



# *Epistle*

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## **SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

***UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST***

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September 2014

This was a wonderful summer! As a result of combining vacation and some sabbatical time, Tora and I took a six week road trip from Maine to Missouri. At various points our daughters joined us and all along the way we were aware of a holy presence. One afternoon in Maine while daughter, Lia, and I kayaked on the Penobscot, talking over her career plans and watching eagles, two porpoises popped up swimming in tandem. We were left speechless. A few days later Tora and I arrived in Washington D.C. rendezvousing with daughter, Meg, at a bagel shop after she and a friend finished a morning run to the National Mall. We spent the day discussing her future and exploring out of the way places. One evening I sat reading a novel on the grounds of the Smithsonian Research Center, in Front Royal, Virginia, watching “Maned Wolves”, an endangered species of hyena-like canines from South America. Tora was at a conference there, busy with teachers from communities all along the Appalachian Trail learning new ways of introducing her students to the AT and the outdoors. While there I hiked portions of the Trail in the Shenandoah National Forest—crossing paths with a couple of bears—and with Tora we drove parts of the Sky Line Drive—a stunning ridge top road. We also had a remarkable four day spiritual retreat while in the Shenandoah’s with friends from Kripalu, whose journey into the love of God parallels our own. We had rich conversations sharing the wisdom of Hindu sutras, Biblical stories, poems, and all that arose from our hearts. We also took walks and I helped pour cement for a low wall they were building. I loved this blending of sharing, praying, walking, and working. It’s an ancient model for spiritual vitality in both East and West.

We spent a number of days with Tora’s dad in Columbus, Ohio, who turned ninety one in August. He still continues his medical practice part-time. Again, we had wonderful, spacious conversations. Eventually we arrived in Branson, Missouri, for a family wedding. I conducted the service for my youngest cousin and her fiancé. All our family was gathered. I have seven cousins and we had not all been in one room together since 1969. It was joyous being together, again. On the way home Tora and I spent a day at Cahokia, a UNESCO world heritage site outside of St. Louis. Cahokia is a North American version of the Mayans—a large civilization that built huge pyramid structures a thousand years ago in the Mississippi bottom lands. Upon returning home we still had one more trip to make. Lia was moving into a small efficiency apartment in South Philly and needed her old bunk bed and a venerable van to help smooth the way. It is so rewarding to help your children move into ever-larger identities. Her 150 pound anvil and welder are now resting comfortably in the garage waiting for the day when a certain artist can afford a studio of her own.

And then there was another dimension to this six week sojourn. I spent each morning reflecting on my life from a spiritual perspective. I have often thought the spiritual life consists of my search for God. But what if this is misguided? What if the spiritual life is actually God searching for us, laboring with infinite patience to bring us to birth into an identity large and whole? Have I been the one who is elusive, hard to find, distracted by many things? What happens when you look at your life this way? That’s what I’ve been exploring this summer—and it has been very fruitful. Thank you for the gift of time. Peace.

EPISTLE

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The next *Epistle* deadline is Sept. 28th at 11 am.

**OUR CHURCH FAMILY**

***In Memoriam***

This world is not conclusion,  
a sequel stands beyond;  
invisible as music,  
but positive as sound.

Emily Dickinson

- Emily Jahn** July 12
- Susan Schroeter** July 9
- Adrienne Auger** (former member and choir participant) July 7

**CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS**

As of late, I have been contemplating the idea of living in harmony. This contemplation was sparked by the children's lesson of August 17<sup>th</sup>. From the Whole People of God curriculum I quote:

"Living together as the human family has never been easy, right from the days of the Garden of Eden. Even living together in small families, within the human family, has many difficulties and challenges. Daily we are re-forming new relationships in a global faith context, and perceiving old barriers that need to be broken down in order that God's vision of wholeness comes to all the earth."

Monday, as I was working, I heard fellow

associates talking a buzz about a shooting here in Pittsfield on Tyler Street. As I drove home that day, listening to NPR, I heard detailed information of the shooting of Michael Brown and the rising unrest in Ferguson MO. Later, while watching the evening news, I heard of the air strikes in Iraq and the long unrest between Israel and Palestine.

As individuals, what "tools" or coping skills do we possess to better receive and digest all of this? For myself, and many other Christians I would imagine, it is the presence of faith; a foundation that holds up hope and a belief that "God's plan is grace for all." No, it doesn't make these things go away or directly improve them, but it helps to put it in perspective. It creates a positive environment to contemplate the situations at hand.

Why do I mention all of this? I believe all children deserve a Christian education. One that will raise the students' awareness of the importance of being kind and loving while helping them to build a foundation of faith, no matter how young. They will learn and experience the wonderful feeling of giving back. Providing them with these benefits is my responsibility as a Christian Educator. I have to wonder, in the busy, fast paced life many families live, is this understood or even thought about?

"Our world still has much to learn about how to treat each other and about how to live in harmony. Our hope lies in Christ who has shown us the way."  
– Whole People of God

The South Church Christian Education Program for the 2014-2015 year will open on **Sunday,**

**September 14th.** If you are a parent or guardian or simply know of a child who you feel could benefit from the program, please have them join us at 10am in Cooke Center at the church.



**Summer Birthday: Ian Ryer – August 30<sup>th</sup>**  
**7-years old**

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at 413-447-8889.

Ann Roche, Children/Youth Director

## LECTIONARY FOR SEPTEMBER

### Lectionary for September 7 – Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 11:1-10

Psalm 149

Romans 13:8-14

Matthew 18:15-20

### Sunday, September 14 – Sunday School Opening

*We welcome our Chancel Choir into worship this morning as they help lift our hearts and voices in song. In addition the Church School resumes a new year of learning and growth. Today they will be introduced to their fall theme: Gathering into the Sacred Circle. They will also be preparing for next week's Intergenerational worship celebration.*

Exodus 14:19-31

Psalm 114

Romans 14:1-12

Matthew 18:21-35

### Sunday, September 21 – Circle Sunday:

#### Intergenerational Worship

*Today, we will draw the circle of God's love wide and deep as we focus on our participation in the "sacred circle" of both ancient and present witnesses to God's presence in our lives and world. We will tell the story of faith through voices from long ago, responsive readings, and with songs that "Draw the Circle Wide." We will also dedicate and bless our teachers, leaders, and students as a new year of learning begins.*

Exodus 12:1-14

Psalm 145:1-8

Philippians 1:21-30

Matthew 20:1-16

### Sunday, September 28 – Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 17:1-7

Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16

Philippians 2:1-13

Matthew 21:23-32

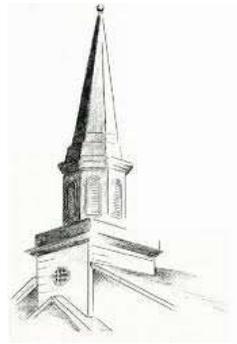
## TRUSTEE REPORT

It's hard not to notice that activity around the church doesn't slow down for the summer. Under the watchful eye of the former trustee Dale Prindle, the capital fund steeple repair has been progressing nicely. Whether viewing from near or far, the upgrades are beautiful. The work should be done within a few weeks. Also near completion is better ventilation for the compressors that run the new refrigeration units for the pantry.

We hope to get a new roof on the parish house this fall. Bids for painting the outside of our buildings are being sought for the work to begin next spring.

Our year-to-date annual budget after a rough winter is becoming more balanced. As usual, pledge income has been lagging over the summer months. This is a good time to check your pledge status and catch up if necessary.

John Robertson, Trustees, Chair



## FOOD PANTRY

The Food Pantry has been a very busy place this summer. Last week there were 427 families and this week 449. The end of summer with back-to-school expenses, a holiday, and pay checks received after Labor Day, all add up to a very serious lack of food.

One mother called very upset because one of her two children was crying. The little girl was very hungry and there was no food to give her. Another mother called saying the program in the school for free snacks was cancelled since the needed grant had not been received. She had no money to send her kindergarten daughter to school with a snack. Luckily, we could supply her with raisins, applesauce and orange juice. These are just two of the many people who come hoping for something to eat.

Unfortunately, we have very little meat to share and peanut butter, eggs and cheese come only once a month. So for September we are looking for donations of Peanut Butter. Thank you for your help!

Mary Wheat

## MAY MATTOON

On July 20<sup>th</sup> eight May Mattooners attended a Tanglewood concert featuring violinist Joshua Bell-an excellent presentation. We gathered under the shade of the trees and snacked on all the “goodies” brought by the group. Also entertaining was “people watching” as they passed by on the sidewalk, some nattily attired and some hardly attired at all. It was a very pleasant day which we all enjoyed.



Our next gathering will be September 8<sup>th</sup>, a Monday evening, for a covered-dish supper at 6 pm. There will be no set program for this gathering. A business meeting will be held and the rest of the evening will be spent socializing and catching up on summer activities.

Don't forget your potluck dish, toilet articles for the Pantry, and your own place setting. Hostesses will be Ruth Austin, Joyce Brown, and Karen Allender. *See you then!*

Alice Gallup



## LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

Fall is upon us and what a beautiful time of year. But no matter the season we are here in the Parlor each week working on quilts and other projects.

We finished a unique quilt for Diane St Martin and are now working on a beautiful butterfly quilt that Evelyn Eastwood started but was unable to complete.

The Harvest Fair (November 8<sup>th</sup>) is not too far away, so work on those projects is in full swing.

It is still our hope that some of you will come and join us. Ladies Benevolent isn't just about sewing; it is a time to spend with others talking, laughing, and sometimes crying. It is a great way to spend some quality time and enjoy some delicious desserts.

Hope to see you!

Marge Demary

## LORD & TAILOR NEWS

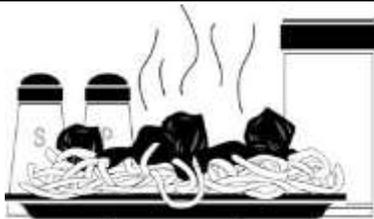
We had an exciting and very successful tag sale on Saturday August 23. We made about \$1200. between the shop and the sale, and the \$1200. will be given to the church. This makes the total \$4450. so far this year.

The sale was very popular, and we had everything for sale from A to Z. Many, many thanks go to the volunteers who helped set up this titanic of a sale and to those who worked in the shop or in Barrett Hall. It could not have happened without you all.

Now we are heading into the fall season, and the coats and sweaters will be appearing in the shop. We still have the summer sale, and what there is of summer clothes will be 50% off. This sale will probably last for only two weeks, however, so, last call for summer!

Thank you, as usual, to you all who donate and/or work in and patronize the shop.

Nancy deForest



## PASTA DINNER

**Saturday, Sept. 27 at 5:30 PM**  
**Barrett Hall**

A delicious meal of pasta and meatballs with all the “fixings” (including dessert) is in the planning stages. Adults - \$12, children (12 and under) -\$5  
Proceeds will be used to assist with heating expenses of South Church.

Anyone who would like to help in any way, please contact Pat Hill, Mary Wheat or Pam Garrett.

# SUPPORT Diabetes AWARENESS

**BERKSHIRE DIABETES WALK**  
Saturday, September 20, 2014 9:00 AM  
Ashuwillicook Trail- Farnum's Crossing

This fall is the 18<sup>th</sup> year Roger's Team has Walked for Diabetes. The team is named after my brother, Roger Grant, who died in 1984, at age 43, from multiple complications of Type I Diabetes.

Since 2012 the walk has been sponsored by Berkshire Medical Center with the support of Roger's Team. Proceeds will support BMC's Diabetes Patient Needs Fund. The purpose of this fund is to cover costs of urgent diabetes expenses and diabetes education of patients in financial need.

We would love to have you walk with us and have others sponsor you. If not, we welcome your contributions. Join us or send a check, with ROGER'S TEAM noted in the memo section, to:

Patient Needs Fund, Diabetes Education  
725 North Street,  
Pittsfield, MA 01201

or call (413) 395-7942 with any questions – ask for Tammy or Jan. All contributions are tax deductible and will be acknowledged. Our goal for this year is \$3000.

Audra J. Kinner, Captain of Roger's Team  
3 Smith Road  
New Ashford, MA 01237  
(413) 458-0971 audrajkinner@aol.com

THANK YOU to Paula Haskell for substituting as editor of the *Epistle* while I was on vacation. In addition to her regular duties of copying, colating, folding and addressing over 200 copies, she stepped in as formatter and editor as well, and managed to get the newsletter delivered to the homes on time, both electronically and by regular mail. A feat well accomplished!!

Priscilla Anthony, *Epistle* Editor

## MISSION UPDATE

Although the Mission Board has not met this summer, we have been busy. The Coffee House continued through the summer with Linda Wooster and David Grover delighting us with their own inspiring songs, and nostalgic music of artists /past.

As we begin to look to this next year's projects, we would like to include the congregation as we look to fund charities and organizations, and highlight them at our Coffee House concerts. If you know of an organization or charity that you feel would be worthy of some funds and could educate us on what's happening in our community, we would take this into consideration as we move forward. And although we have received very positive comments on what we have now, we would also welcome any feedback you may want to share with us as to our venue, music, food table, and other. More info will follow next month as we set our schedule.



Jean Robertson  
Missions, Chair

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## WOMAN'S BOOK CLUB

*When you re-read a classic you do not see more in the book than you did before; you see more in you than was there before.*

The Woman's Book Club will meet about 15 minutes after church on September the 7th. Bring suggestions for books you think would be interesting to read and discuss. If you can't be with us on Sunday, please feel free to send me your suggestions at [plkueppers@gmail.com](mailto:plkueppers@gmail.com) or call at 518-441-5116.

Pam Garrett

## LABOR DAY

"Labor Day is a glorious holiday because your child will be going back to school the next day. It would have been called Independence Day, but that name was already taken."

~Bill Dodds



His name was Fleming, and he was a poor Scottish farmer. One day, while trying to eke out a living for his family, he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby bog. He dropped his tools and ran to the bog. There, mired to his waist in black mud, was a terrified boy, screaming and struggling to free himself. Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse surroundings. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy farmer Fleming had saved.

"I want to repay you," said the nobleman. "You saved my son's life."

"No, I can't accept payment for what I did," the Scottish farmer replied, waving off the offer. At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family hovel.

"Is that your son?" the nobleman asked.

"Yes," the farmer replied proudly.

"I'll make you a deal. Let me take him and give him a good education. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll grow to a man you can be proud of."

And that he did. In time farmer Fleming's son graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin.

Years afterward, the nobleman's son was stricken with pneumonia.

What saved him? Penicillin.

The name of the nobleman? Lord Randolph Churchill

His son's name? Sir Winston Churchill.

Someone once said what goes around comes around.

Work like you don't need the money  
Love, like you've never been hurt.  
Dance like nobody's watching.

Friends are a very rare jewel, indeed. They make you smile and encourage you to succeed. They lend an ear, they share a word of praise, and they always want to open their hearts to us.

# September 2014

## South Congregational Church

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
	<b>1</b> <b>LABOR DAY</b>	<b>2</b> Spiritual Support Group 10 am Men's Summer Forum 12 noon	<b>3</b> Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am UCC Clergy 12 noon St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm Trustees 6 pm	<b>4</b> Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Ladies Benevolent Quilting 9:30 am	<b>5</b> Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm AA 6:15 pm	<b>6</b> AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor CLOSED Memorial Service for Emily Jahn 1 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm
<b>7</b> Worship 10 am with Communion  Women's Book Club 11:30 am	<b>8</b> May Mattoon Covered Dish Supper 6 pm	<b>9</b> Spiritual Support Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon Diaconate 7 pm	<b>10</b> Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	<b>11</b> Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Ladies Benevolent Quilting 9:30 am Chancel Choir 7 pm	<b>12</b> Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm AA 6:15 pm	<b>13</b> AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 2-4 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm
<b>14</b> Worship 10 am <b>Sunday School Opening</b>	<b>15</b> Yarn Spinners 7 pm	<b>16</b> Spiritual Support Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon Mission Board 7 pm	<b>17</b> Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am Berkshire Place Worship 10:45 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	<b>18</b> Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Ladies Benevolent Quilting 9:30 am Thanksgiving Angels 1 pm Chancel Choir 7 pm	<b>19</b> Lord & Tailor 10 am-4pm AA 6:15 pm	<b>20</b> AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm Pittsfield Squares 7 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm
<b>21</b> Sunday Worship 10:30 am Circle Sunday Intergenerational Worship with Art, Music & Imagination "Inward Journeys" Gathering 7 pm	<b>22</b> Yarn Spinners 7 pm	<b>23</b> Spiritual Support Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon Church Council 7 pm	<b>24</b> Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	<b>25</b> Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Ladies Benevolent Quilting 9:30 am Chancel Choir 7 pm	<b>26</b> Lord & Tailor 10 am-4pm AA 6:15 pm	<b>27</b> AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm <b>Spaghetti Dinner to benefit South Church Heating 5:30 p.m.</b> Al-Anon 7:30 pm
<b>28</b> Worship 10 am  <b>Epistle Deadline 11 am</b>	<b>29</b> Yarn Spinners 7 pm	<b>30</b> Spiritual Support Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon	<b>OCT 1</b> Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am UCC Clergy Noon St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	<b>OCT 2</b> Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Ladies Benevolent Quilting 9:30 am Chancel Choir 7 pm	<b>OCT 3</b> Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm Pittsfield Promise 10 am AA 6:15 pm	<b>OCT 4</b> AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm Al-Anon 7:30 pm