

THE PARISH POST

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

CHESHIRE, CONNECTICUT
www.cheshirecongregational.org

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March, 2009

No. 3

A Fond Farewell

By **Dave Buchan, Interim Senior Minister**

Dear Members and Friends of First Congregational Church,

Thank you for the kindness you have shown me over the past two years. It has been an honor and a joy to serve this congregation.

Your sense of mission – the Cromwell Children’s Home, the Salt and Light grants, leaf raking at Chrysalis House – make the church a real beacon and an example to others.

Your friendship and sense of caring for one another are impressive. Ninety volunteers helped 334 people/families within the congregation, donating 1,500 hours of service.

Homecoming weekend and June’s Strawberry Festival were tremendous examples of fellowship. First Congregational’s greatest asset is its people. What an outstanding church!

We have worked together to prepare the church for a new Senior Minister.

The Bible studies and discussions have kept me spiritually and intellectually alert.

It has also been my privilege to be invited to share the secret garden of people’s lives in times of sadness and joy.

This church has dedicated lay leaders and an exceptional staff: Alison and Debbie, Joe and Marianne, Roger, Leslie and Michael, Fred and Pat.

All work long hours with humor and grace.

Welcome Jeff Braun as your new settled Senior Minister.

The church is fortunate to have such a capable and devout minister – and he is fortunate to be called to serve such a fine church.

Thank you for your partnership in the gospel of Christ.

I would leave you with the words of St. Paul:

“Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord...” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

In Christ,
Dave Buchan, Interim Senior Minister

Gulf Coast Mission

The Rev. Alison McCaffrey will lead a group of 12 members of First Congregational Church to Mississippi to assist in the ongoing rebuilding the Gulf Coast. The group will leave Cheshire on March 15 and return on March 21. The members who will go are: Chris and Ed Albrecht, Jack Burton, Lisa Canas, Dick and Sue Mattson, Sue Pappas, Larry Pivrotto, Peter Ploch, Kevin Ross, and Jack and Robin Sellati.

Please check our church web site during their week of work for updates and pictures (www.cheshirecongregational.org) and please pray for them and let them know of your prayer support by using the prayer pager they will take with them (phone 657-0081).

Thanks to all those in the congregation who have supported this trip by attending the benefit concert in January, or by making a financial contribution, or by helping out with transportation to and from the airport. This trip could not have happened without your support.



Caring Crafts Ministry

Caring Crafts Ministry will meet March 30 at 7 p.m. at Donna Mead's home, 15 Conifer Drive, Hamden. If you need directions, feel free to call Donna at 248-9576. All are welcome – those who know how to knit or crochet, or those who don't. We love to teach others a craft we enjoy doing.

Worship Schedule For March

Sunday, March 1: Services at 9 and 11. Alison McCaffrey preaching. Communion Sunday. Food offerings will be received; the food of the month is canned hash.

Sunday, March 8: Services at 9 and 11. Dave Buchan preaching.

Sunday, March 15: Services at 9 and 11. Dave Buchan preaching; this will be his last Sunday with us.

Sunday, March 22: Services at 9 and 11. Jeff Braun preaching.

Sunday, March 29: Single service at 10. Memorial Music Sunday (see below). Jeff Braun preaching.

Memorial Music Sunday

On Sunday, March 29, the Senior Choir will present contemporary American composer Morton Lauridsen's beautiful choral work, "Lux Aeterna", at the single Sunday morning service at 10 a.m.

Its texts are drawn from sacred Latin sources, each containing references to light. This five-movement choral work will honor the memory and lives of those who have passed on.

The choir will also sing John Rutter's anthem "The Lord Is My Shepherd." The service will be conducted by Joe D'Eugenio, and accompanied by organist Allan Conway.

What Is the Right Percentage?

If you have begun to look at your pledge to the church through the lens of your blessings, and know the percentage of your blessings that you are returning to your God, then you have taken a significant step toward being a modern-day disciple of Christ. But the first question that confronts you then is this: what is the right percentage for you?

That's a question no one can answer for you. Some have claimed that they were asked to give up all, like Peter and Andrew, to follow Jesus. For most of us, the answer is somewhere between 0% (no pledge at all) and 10% (the Biblical tithe).

Depending on your circumstances, there might be a good case to be made for almost any percentage. On the face of it, however, you could say that you are showing greater gratitude toward God for the good things of your life as you approach the 10% end of the scale. Implicit in that gratitude is a tacit admission that, yes, his generosity is at least this much more than we actually need. Like a medieval mystic, we discover it's possible to be rich in proportion to what we can do without.

As you approach the other end of the scale, you're saying that the resources within your grasp are comparatively scarce and there is little excess capacity for expressing your material gratitude for them. We must all admit that for some, 0% is all that is possible. The good life hasn't yet arrived for them, and they,

perhaps they especially, are most welcome in our church.

But beyond where you sit on this scale, there is the question of where you want to be on it. Are you satisfied with the percentage that you've pledged this year? (You can always change your pledge.) Some of us might say that we can never make a sufficient return to the Lord for his mercies to us – not just his material gifts, but his blessings of health, children, the life and times and peace and plenty that are all around us – how could we ever say we had shown enough gratitude?

These are difficult times, economically, to think about trying to do more for the church. But also, these are times when we have all cut back, and found that our expenditures may have been a bit “over the top” – with nothing much to show for them, and once we stop, we don't miss it much. Some of us have gotten used to a new car every couple of years, and maybe we've started wondering if that's a little too aggressive. Maybe we've realized we're a little bogged down with new toys, new technology, a hobby, travel.

So we're learning something here in these tough times, and how we apply those lessons is up to us. We profess our faith, as members of this community, in the promise that Jesus brought to us, and in the Christian interpretation of the patterns of our lives and experiences. We yearn for a higher road, for our lives to be more meaningful. Greater discipleship is within our reach.

Parish Care in January

Here is what your Parish Care Committee and its volunteers did in January:

Bereavement – Two people were sent the Bereavement Series booklets and invited to join the Bereavement group, which meets once a month on the last Thursday of the month in Room 11 at 7 p.m. If you have suffered a loss of a loved one, please join this group. It has proven to be very helpful to those who attend – no matter where they are on their grief journey.

Cards – Thirty-nine cards were sent containing sympathy, get well, thinking of you and thank you sentiments along with Valentine cards to our senior church members.

Caring Visitors – We are currently seeking new Caring Visitors. This is a ministry where a member of the church who is homebound or shut in welcomes a parishioner into their home for a minimum of one visit a month. It is important for the receivers to feel that they are still part of our church and this is a wonderful way to provide it. If you are interested in becoming one, please contact Donna Mead (donna.mead@comcast.net or 272-5323 ext. 14.).

Chores – John Bates has graciously agreed to head this ministry. If you know of anyone who needs something done or if you yourself need something done, please contact either John (272-6389) or Donna Mead.

Meals – Twenty meals were delivered to four recipients. There are sufficient frozen meals at the moment so there will be no need for any for a while. The meals coordinator for March and April is Marianne Eagleson, 271-2850.

Prayer Pagers – Five of the seven pagers were used. The Adult Mission Trip will have one for their trip March 15-21. Please call 203-657-0081, then press 777 #. The pager will buzz, and they will know their church is praying for them.

Rides – Two rides were provided for a parishioner.

Stephen Ministry – Nine care receivers were ministered to by eight ministers. If you or someone you know think you could benefit from having a Stephen Minister, call Sue Chatfield (235-6294) for a consultation.

Telephone – Debbie Wylie was the person performing the January calls. Thanks to Debbie for performing this important ministry.

Parish Care Coordinator – Donna Mead met with the Windsor First Congregational Church Parish Care Coordinator, Sue Williams, to compare notes on parish care. It was a very worthwhile, informative meeting. Donna not only gathered good information on how Windsor conducts its parish care that can be used in our church but also shared many things that our church is doing.

The Parish Care Coordinator spent a total of 41 hours in January.

Miles for Malawi

We have lots of treasure beyond our money. To help one project, the Board of Stewardship is calling for something other than a monetary donation.

Amy Webb, who chairs the church's missionary to AIDS orphans in the African country of Malawi, is seeking donation of travel miles from airlines to pay for her next journey to Africa.

If you have frequent flier miles on United Airlines, U. S. Airways Dividend Miles, or Delta Skymiles, and would like to donate them for use with the Malawi mission, please contact Ruth



MacDonald at ruthkmacdonald@comcast.net, or in person. She will supply you with the information you need to donate the air miles. Information is also available on the Stewardship bulletin board in the connector, and in the weekly worship bulletin.

A thank-you in advance from Amy and the Board of Stewardship for your generous support of God's work through Amy in Africa.

**Have you remembered
First Congregational Church
in your estate planning?**

New Bible Study:

Jesus and Your Junk Drawer

Everyone has a junk drawer – a place where you stash things you think you'll need some day. Whether it's a drawer, a closet, a workshop, garage, or whole rooms, we often hang onto things and ways of being that no longer serve us, but find difficult to let go.

What does Jesus have to say about these "junk drawers" and the things that hold us back? Actually, a lot. In this Lenten Bible Study, we'll look at his teachings on material possessions, relationships, self-care, work/ vocation, and our concept of time as we explore the act of decluttering our spaces and our lives.

This study will include weekly hands-on spiritual practices. Come join us; at the very least you'll have a clean junk drawer by Easter (and most likely, a whole lot more).

Dates: March 5 (Thursday), March 11 (Wednesday), March 19 (Thu), March 26 (Thu) and April 2 (Thu). A signup sheet is on the lobby table.

Christmas Fair (in March?)

Do you have ideas on how to make our Christmas Fair bigger and better than ever? We would love to hear from you. This doesn't obligate you to serve on any committee! Just come and bring your ideas. We will meet informally on Tuesday, March 24, at 7:30 p.m. in the Whiting House.

Christian Education in March

Bible Journeys for grades 2-6 continues to be a popular model for learning. Each month is different and exciting.

Excluding March 29, grades 3-6 will go to class when dismissed from the church. Watch the bulletin for when children leave for class.

Excluding March 29, grade 2 at 9:00 service only will leave for Chapel in the early part of the service. After Chapel they will go with their Shepherd to their Bible Journeys workshop. Parents may find their children in the classroom listed in the bulletin at the end of Church School. (For March 29, see below.)

Thou Art, Room 8: Children will learn the story behind our Palm Sunday celebrations. They will make felt banners reflective of the story. Grades 2 and 3 will use their banners in the Palm Sunday processional in the sanctuary on April 5. Children will meet to process 10 minutes before the beginning of the service in the hall outside Room 11.

Red Sea Productions, Room 9: Through the Bible scripture and several puppet skits, the children will hear confirmation of God's control and power over our world and God's plan to save us through Jesus Christ. Children will also think about love and apply these thoughts to God's perfect love, which is why Jesus died for us.

Desert Tales, Room 10: Children will watch the video "The Easter Story" from the New Testament Animated Bible Series.

Discussion will follow. Popcorn will be served using our new popcorn maker.

Gospel Games, Room 11: Using the game "Antioch Arcade," children will become familiar with the main events of Holy Week and their sequence. The class will play a game in which the children will locate and read passages of Matthew's account of Holy Week. They will answer questions in order to move around on the giant stepping stones on the floor.

On March 29, there will be a single service for Memorial Music Sunday. Children in preschool 3 – first grade will see a special presentation of a Veggie Tales movie in Room 10. Popcorn will be served. Teachers and helpers scheduled for that day are asked to help with the special event. Please bring your attendance folders.

The Lenten mission project for grades 2-8: Heifer Project International is the organization we will help this Lent. Heifer Project works with the poor throughout the world, helping grassroots groups set goals that are inclusive, achievable, and in harmony with the culture and environment. Heifer Project provides training, support and evaluation, which includes "passing on the gift" of livestock and learning so that more and more families benefit from your gift.

Children have received their "passing on the gift" Lenten mission project kits. They will multiply the seed money they

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9:00

Date	Thou Art	Red Sea Prod.	Desert Tales	Gospel Games
Mar. 1	Grades 3&4	Week Off	Grades 5 & 6	Grade 2
Mar. 8	Grade 2	Grades 5 & 6	Week Off	Grades 3&4
Mar. 15	Grades 5 & 6	Grade 2	Grades 3&4	Week Off
Mar. 22	Week Off	Grades 3&4	Grade 2	Grades 5 & 6

11:00

Date	Thou Art	Red Sea Prod.	Desert Tales	Gospel Games
Mar. 1	Worship	Worship	Worship	Worship
Mar. 8	Week Off	Week Off	Grades 2-4	Grades 5&6
Mar. 15	Grades 2-4	Week Off	Grades 5&6	Week Off
Mar. 22	Grades 5&6	Grades 2-4	Week Off	Week Off

10:00 Single Service

Mar. 29	Silver Lake Program	Silver Lake Program	Silver Lake Program	Silver Lake Program
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receive from a Board of Outreach Salt and Light Grant to help buy farm animals for families in the poorest areas of the world. Parents are encouraged to help children find ways to take the seed money, ask God to bless the money, and their plans to enable them to be good stewards, caretakers, of the gift. We encourage them to journal about their fundraiser and pass in their journal with the money raised on Sunday, April 19.

Snack and Juice: 3-year olds through 1st graders are served snacks and juice on Sunday mornings. We have found that asking parents to contribute once a year helps us keep within our budget. Please read labels carefully as snacks should have no nuts, peanut butter or peanut oil. Some suggestions of cookies which have no nuts are: nut free varieties of Chips

Ahoy, Oreos, Teddy Grahams, Vanilla Wafers, and Lorna Doone.

Families with last name starting with R and S are asked to bring snacks in March. Families T-V in April, and W-Z in May.

Confirmation Retreat: All confirmands will be on retreat Friday, March 20 to Sunday, March 22. The leaders will be Debbie Gravell, Emilee Ziolkowski, and Mark Dickinson. Our group will be joined by the Woodbridge confirmation class led by Joellyn Jason. The theme is “the Holy Spirit”.

Stepping Stones: Our 5th and 6th grade youth group has been keeping busy. In February, the group heard from Amy Webb about her travels to Malawi. The next meeting is March 20 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. All 5th and 6th graders are invited. Friends are welcome.

All About Prayer Net

The First Congregational Church Prayer Net is an e-mail prayer chain ministry where church members and friends pray for people and situations on request, day or night.

When a need arises, a confidential email is sent to our pray-ers, who then commit to praying. If you have a need or request for yourself or others that you would like the group to pray for, just send Alison McCaffrey an e-mail, and the request will be sent to the group.



Names and situations may be anonymous, and all prayer requests are kept confidential. If you would like to join the Prayer Net as a pray-er, and would like more information, please send Alison McCaffrey a note via email: amccaffrey@CheshireCongregational.org.



Pew Pals Ministry

Our 'Pew Pals' Ministry, so well received here by young and old, has now made its way into hands of our friends in Malawi. The Welcoming Team appreciates your ongoing donations of these smaller-size stuffed animals for this ministry. A basket outside Alison's office is ready to receive these new or pre-loved stuffed animals. Keep 'em coming! Thank you!

Summer Music on the Green

On Saturday evening, June 20, the Board of Music will present its fourth annual Music on the Green, featuring the Heartbeat Dixieland Jazz Band, directed by Bill Logozzo. This eight-piece jazz ensemble is hailed as "New England's most lovable jazz band." Save the date now to join us on the Green with your picnic, ears, and dancing feet, and get ready to experience one of the most enjoyable evenings of the year.

Columbarium Committee Forming

The approval to proceed with the Columbarium (a structure with niches to receive the ashes of the dead) in the space around the memorial garden at the back of the church was given by those present at the Annual Meeting on January 25.

The Trustees are charged with forming a committee to draw up rules and regulations for the beginning and continued use of the Columbarium, and to obtain quotes for the cost of construction.

After approval of the final bid, the committee will oversee construction of the Columbarium.

If you would like to serve on this committee, please call the church office at 272-5323 or Martha Lape at 272-9327.

Or e-mail Martha at mlape@aol.com or Alan Skiparis at alan_a_skiparis@sbcglobal.net.

February Executive Board

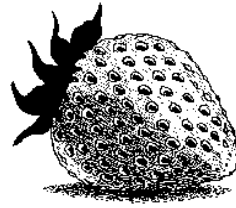
Your Executive Board had a productive February meeting. Bob Porter and the members of the Personnel Committee completed work on an updated Employee Handbook and Personnel Policies Manual. Final details were worked out at the February meeting and this new document will be ready for implementation very soon. This document applies to our paid staff, but is also a “must read” for lay leaders who serve in supervisory positions.

The Board also addressed several of the “open items” that were discussed but not completely resolved during our recent annual congregational meeting. In the near future we will be able to discuss the progress we are making in developing the formal, detailed guidance for the columbarium, forming a team to lead the congregation in a conversation pertaining to our worship schedule, and finally in developing a process that will enable us all to periodically review the financial position of the church.

Based on changes to our by-laws, we now enjoy the addition two new members to the Executive Board: President-elect Ford Cole and Immediate Past President Susan Hostage. Ford is currently in the process of visiting the various boards and committees to gain insights into their inner workings, while Susan is actively engaged in guiding us through the process of planning for the future of our church. Most important, however, these two provide continuity within our lay leadership that will help keep us consistent and well focused on God’s call.

Thinking of Strawberries

Our church’s annual Strawberry Festival



is still more than three months away, but we’re already planning for it. The Festival Committee needs

new ideas for the children’s games and activities at the Festival.

If you have idea to share, please see Beth Ross at church on Sundays, e-mail her at meimross@gmail.com, or phone her at (860) 426-0702. And if you’re planning ahead, mark your calendar for Saturday, June 13, the date of this year’s event.



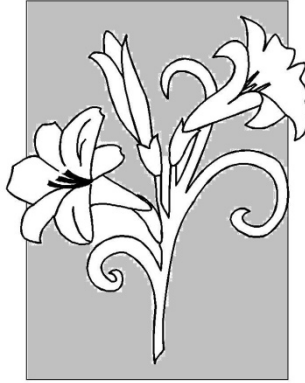
‘Covenant for Caring’ News

Once again, our church family will be donating Easter baskets to families in need through the state Department of Children and Families. Please keep an eye out for the signup sheet, which will be posted on the Outreach bulletin board in the church Parlor.

Hospitalized?

If you or someone you know is in the hospital, please tell First Congregational Church. Federal privacy laws now forbid health care providers from informing others, including churches, when someone is admitted to the hospital. We want to care! But we can’t do it without your help.

Order Your Easter Lilies Now



Now is the time to order Easter lilies. You have the option of either picking up your lily after the 11:30 a.m. Easter service or donating it to someone in the hospital or a shut-in. Please remember that you will not be bringing a plant to church. Please fill out the form below to order your plants, and hand it in or send it to the church office. The cost of each Easter lily is \$9.00. Orders must be received no later than March 24. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at 271-0875.

Jenell Janes, Easter Lily Chair, Flower Committee

To order an Easter lily for the Easter services, please fill out this form and hand it in or send it to the church office (111 Church Dr., Cheshire CT 06410), along with \$9.00 for each plant, no later than March 24. Payment must accompany the order.

YOUR NAME(S) _____

_____ Afterward, please give it to someone in the hospital or a shut-in.

_____ I will pick it up after the 11:30 a.m. Easter service

___ IN MEMORY OF _____

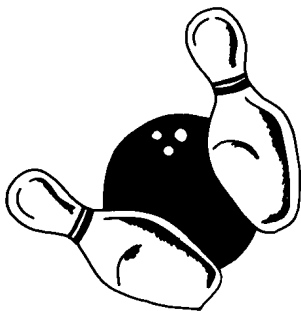
___ IN HONOR OF _____

Youth Group News

The YUTES would like to thank our church family for all their support of the 30 Hour Famine. The 30 Hour Famine is a World Vision program that allows young people to make a significant impact on the problem of world hunger while growing closer to God and to each other.

By going without food for 30 hours, our youth not only raised funds to help feed and care for children worldwide, but also gained an understanding of how it feels to experience hunger.

We will hold a Bowling Night for both



groups on March 15. The cost is only \$10, which covers pizza, drinks, and two hours of bowling. Please sign up

in advance so we can get an idea of how many lanes to reserve.

Summer Mission Trip Update: This year's mission trip, from July 19 through 25, will be to Groton, Conn., where we will repair homes for those in need and participate in a week of spiritual growth.

If you plan to attend this year's trip, please submit your deposit NOW. Please note that the trip must be paid in full by May 15.

If you need more information, please contact Roger Olander or visit our website at www.yutes.org.

Lectionary for March

Sunday, March 1: Genesis 9: 8-17; Psalm 25: 1-10; 1 Peter 3: 18-22; Mark 1: 9-15.

Sunday, March 8: Genesis 17: 1-16; Psalm 22: 23-31; Romans 4: 13-25; Mark 8: 31 – 9: 9.

Sunday, March 15: Exodus 20: 1-17; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 1: 18-25; John 2: 13-22.

Sunday, March 22: Numbers 21: 4-9; Psalm 107: 1-3, 17-22; Ephesians 2: 1-10; John 3: 14-21.

Sunday, March 29: Jeremiah 31: 31-34; Psalm 51: 1-12; Psalm 119: 9-16; Hebrews 5: 5-10; John 12: 20-33.



Maundy Thursday Worship Group

This year, Maundy Thursday, April 9, will be celebrated as an Upper Room Meal and Worship Service in the Parish Hall.

In worship, scripture, and song we will learn about the Jewish Passover meal and the roots of our Communion service as we tell the story of the Last Supper with the help of the Scripture By Heart group.

A small group is now forming to work on all aspects of the worship service: from learning the elements of the Seder to working on the details of planning this event to menu planning and set-up.

There's something for all interests and all ages. Please sign up for this group at the lobby table, or speak with Alison McCaffrey.

‘Caring Crafts’ Needs You: Create a Prayer Shawl

Prayer shawls are being given on a more regular basis recently, which means the demand is higher than in the past.

For this reason, we are asking anyone who knows how to knit or crochet, and has the time, to make a prayer shawl.

The shawls have brought comfort to many who have lost a loved one, gone through a difficult time, or had a serious illness.

Once you make a shawl, a label is sewn on with the church address, and a card with a blessing is attached. (You can get these items from Donna



Meade, or hand your shawl in, and she will attach them for you.)

Thank you in advance for using your skill to make another feel comforted.

Prayer Shawl Directions:

- Finished Size: approximately 24” x 60”
- Materials: 3 skeins Lion Brand Homespun yarn
- Knit: Size 10.5(6.5 mm) through 15 (10 mm) needles
- Crochet: Size N-13 (9mm) or P-15 (10 mm) crochet hook

KNIT VERSION:

Cast on 63 stitches

First row: Knit 3; purl 3 to end of row.

Repeated row: Turn and knit the purl stitches and purl the knit stitches

CROCHET VERSION:

Loosely chain about 43 stitches

First row: Half-double crochet in third chain from hook and in each chain across.

Repeated row: Chain 2, turn. Half-double crochet in each half-double crochet across.

BOTH VERSIONS:

Work about 2½ skeins in this pattern. Use the rest of the yarn for fringe, which can be from 3” to 9” long. Knot the ends of the fringes to keep the yarn from frizzing.

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The Better to Know You: Church Life Communities

What do the biblical towns of Jerusalem, Galilee, Shiloh and Bethlehem (to name just four) have to do with our First Congregational Church in Cheshire?

Plenty, as you'll see.

Getting to know fellow church members and friends in our large and ever-changing congregation is a daunting task; some might even say, impossible.

However, God calls us to be a church community, a community in the richest sense of that word. And first, we need to know one another.

So a small group has been at work, quietly and persistently, during the past two years to find a way to make the 'impossible' possible.

We first made a geographic map of where all our members are located. Street lists were compiled, a huge map constructed, and pins placed to mark each family unit. Then we grouped our members into 12 equally dense geographic areas, what we are calling "Church Life Communities" or CLC's for short. Each of these communities or districts is named for a biblical town and is composed of about 60 to 70 family units.

At the center of the map is our church, located in "Jerusalem," and 10 of the geographic CLC's radiate from this hub. (The twelfth is composed of all our college students across the country.)

Gathering ourselves into the Church Life Communities is not meant to divide

us or to keep us from knowing others in the other CLC's. Instead, the goals are to make it possible to know one another better, to provide ways to connect in fellowship, and to reach out and care for one another.

The better we know one another, the better we can be the church God calls us to be. Looking at the map, it's amazing to see how many church members live on the same streets and may not even know one another.

The map is almost ready to be placed in the Parish Hall, and there you will be able to find your place and discover which CLC you are part of, and who your 'church neighbors' are.

To initiate our new mapping and CLC project, you will soon receive an invitation to join in fellowship and conversation with your neighbors and our new Senior Minister, the Rev. Jeffrey Braun.

Details are still being worked out, but the Senior Minister Search Committee, in conjunction with the Membership Committee, are planning at least two "cottage meetings" in each geographic CLC starting at the end of March and extending through the coming months.

We hope you will take this opportunity to commune with neighbors and reflect on your church with Jeff!

Peace,

Kirsten Sullivan and Alison McCaffrey

Holy Week / Easter Schedule

Palm Sunday, April 5: Worship with Communion at 9 and 11 o'clock. Telling of the Passion story by the Scripture by Heart group. Distribution of palms, procession by children.

Maundy Thursday, April 9: 6:15 p.m. Upper Room meal and worship in the tradition of the Seder; sign-up on lobby table. Appropriate for families; child care option available.



Good Friday, April 10: Noon worship in the chapel and 7:30 p.m. worship with the Service of Tenebrae in the sanctuary.

Good Friday, April 10: Silent Vigil begins at 10 p.m.

New this year: Holy Saturday, April 11: LightFest, 7 to 11 p.m. in the parsonage back yard. A sharing of faith stories from scripture and experience around a campfire in the tradition of the ancient Great Easter Vigil. The Labyrinth will be lit for self-guided walks. Renewal of baptismal vows at 11 p.m. Dress warmly, bring a chair, and bring your guitar.

Easter Sunday, April 12: Worship with Communion at 8:00, 9:30, and 11:30 AM. Jeff Braun preaching. Children's program at 9:30 and 11:30 services.

Visit the church web site:
www.cheshirecongregational.org
to keep up to date!

Saying Thank-You

I would like to extend my humble gratitude to all of you who honored me and Covenant to Care at a recent service. I thank the Board of Outreach for their years of support in making this mission a viable one. I will treasure the words that were spoken, the beautiful cards and the "thank you" angel that now sits by my mantel. As I signed off as the Membership Chair later in the day, I was surprised with a \$125 check for the Covent for Caring program in my honor. I am overwhelmed by the outpouring of love from this church and I will be forever grateful. May we all continue to serve with the gifts we have been given. God bless you all.

Jan Cowles

We want to say thank you for the wonderful meal that Ken and Pam Euerle brought to us after Carolyn's surgery. The meal was healthy and delicious, just what the doctor ordered! We're so glad to be part of First Congregational Church.

Carolyn Brown and Don Lee

We would like to thank the Church Staff and members of the Congregation for their continued support and encouragement. A special thanks to the Strawberry Festival Committee for their generous donation towards the purchase of a portable digital piano. We all look forward to another exciting year of music.

The Praise Band

We would like to thank the Birth and Baptism Committee very much for the

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beautiful blanket for Mattie Mae. Your kindness and generosity is deeply appreciated. God bless you!

Kimberly, Richard and Mattie Mae Tabor

Thank you so much for the beautiful flowers Carol Cummings delivered to brighten a snowy afternoon. The flowers and the kind thoughts they represented were deeply appreciated.

Abby Bray

Thank you to the Stepping Stones for the surprise care packages you sent us at college. It is nice to be remembered by our friends at the church. The treats will be a welcome addition as we get ready for exams!

Paige and Emily Cowles

Thanks to Martha Lape, Bill Eagleson, and Ken Euerle for the fantastic job they have done painting the entire church kitchen, including the walls, ceiling and cabinets. It looks absolutely beautiful! It took many hours to complete, and I want you to know how much this is appreciated. What a wonderful enhancement to our church building! Also, a heartfelt thank you to Jan and Kelly Garthwait, Bobbie Porter, and Ray Cummings for helping to “prep” the walls and ceiling prior to painting. As well, thank you Addie Marx, Jan Garthwait, and Bobbie Porter for your helping hands cleaning out and reorganizing the kitchen cabinets.

Carol Cummings

I want to thank our ministers, so many friends, for the many visits and cards, the flowers delivered by Carol Cummings and

for our caring congregation for their prayers. Anne and I know that we have the best church ever!

Joe Madden

Milestones

In the Life of our church family

Deaths

Ronald Barlok, husband of Barbara Barlok, January 25

Jeanne Whinfield, mother of Steve and John Whinfield, January 28

