



# *Epistle*

**SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

110 South Street  
Pittsfield, MA 01201  
(413)-442-7357

sochurch@nycap.rr.com  
www.southchurchpittsfield.org

November 2013

With the coming of November it's stewardship season at South Church. Our theme this year is "Surprising Gifts" based on Paul's words in 2 Thessalonians: "May God...who reached out in love and surprised you with gifts of unending help and confidence, put a fresh heart in you..." The invitation of this season is to become more aware of all the surprising gifts God gives through the sacred web of relationship that is this community of faith we call South Church. From such awareness we can respond with freshness of heart to the call of Christ to give of our time, talent, and treasure as this month we make our pledges for the coming year.

I often feel I am the 'shepherd of gifts' here at South, helping to bring to expression what is within each of us. Sometimes this shepherding means naming what is happening all around. This past Sunday is a good example. When I arrived before worship I encountered Mary Wheat and Lynn Reynolds in the downstairs hallway as they waited for a delivery. We chatted briefly about the upcoming week at the pantry. Gifts of organization and generosity were weaving their way through Barrett Hall early on Sunday.

During worship I had the opportunity to share in conversation with Don Roche, Jr. as I drew forth from him stories and reflections on the call to stretch into the fullness of Christ. We learned a bit about rowing and sculling, how as a young paperboy Don helped an older member stretch and reconnect with the church after the death of his spouse, how Don, himself, reconnected and grew in faith after the birth of his daughters, and together we reflected on how God's surprising gifts come when we are willing to open ourselves, to stretch and grow into a larger identity. While we were speaking, the Church School was busy with a creative arts program with artist in residence, Alma Blafield. Our young ones were creating a "Blessing Tree" out of bare tree branches, green moss, and a large pot. The branches were planted in the moss and pot and were covered with brightly decorated leaves and other symbols to remind the children of their connections with the saints and loved ones of their lives as they were challenged to be a blessing to the world. It was a creative way to honor All Saints Day—and to balance this week's focus on being scary and getting candy. Gifts of memory and commitment were weaving their way through our sanctuary and Church School on Sunday.

Following worship we had our congregational meeting to hear reports and vote concerning the capital fund drive. As Mary Rentz and John Robertson led us through the process that has brought us to this moment, I was struck at the thoroughness, clarity, and wisdom that flowed. Gifts of trust, faithfulness, and hope were weaving their way through that meeting as we sought to be the people God would have us be in this time.

Finally, on Sunday evening at our House Church gathering we shared in song, gentle meditation, a brief film, and heartfelt discussion as we explored how transformation comes. The film focused on a homeless man's painful journey into hope. We talked about how easy it is in our harsh culture to judge the vulnerable. Where does such harshness come from? It has many sources, but one could be the harshness of the voices in our own heads that judge us endlessly—and then almost unconsciously we judge others. Could mercy flow into our world as we more deeply hear the word of mercy for ourselves? If we are connected in a web of relationship one with another and with God, then what goes on in our heads has a powerful impact upon everything. Gifts of awareness and unconditional love were weaving their way through the parlor Sunday evening.

Experiencing the surprising gifts of God as they weave their way into our lives and world is what South Church is about. May we respond faithfully to such abundant and persistent love.



**EPISTLE**

Published monthly at Pittsfield, Mass. in the interest of members and friends of South Congregational Church.

Subscription: \$3.00

Staff

- Editor ..... Priscilla Anthony
- Business Manager ..... Jeannine Rontowski
- Reporters ..... Each of You
- Features
- Pastor ..... Joel Huntington
- Children/Youth Director ..... Ann Roche
- Moderator ..... Mary Rentz
- Parish Nurse ..... Sue Kaufman
- May Mattoon ..... Alice Gallup
- Ladies Benevolent ..... Marge Demary
- Men's Forum ..... John Anthony
- Production and Mailing ..... Paula Haskell

The next Epistle deadline is December 1st at 11 a.m.

**OUR CHURCH FAMILY**

**In memoriam:**

Shirley Whitehead (Mrs. Richard) October 26

Florence McConahey September 10

**Letter From Nephew, Peter McConahey**

Hello –

This is a note to let you and the church know that my Aunt Florence died on Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013. I thought there might still be some members there that would like this information, as Florence was always a devout Christian and the church was a big part of her life.

She had her 100th birthday last Dec. (12/12/12 birth date) and was in a wheelchair for the last few years but really was in pretty good shape. She caught pneumonia on a Monday morning, was in bed mainly sleeping with oxygen to help her breathing and died Tuesday late afternoon.

So she did not have a long painful death and was over 100 years old - I guess that is a blessing.

Thanks, Peter McConahey

Editor's Note: Florence served as Business Manager for the *Epistle* for 26 years.

**Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity**  
 Workday, Saturday, November 2, 8 am-2pm  
 For info, contact Will Garrison,  
[Garrisonfamily77@gmail.com](mailto:Garrisonfamily77@gmail.com) or 443-0164

**CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS**

The children have been busy spending time getting to know each other. Many of our lessons have involved reading scripture together followed by an interactive activity. For example, after reading Luke 17:5-10, the Parable of the Mustard Seed, the children learned that the smallest amount of faith can do amazing things. We made bird feeders out of pine cones. Feeding birds is a way to show love and grow in God's way.

On October 27th a Children's Art Workshop will take place. Entitled "Halloween and All Souls Day," the Workshop will involve working with wood and fabric to create an All Souls Blessing Tree. It will be tons of creative fun! Children of all ages are welcome! Cooke Center -10:00-11:00.

Finally, on October 6th, South Church joined with First Church to participate in the Annual CROP Walk to fight hunger. After the walk, First Church provided snacks and drinks for all the walkers! It was a fun time of fellowship and good old-fashioned exercise to help a worthy cause! A special thanks to Pamela Pixley who raised over \$200 in sponsorships!

**Happy belated birthday to Bryce Denault on October 4th.**

Blessings to all, Ann Roche  
Children and Youth Ministries

**WANTED: MORE CHILDREN'S BOOKS**  
 Thanks so much for your generous gifts of books. The good news--kids of Food Pantry families now own these books. The bad news—there are no picture or easy-read books left and very few older children's books.  
 Please bring in what you find or ask your friends and neighbors. There's a great need out there to get kids interested in the wonders of reading as early as we adults can provide. A box is outside the office for donations.  
 Thanks! Sandie Smith

**LECTIONARY FOR NOVEMBER 2013**

Sunday November 3 – Communion Sunday

Isaiah 1:10-18

Psalm 32:1-7

2 Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12

Luke 19:1-10

Sunday, November 10 – Stewardship Sunday

Haggai 1:15b-2:9

Psalm 17:1-9

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17

Luke 20:27-38

Sunday, Nov. 17 – Reorienting and Receiving of Pledges Sunday

Malachi 4:1-2a

Psalm 98

2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

Luke 21:5-19

Sunday, Nov. 17 – House Church/Alternative Worship at 7 p.m.

Tonight Cindy Dickinson will help us explore images of faith, hope, and love in the poetry of Emily Dickinson. We will also share in singing, silence, and the musical talents of Linda Worster.

Sunday, Nov. 24 – Thanksgiving Sunday

Jeremiah 23:1-6

Psalm 46

Colossians 1:11-20

Luke 23:33-43

**FOOD PANTRY**

This past week has been “Turkey and Fixings” signups for Thanksgiving. The food will be distributed on Monday, November 25<sup>th</sup>, from 12 noon to 5:30. The Food Pantries of Pittsfield have been working together to help everyone have a plentiful and happy Thanksgiving.

Thank you to all the individuals and religious, civic, and community groups for donating food and money. We still need turkeys and pies (our part is 40 pies) so any help would be greatly appreciated.

Pittsfield is a very caring and generous community and I feel very fortunate to be living here.

Mary Wheat



Thanksgiving  
Dinner

**“Giving Thanks” Dinner and Concert**

The Annual Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity “Giving Thanks” Dinner and Concert is taking place on November 9<sup>th</sup>. The event is held at The First United Methodist Church, 55 Fenn Street, with a first dinner seating at 4:30 and the second seating at 6:00 with the concert beginning at 7:00.

Please join us to support affordable housing in the Berkshires by enjoying a delicious turkey dinner. Following the dinner, the program will include local musical artist Jack Waldheim with special guest Joanna Redding, launched with a poetry reading by local author Kevin O’Hara. Tickets can be purchased at Wood Bros. Music, Kelly’s Wine & Spirits, Gypsy Joynt, Bagels Too, Becket General Store, Our ReStore, or at our office at 314 Columbus Ave in Pittsfield, as well as online, linked from our Facebook page or website.

This event takes a lot to put on so if you are interested in volunteering, we would love your help – to volunteer please call our office (413) 442-3181 and ask for Luke.

Luke Kaplan

**PAAC INTERFAITH BOOK GROUP**

The Pittsfield Area Council of Congregations (PACC) is pleased to announce the formation of an interfaith book group. In order to keep the group a reasonable size each member of PACC will be able to send two congregants to the first meeting. If we see that there is great interest we will form a second, third, etc., group(s).

The book chosen for the first meeting will be *The Submission* by Amy Waldman. Briefly, this novel explores the issues surrounding the selection of a design for the memorial following the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center. The winning selection was submitted by an American born, Muslim architect. There are many issues and concerns to explore in this novel. The book is available at the Berkshire Athenaeum, electronic books, book stores, etc.

The first meeting will take place on Tuesday, November 19, at 7:00 pm. at Temple Anshe Amunim, 26 Broad Street. Parking is on the street.

Those interested, contact Alexandra Warshaw at 413-443-1434 or [awarshaw@nycap.rr.com](mailto:awarshaw@nycap.rr.com)

## MAY MATTOON NOTES

Walking into the church Parlor to a May Mattoon luncheon is always a pleasant, cheerful experience. This time was no exception. The tables were set with bouquets of brilliant fall colors of gold and orange leaves. Small witches and scarecrows sat among the leaves. Dishes full of sweet Halloween treats completed the scene.

Will Garrison, curator of Arrowhead Museum, presented our program at this meeting. The museum was the former home of Hermann Melville. Will showed beautiful slides of the interior including its lovely furnishings, along with mannequins displaying period dresses. Many improvements have been made to the exterior including a new front porch. To the north, a beautiful view of Mount Greylock can be seen. The outside of the museum has been newly painted.

Will also presented a history of the Melville Family and how they came to live on Holmes Road. Back in Melville's time, a quick walk through the woods behind the house brought one to the home of Melville's uncle, which has expanded to become the Pittsfield Country Club. It was a very enlightening presentation. Will has a knack of bringing history to life.

After the presentation, it was voted to donate \$200 to Arrowhead via the Berkshire Historical Society.

May Mattooners have forwarded a get-well card to Diane Leavitt. Husband Tom assured us that she is doing great – walking and driving. We are looking forward to having her in our midst again. It was noted that Judie Grady is doing well and improving day by day. However, she is still in a brace. We all send love and get-well wishes.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>. Bring a sandwich and join us. Program at this time will be projects for the November 9<sup>th</sup> Craft Fair. Hostesses are Ruth Campbell, Pam Garrett, and Sara Adams. Please remember to bring toilet articles for the Food Pantry. Donations of shampoo, bath soap, men and women's deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and combs will be greatly appreciated.

Alice Gallup



## LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

We have been busy planning for the Harvest Craft Fair on November 9<sup>th</sup>. The South Church crafts, flowers, bake sale, and silent auction (Miniature Christmas Trees) will be in Barrett Hall and the outside vendors will once again be in the Parlor and Red Carpet area.



There are so many beautiful things for our craft table, but too many to list here. So you will just have to stop by to see for yourself.

Don't forget to buy your Raffle Tickets for the **Quilt, Jewelry Box, Money Tree and Painting**. This is the last year that we will have a Jewelry Box so you better not miss a chance to take a chance.

Kerry Sullivan is running the kitchen this year for the luncheon. She will do a wonderful job I am sure!

We hope to see all of you at the Harvest Craft Fair on November 9<sup>th</sup> sometime between 9:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

DON'T MISS THE FUN!!

Marge Demary

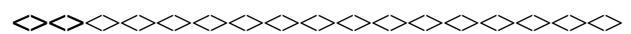
## LORD AND TAYLOR

It is FALL and the Thrift Shop has become very busy with new and regular customers, enjoying our merchandise and buying quite a lot. We have been able to give the church \$600 this month. The total for the year is now \$5600.



We thank all of you for your generous and continuing donations. Our volunteers are steadfast and enjoy their time working together. It takes all of us together to make this enterprise thrive.

Nancy de Forest  
and Audra Kinner



“Faith is the word that describes the direction our feet start moving when we find that we are loved. Faith is stepping out into the unknown with nothing to guide us but a hand just beyond our grasp.”

Frederick Buechner

## **CAPITAL CAMPAIGN APPROVED**

Sunday, October 27, at a special meeting, the members of South Church approved a three-year Capital Campaign for \$200,000 with a stretch goal of \$225,000.

Before the vote, John Robertson presented the list of capital projects to be addressed by the Campaign. They include: Steeple repair, \$25,000 (plus \$50,000 from a bequest ); Kitchen Upgrades \$34,000; Roofs, \$61,000 (repairs for Parish House; and replacement for Sanctuary); Exterior painting, \$30,000; Campaign expenses \$10,000,(including consultant); Mission, \$20,000 (includes \$10,000 toward the Walk-In Cooler/Freezer); Contingency and unanticipated occurrences (such as a furnace failure) \$20,000. Sanctuary improvements and a Capital Maintenance Fund will be included if the stretch goal is reached.

John cited the work of Dale Prindle and the Trustees in gathering complex bids for the anticipated work. They also handled the pre-campaign projects, which were completed with funds from generous bequests. Dale has acted as Clerk of the Works in faithful and exemplary fashion.

Jennifer Davis, UCC consultant, presented the results of the Campaign Feasibility Study, conducted with Dr. Jay Terbush on the last weekend of September. Their report noted the extraordinary level of good will and excitement about South Church expressed by the members they interviewed. Copies of the Feasibility Study have been forwarded by email to members, and are available from the office.

After some discussion, the votes were taken.

The congregation also approved hiring Dr. Jay Terbush, currently serving as Interim Minister in East Longmeadow, as the UCC fund-raising consultant. He will train and support the Steering Committee, but his larger role will be to help the church go through a faith-raising experience as the campaign progresses. The active phase will launch in February and conclude by April.

John Robertson and Mary Rentz have agreed to co-chair the campaign. They will immediately begin gathering a Campaign Committee with the first meeting scheduled November 5, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Parlor. Much of the work will be done in smaller committees, for which much help will be needed. Pam Garrett will act as Campaign Treasurer. The Campaign will be in a quiet phase until the kick-off in February, and will conclude by April 1.  
~Mary Rentz - 442-6732

## **MISSION MOMENT**

The Mission Board has taken on a November project that would target Conte Community School and Morningside Community School. We are looking for donations of warm clothing for the children in kindergarten through 5th grade. Some items of interest would be hats, scarves, mittens, socks, and jackets. We would welcome used items as long as they are clean and ready to wear.



Our timeline is to donate the items by Thanksgiving, so it would be great if all items were collected by November 24th to be delivered to the schools at the beginning of the week before Thanksgiving. We will set up an area in the Parlor where the donations can be made. We welcome whatever donations you could make to help the children who may need them as winter approaches. Thank you!!

Jean Robertson  
for the Mission Board

## **SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Through 10/1/2013

	YTD Actual	ANNUAL Budget
Income		
Operating	\$134,114	\$174,502
Expenses		
Salaries	\$102,476	\$ 146,230
Operating	<u>\$60,158</u>	<u>\$ 80,200</u>
Total	\$162,634	\$ 226,430
Net Surplus (Deficit)	\$(28,520)	\$ (51,928)

This statement is a condensed version of the Treasurer's report using YTD data for the first nine months of 2013.

Dale Prindle,  
Chairman, Board of Trustees





***SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH***

**ANNUAL HARVEST CRAFT FAIR**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup>**

**9:30 A.M. -- 3 P.M.**

**25 LOCAL CRAFTERS AND VENDORS**

**BAKE SALE**

**SOUTH CHURCH CRAFTS**

**LUNCHEON**

*See separate article on page 6*

**SILENT AUCTION**

*See separate article on page 6*

**Chinese Auction**

*Themed Gift Baskets*

**Raffle**

*Featuring Original Art Work by Bob Hill,  
Quilt, handmade by the Ladies Benevolent Society,  
Jewelry Box, hand crafted by George Lovejoy,  
and a Money Tree*

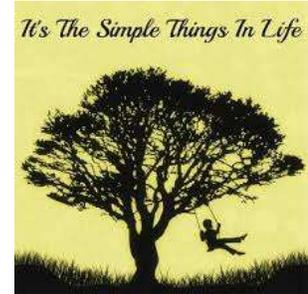
**Ways you can be of help:**

- Donations of NEW items to fill Themed Gift Baskets
- Help putting the baskets together, Thursdays, Oct. 31 and Nov. 7 at 9:30 –noon.
- Donations of non-perishable items for the luncheon  
(canned tuna, saltine crackers, coffee or potato chips)
- Pie Making: Friday, Nov. 8, 9:30 – See Kerry's Sullivan's article on p. 6
- Set up for the Fair Thursday, November 7<sup>th</sup>.
- Assistance with parking cars

Contact Mary Wheat (442-3706) or Pat Hill (413-243-1361) to volunteer or for further information.



# The Simple Things In Life



I am hereby officially tendering my resignation as an adult. I have decided I would like to accept the responsibilities of an 8 year-old again.

I want to go to McDonald's and think that it's a four-star restaurant.

I want to sail sticks across fresh mud puddles and make a sidewalk with rocks.

I want to think M&Ms are better than money because you can eat them.

I want to lie under a big oak tree and run a lemonade stand with my friends on a hot summer's day.

I want to return to a time when life was simple: When all you knew were colors, multiplication tables, and nursery rhymes, but that didn't bother you, because you didn't know that you didn't know and you didn't care.

All you knew was to be happy because you were blissfully unaware of all the things that would make you worried or upset.

I want to think the world is fair. That everyone is honest and good.

I want to believe that anything is possible. I want to be oblivious to the complexities of life and be overly excited by the little things again.

I want to live simple again. I don't want my day to consist of computer crashes, mountains of paperwork, depressing news, how to survive more days in the month than there is money in the bank, gossip, illness, and the loss of loved ones.

I want to believe in the power of smiles, hugs, a kind word, truth, justice, peace, dreams, the imagination, and making angels in the snow.

So...here's my checkbook and my car-keys, my credit card bills and my 401K statements. I am officially resigning from adulthood.

Submitted by Pat Politis

# November

# 2013

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
					1 Lord & Tailor 10 am – 4 pm AA 6:15 pm	2 Habitat Work Day 8 am – 2 pm AA 10:15 am Church Women United 10 a.m. Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm
3 <b>DAY LIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS</b> Sunday Worship With Communion 10 am Women's Book Club 11:30 am UC Berk Assoc. Gathering 3 pm	4 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	5 May Mattoon Luncheon 12 noon Men's Forum 12 noon	6 Food Pantry 8 – 11 am UCC Clergy Meeting 12 noon St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	7 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Spiritual Support Group 6:30 pm Chancel Choir 7 pm	8 Lord & Tailor 10 am- 4 pm AA 6:15 pm Set-Up for Craft Fair	9 <b>HARVEST CRAFT FAIR</b> 9:30 am- 3 pm
10 Stewardship Sunday Worship 10 am	11 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	12 Men's Forum 12 noon Diaconate 7 pm	13 Food Pantry 8 – 11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm Trustees 6 pm	14 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Spiritual Support Group 6:30 pm Chancel Choir 7 pm	15 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 p.m. Turkey Sign-Ups 11-2 AA 6:15 pm	16 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12 noon-4 pm Pittsfield Squares 7pm
17 Dedication Sunday Worship 10 am House Church 7 pm	18 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	19 Men's Forum 12 noon Mission Board 7 pm	20 Food Pantry 8-11 am Berkshire Place Worship 10:45 am St. Joe's Dinner 5:00 pm	21 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Spiritual Support Group 6:30 pm Chancel Choir 7 pm	22 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm AA 6:15 pm	23 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12 noon-4 pm
24 Thanksgiving Sunday Worship 10 am	25 Pittsfield Food Pantries Turkey Distribution 12:00 noon – 5:30 pm Yarn Spinners 7 pm	26 Men's Forum 12 noon	27 Food Pantry 8 – 11 am UCC Berk Assoc Church & Ministry 4 pm St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm UCC Berk Assoc Executive Comm 6 pm	28 <b>THANKSGIVING</b>	29 OFFICE CLOSED Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm AA 6:15 pm	30 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12 noon-4 pm

**NOTE: December Epistle Deadline – Sunday, December 1, 2013 at 11 am**