bible based lessons already prepared to teach about the Bible. One teacher and at least one helper are in each room.

**Grades 2-6:** Bible Journeys Church School. Volunteer "Shepherds" guide them each week through a different Workshop. Our Workshop leaders use prepared lessons to familiarize young people with a different Bible story each month.

Leaders who love art sign up for a month to teach – Thou Art

Leaders who love drama sign up for a month to teach – Red Sea Productions.

Leaders who love storytelling through video, music or characters sign up for a month to teach – Desert Tales.

Leaders who love computers or games sign up for a month to teach – Gospel Games.

In a month, students have visited each of the workshops and have learned in different ways about the Bible Story. Children, Workshop leaders and Shepherds love this way of learning.

**Grades 7 & 8:** Our Middle School children, through activity-based learning, explore faith topics as they relate to their everyday lives. Monthly lesson plans give detailed lessons for the month. New faith topics change monthly.

All of these ministries require committed and dedicated volunteers willing to share their faith with youth through the gifts and talents given them by God. If you have a desire to be a member of the volunteer team in Children's Ministry, please see Debbie Gravell and set up a time to talk with her about your gifts and talents and where your gifts would be best used in the ministry.



### Confirmation 2007-2008

An informational meeting was held on June 11 for families interested in participating in next year's confirmation process. If you were unable to attend that meeting and you and your youth are considering being a part of this year's confirmation process, please contact Debbie Gravell, 272-5323, ext. 16 as soon as possible. She will be happy to make an appointment to meet with you telling you about the program and the commitment involved.

The model being used for this year's process has been revised and it is important to know before the fall who will be participating.

## Here's What's New from the Board of Deacons

The Deacons have been busy recently. One of our new initiatives is sitting together on Communion Sundays. You may have noticed us up in the first two pews on the right hand side as you face the cross. We have experienced a closeness of fellowship in this small act, and it is very meaningful.

The following are some of the other things we've been doing, along with Communion, delivering flowers, and so forth:

- We approved a request from the Rev. Barbara Barlok that she be allowed to baptize the granddaughter of a former member of our church in either the sanctuary or the chapel. The baptism will occur in the autumn.

- We voted to accept a recommendation from the Membership Committee confirming, removing, transferring, and inactivating membership of certain individuals as per their request, as well as sending letters moving people to the inactive list after they didn't respond to two letters requesting they confirm their membership. (More details of the membership verification initiative will be available later.)

- We approved Debbie Gravel's request to go ahead with her model program for confirmation as presented to the Deacons on April 17.

- We approved a motion to have the supervision of the Youth Director transferred from the Director of Christian Education to the Senior Minister, beginning June 1, 2007. It is noted that Dave Buchan agreed with this motion, which is in line with a recommendation recently made by the First Congregational Church Response Team.

- We approved the purchase of a hand-held microphone.

- We approved a motion to recommend to the Executive Board the formation of an ad hoc committee for the fall Homecoming Sunday (more to come on that).

If you have any questions for the Deacons, please address them to Ford Cole, 271-9041 or [fc01e7619@cox.net](mailto:fc01e7619@cox.net), who will bring them to the attention of the Board.

### *Food Offerings*

The Food of the Month for July's Food Offering Sunday (July 1) is **fruit juice**. The Food of the Month for August (August 5) is **baby food, including baby cereal**.

Food offerings go to Greater Waterbury Interfaith Ministries and to FISH of East Haven. Please help!

## Lectionary Readings

The United Church of Christ provides a list of Bible readings suggested for each Sunday of the year. Here are the readings for July and August:

**July 1:** 2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14; Psalm 77: 1-2, 11-20; 1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21; Psalm 16; Galatians 5:1, 13-25 and Luke 9:51-62.

**July 8:** 2 Kings 5:1-4, Psalm 30; Isaiah 66:10-14, 19-21; Psalm 66:1-9; Galatians 6:1-6, 7-16; and Luke 10:1-11, 16-20.

**July 15:** Amos 7:7-17; Psalm 82; Deuteronomy 30:9-14; Psalm 25:1-10; Colossians 1:1-14; and Luke 10:25-37.

**July 22:** Amos 8:1-12; Psalm 52; Genesis 18:1-10a; Psalm 15; Colossians 1:15-28; and Luke 10:38-42.

**July 29:** Hosea 1:2-10; Psalm 85; Genesis 18:20-32; Psalm 138; Colossians 2: 6-15, 16-19; and Luke 11:1-13.

**August 5:** Hosea 11:1-11; Psalm 107: 1-9, 43; Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14 and 2:18-23; Psalm 49: 1-12; Colossians 3:1-11; and Luke 12:13-21.

**August 12:** Isaiah 1:1, 10-20; Psalm 50: 1-8, 22-23; Genesis 15:1-6; Psalm 33:12-22; Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16; and Luke 12: 32-40.

**August 19:** Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 80:1-2, 8-19; Jeremiah 23:23-29; Psalm 82; Hebrews 11:29-12:2; and Luke 12:49-56.

**August 26:** Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71: 1-6; Isaiah 58:9b-14; Psalm 103:1-8; Hebrews 12:18-29; and Luke 13:10-17.

## Transitions

in the life of our church family

### Baptisms

June 10: Noah Alexander Odell, son of Nicholas and Naomi Odell; great-grandson of Wes Alexander

June 17: Mairead Joan Martin Hall, daughter of Mark and Kate Hall

### Births

June 2: Monica Ehrenfels, daughter of Karl and Sophally Ehrenfels

### Weddings

June 2: Abigail Cain and Kevin Furey

June 23: Kim Cashman (daughter of Susan and Ray Mancinelli) and David Galvin, in Ireland

### Deaths

May 26: Lucille Norton

June 11: Betty Wang

## Letters of Thanks

Thank you so much for all of your well-wishes for the birth of our second son, Jeremy. Thanks to all of those involved in the beautiful baby blanket that was so generously given to us, and for the handmade teddy bear for "Big Brother" Ryan. We will be returning to church services very soon, and look forward to seeing all of you.

*Jim and Jeannine Plaster*

Thanks for the lovely bouquet that Joy Deegan brought from church. Our church has been so generous sharing flowers!

*Marjorie Beard*

## ***Who's Your Audience?***

*We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.*

2 Corinthians 10:12 NIV

Caleb and his Mom worked hard on the sixth grader's project. The assignment was for the child to build a model medieval castle with a minimum of parental help. Mother and son had a fun and relatively stress free weekend working together. Caleb designed and built the majority of the castle. He was feeling pretty good about the whole process. On Monday when Caleb entered the school, he noticed a number of the other projects that seemed to have been designed and built by expert artisans. As Caleb looked at these professionally coiffed projects and then his own, his heart sank with shame. The joy of the weekend quickly evaporated.

Are constant comparisons stealing your joy? Don't measure yourself by others. Everyone has different gifts and abilities. Your value is not dependent on how others look or perform. Instead, do your best for the Lord. Make Jesus your primary audience. Let the approval of the Lord be the flag that flies high over the castle of your heart!

*Humility is the proper estimate of oneself.*

C.H. Spurgeon

*Enjoy the season!*

