



Epistle

SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

110 South Street
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(413)-442-7357

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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March 2015

Here we are in the season of Lent, traditionally a penitential season that often involved making small sacrifices in imitation of Christ. Fortunately the season has gradually evolved into something more intentional. Here at South in addition to Sunday worship during which we will walk with Jesus towards Jerusalem there will be other ways to draw close to the steadfast love of God. I am offering a Lenten study of the Lord's Prayer from 11:30-12:30 on Sunday mornings following worship. Most of us learned this prayer in childhood and we sense something of its depth and power. But did you know that in its structure the Lord's Prayer is modeled on the creation story of Genesis 1 and like that story helps us remember the deep, holy, goodness of life. Like the creation story, The Lord's Prayer begins with God in heaven and gradually moves downward into the practicalities of life where God empowers us to live with daily bread, daily forgiveness, and daily guidance. Using this prayer is a way to be empowered for life. If you would like to learn more come join us on any of the Sundays in Lent.

Lent is also a season for deepening our vision of the wider world. One practical way to do this would be to volunteer at the food pantry or at St. Joseph's Kitchen. Help is always appreciated. Speak to Mary Wheat about ways to help at the Pantry or to Mary Rentz about assisting at St. Joe's. Also during this season a number of us have undertaken an artistic project to help raise awareness in our wider community about the life realities we see in our food ministry every week. On Good Friday a photographic exhibit will be unveiled that will tell the human story of local struggling families. Here is the rough draft of my press release for the event: "Each and every week hundreds of Berkshire families make use of the food pantries and hot meal sites located mostly in local houses of worship. Who are these neighbors of ours who on a daily basis struggle to eke out a living in this beautiful and scenic area? With 'Take Another Look', photographer Nick DeCandia, hopes to make visible the dignity, strength, and challenges of those trying to feed themselves and their families on minimum wage salaries or other minimal incomes. This evocative photo exhibit will premiere at the Lichtenstein Art Center on Good Friday, April 3. 'Take Another Look' will include a video of the project as it was developing. There will also be on display thought provoking statements from interviews with pantry and community meal clients along with those who volunteer in these efforts to assist our neighbors in need. On Sunday afternoon, April 12, there will be a viewing of the documentary, "A Place at the Table", at the Berkshire Museum, examining in depth the rise of food insecurity in our nation. A panel discussion following the film will invite creative responses to this ongoing struggle for basic human dignity. Through the photos, video, words, and film 'Take Another Look' seeks to develop a more informed citizenry which is the bedrock of cultural vitality in a democratic society and is a vital step in realizing hopeful change." Hold this project in your prayers for it feels very important.

In addition to these projects there will be a Lenten Workshop following worship on the 15th and with the Diaconate's help we will hold our South Church Seder on Maundy Thursday, April 2, at 5:45 before our Tenebrae Service at 7:30 p.m. What a remarkable season for drawing close to the steadfast love of God!

EPISTLE

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Food Pantry	Mary Wheat
May Mattoon	Alice Gallup
Ladies Benevolent	Marge Demary
Men's Forum	John Anthony
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The next *Epistle* deadline is March 29th at 11 AM.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

In memoriam:

Rev. James N. McCutcheon - January 21

Jim served as Assistant Minister for Education during the 1950's. Excerpts from his obituary and reflections on his ministry at South Church appear on page 5.

Anniversary Congratulations:

Paul & Nan Whiton Slonaker observed their 25th Wedding Anniversary on February 12, 2015. Rev. Joel married them at South Congregational Church in 1990, during his first year at our church!

Paul continues to recover at Heartland of Marion, from his August 25, 2014 stroke. The Slonaker's address is 123 Pearl St. Richwood, OH 43344.

Gerry Whiton

FOOD BANK TRAINING

Dear Rev. Joel, Paula and Mary,

Thank you, thank you, thank you for all of your help with Monday's "Advocacy 101" training! From allowing us to use the Parlor, to setting up the space, and Mary providing food and drink, we are deeply and sincerely appreciative . . . we couldn't have done it without you!

With much gratitude,
Michelle Geoffroy, ATI Coordinator
& The Food Bank Team



“A memory is what is left when something happens and does not completely unhappen.”

And that is the blessing I have of the beautiful tribute paid to me as editor of the *Epistle* for 30 years on Sunday, January 25th.

The image of the vertical banners, created from 30 years of the newsletter's front pages and held high by 30 congregants, lined the walls of the Parlor. The monetary gifts to the Norman Rockwell Museum, and the lovingly-written response from the museum's Director, the delicious cake, and elegant yellow roses, all completed a storybook setting.

All of the above was a bit more than I could intelligently process on the spot, and my suspicion is I failed to adequately convey my utmost surprise, my joy and thankfulness to you.

“Thank you” are weak words to cover the scope of my emotions, however, I do thank you most sincerely for a memory that will never “unhappen.”

With deepest appreciation,
Priscilla Anthony

FOOD PANTRY

Despite the snow, slippery conditions, and cold, 370 to 400 families continue to come to the Pantry. Many are walkers with some coming on scooters. We covered one cold man on a scooter with a blanket to help him stay warm on his trip back up North Street.

We also learned this week that sometimes what we think we see is not always accurate. People were noticing and wondering about a man getting out of a Hummer. He is a retired man with a wife who works a minimal-wage job, and they have five children. His oldest daughter bought the car for him with money she received when she came home from the service as he had no car. Why a Hummer? I don't know.

Peanut butter and tuna are great proteins which everyone needs in this very cold winter. Please continue to bring them in--they are much appreciated. Thank you for your help!

Mary Wheat

BOOK OFFERINGS FOR FOOD PANTRY

I know that my partner, Jean Bousquet, considers the books she donates as offerings. And they are splendid! But, as the widow in the Bible who gave all she could, whatever anyone gives is welcome wholeheartedly.



I invite everyone to give one book or more to bring a smile to a child, a teen, their parents, or their grandparents. As a retired teacher, I know that sometimes it takes only one book to spark the student's interest in reading more.

Thank you for what you can do.

Sandie Smith

EASTER MEMORIALS

With snow blowing around and frigid temperatures, it is hard to think about Easter and spring. However, Easter does come at the beginning of April. Please send requests for Easter memorials to Mary Wheat, 23 Ivy Lane (442-3706) by Sunday, March 29th.

SOUTH CHURCH BOOK CLUB



The Book Club is a lively group of women who love to read and discuss the books we have selected. Our upcoming books and the meeting dates are as follows:

March 1st - The Heathen School by Demos

April 12th - The Girl on the Train by Hawkins

May 3rd - Sara & Eleanor by Pottker We have planned a trip to the Roosevelt's homes in Hyde Park and probably lunch at the CIA on May the 8th.

June 7th - Mill Children by Marshall

We will be planning a trip to North Adams to see where the mill children worked. Details to be announced.

Please join us shortly after the church service to discuss our current book and help choose future books.

Pam Garrett

LECTIONARY FOR MARCH

Sunday, March 1 – Second Sunday in Lent –
Worship Returns to the Sanctuary

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Psalms 22:23-31

Romans 4:13-25

Mark 8:31-38 or Mark 9:2-9

Sunday, March 8 – Third Sunday in Lent

Exodus 20:1-17

Psalms 19

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

John 2:13-22

Sunday, March 15 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

Lenten Workshop following Worship with crafts for children and Lord's Prayer Study for adults and a pot-luck lunch. All are welcome

Numbers 21:4-9

Psalms 107:1-3, 17-22

Ephesians 2:1-10

John 3:14-21

Sunday, March 22 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Psalms 51:1-12 or Psalm 119:9-16

Hebrews 5:5-10

John 12:20-33

Sunday, March 29 – Palm/Passion Sunday

Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16

Psalms 118:1-2, 19-29

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Philippians 2:5-11

Mark 14:1-15:47 or Mark 15:1-39 (40-47)

“Inward Journeys” – Sunday, March 15 at 7 p.m.

Explorations of Lent and the journey into God's wilderness, with Rev. Huntington, Tora Huntington, Linda Worster, creative musician and Eileen Mahoney, creative artist. All are welcome.



is coming!!!!

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

“Give, and Change the World”

By the grace of God, all of us have the power to give, and the gifts we give make the world more the way God intended it to be – a place where everyone has what they need. Together, we can achieve a fair balance in our world by giving back to God what God has so richly bestowed upon us.

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering reaches those near and far, sometimes changing the life of someone in distress in our congregation or community, and at other times impacting the lives of those we may never meet but who are in desperate need of our compassion and generosity. OGHs provides support for health, education, refugee, agricultural, and emergency relief initiatives in 138 countries by working with local, national, and global partners. Typhoons in Philippines, tornadoes in Kansas, floods in farmland in Colorado, tsunamis in Southern Asia and Africa, and refugees who came from refugee camps in other countries, vocational education in Honduras, and advocacy help for survivors of horrific, unjust years of institutionalized discrimination and mistreatment are many ways your offering helps others.

We will be collecting for OGHs on Sunday, March 8th. Won't you please give to help change the world! Thank you!

Jean Robertson

LORD AND TAILOR NEWS



It is good that February is a short month, because it has been brutal up to now. Luckily, we have had to close only a couple of times so far this year.

We have an abundance of winter clothes, and with Dale's generous help, uncovered a few more boxes of winter clothes we didn't know we had in our storage closet. As a result, all the clothes are half price, including purses, shoes, and coats, etc. So, come in, tell your friends, bring your friends.

Save the date of Saturday March 21 for our always popular tag sale in Barrett Hall from 9-3. Bring your donations, but please only things in working order. We will need help setting up on Thursday and Friday March 19 and 20, as well as help the day of the sale.

We are able to give the church \$400 this month. Thanks, as always, for all you do to help and encourage us. Anyone who wants to help us on our work days will be most welcome; just call Audra Kinner or Nancy deForest.

MAY MATTOON

May Mattoon met on Tuesday, February 3rd at noon for the usual noontime sandwich luncheon meeting. The table setting theme was, of course, Valentine's Day. Bright red garlands stretched along the tables with tiny red hearts scattered about. Red heart napkins, red cups and heart candies spread over a white table. Very eye catching!

The day of our meeting was bitter cold, but 19 members attended despite the weather. We are a hardy bunch! After our lunch, we were treated to a delicious dessert provided by Shirley Vickery and it received kudos from everyone. Yum-Yum! Hostesses for the meeting were Pam Garrett, Dot Kresge, and Shirley Vickery.

During our business meeting, Mary Rentz suggested the subject of aprons for a future program. Aprons are making a comeback – I think. Everyone agreed it would be very interesting and we look forward to the presentation.

A total of 100 books were provided by the Judie Grady Education Fund to be given out to Food Pantry clientele. The Book Corner has become very popular under the leadership of Sandie Smith and Jean Bousquet. If you are donating used books, it is requested they be clean and in good condition.

The program consisted of a workshop by Bing Honig who provided materials for the making of valentines for loved ones.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 3rd at noon. Hostesses are Pat Hill and Arlene Emerson. The program will be “Underground Railroad” presented by Bertha Lawrence. Bring a sandwich – bring a friend! Don't forget your toilet articles for Food Pantry distribution.

May the weather be warm and favorable. See you then.

Alice Gallup



See the land, her Easter keeping,
Rises as her Maker rose.
Seeds, so long in darkness sleeping,
Burst at last from winter snows.

Charles Kingsley

REV. JAMES N. McCUTCHEON

Brewster, Massachusetts

Reverend James N. McCutcheon passed away on January 21st at the age of 85. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Janet, two sons, a daughter and six grandchildren.

After leaving South Church Jim served as senior pastor at the First Church of Christ in Worcester, MA, the First Congregational Church of Kalamazoo, MI, and Wayzata Community Church in Wayzata, MN. He earned a degree in engineering from Yale, a Bachelor of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary, and during the time he was with us he completed a Doctor of Divinity degree at Harvard.

A celebration of Reverend McCutcheon's life of caring and service to others was held at St. Christopher's Church in Chatham, MA on Saturday, January 31st.

Note: Mrs. McCutcheon's (Janet) address is 40 Sand Bar Lane, Brewster, MA 02631.

REFLECTIONS FROM A SOUTH CHURCH PARISHIONER

Shortly after his arrival in 1951 our new pastor, Raymond Gibson noted that one of his goals for South Church was to introduce a new approach to community building designed to "deepen our faith and vitalize the expression of that faith in our corporate worship and our other activities." That was 64 years ago and while our membership has dwindled dramatically since 1951, we are still following that goal.

In 1957 when our associate pastor Herb Keebler left to become minister of the Congregational Church in Westbrook, Maine we hired Jim McCutcheon, a 28-year old bachelor, to help continue our vitalization program. South Church was moving into the most dynamic growth period in our church's history. Jim's assignment was to serve as Assistant Minister for Education for a rapidly-growing church school and a fledgling adult education program. He arrived to find a church school with over 350 children enrolled and some 230 attending class each week. When he moved on to Worcester in 1960 the church school had grown by another 50 students and was utilizing 50 teachers to cover the curriculum. I was one of those teachers, recruited and trained by Jim and so inspired by his leadership that I remained on staff teaching the high school class for ten years.

In addition to leading our very successful Christian Education program, Jim worked in the community during his tenure at South Church. He felt the Pittsfield High School curriculum was not sufficiently preparing the college bound students for the Student College Aptitude tests and set up a special after school training program for interested students. His classes became an instant success and by the time he left he was coaching young people from across the city to prepare for the test.

The Junior and Senior High School Pilgrim Fellowship programs were part of Jim's responsibility and this quote from the 1959 Senior High Fellowship president, Bob Livingston said it all: "I think an extra special thank you is due to Rev. McCutcheon. Jim is an extra special sort of fellow without whom the entire Fellowship program would be nothing. From teaching the classes for the college entrance exams, to worrying about the seniors being accepted at college, to playing the piano, to hiking and swimming with us, I think I speak for all the members of the Fellowships in saying, 'Rev. McCutcheon thanks a lot—you're a great guy.'"

Fifty-five years later I will echo Bob Livingston by saying, "Rev. McCutcheon thanks a lot—you were a great guy."

John Anthony



Easter Flowers

We have a tradition at South Church of decorating our sanctuary on Easter Sunday with lilies and tulips. If you would like to order a plant in memory or honor of a loved one, please place an order with Mary Wheat. You can choose a lily or a tulip plant at \$15.00 per plant. If you are interested in purchasing a plant, please complete and return this form to Mary with your payment or contact her at 413-442-3706 **by Sunday, March 29th**

Mary Wheat
23 Ivy Lane, Pittsfield, MA 01201

_____ I wish to order and take my **lily** with me after service on Easter, April 5th.

_____ I wish to order and take my **tulip** with me after service on Easter, April 5th.

(If you sign up to take your lily/tulip with you after service, please remember to do so, as we had many left last year.)

_____ I wish to order a **lily** for a shut-in.

_____ I wish to order a **tulip** for a shut-in.

_____ I wish to give a cash gift.

The memorial will read as follows:

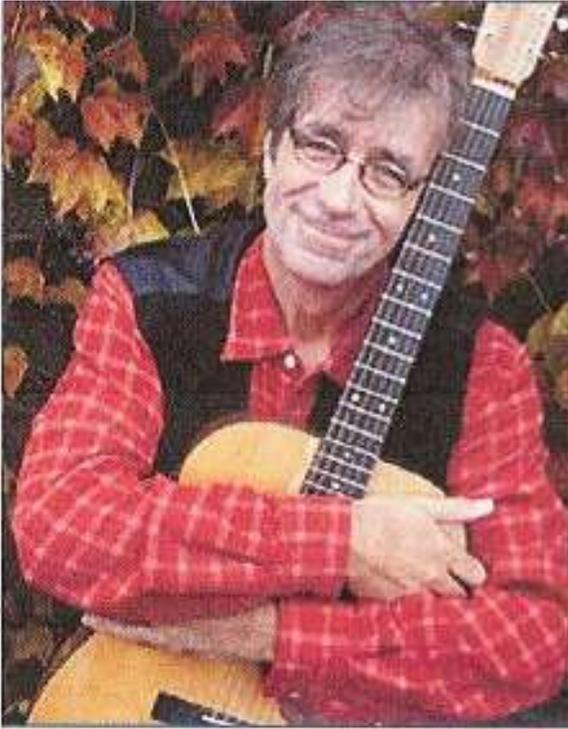
Given by:

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR REQUEST PRIOR TO SUN., MARCH 29

March 2015

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>	
1 2 nd Sunday in Lent Worship in the Sanctuary with Communion 10 am Lord's Prayer Study Group 11:30	2 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	3 "Falling Upward" Study Group 10 am May Mattoon Luncheon 12 noon Men's Forum 12 noon	4 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am UCC Clergy 12 noon St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	5 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Chancel Choir 7 pm	6 Pittsfield Promise of the United Way 8 am Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm AA 6:15 pm	7 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm Al-Anon 7 pm	
8 3 rd Sunday in Lent Worship 10 am Lord's Prayer Study Group 11:30 am	9 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	10 "Falling Upward" Study Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon Diaconate 7 pm	11 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm Trustees 6 pm	12 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Chancel Choir 7 pm	13 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm AA 6:15 pm	14 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm Al-Anon 7 pm	
15 4 th Sunday in Lent Worship 10 am Lord's Prayer Study Group 11:30 am Coffee Hour Collections for the Language Project "Inward Journeys" 7 pm	16 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	17 "Falling Upward" Study Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon Mission Board 7 pm	18 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am Berkshire Place 10:45 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	19 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Ladies Benevolent Chancel Choir 7 pm	20 First Day of Spring! Set-Up for Tag Sale Coffee House Concert 7 p.m.	21 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor TAG SALE 9-3 12-4 pm Dedication of Chapel at new Berkshire Place 11 a.m. Pittsfield Squares 7 pm Al-Anon 7 pm	
22 5 th Sunday in Lent Worship 10 am with Linda Worster Lord's Prayer Study Group 11:30 am	23 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	24 "Falling Upward" Study Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon Church Council 7 pm	25 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	26 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Chancel Choir 7 pm	27 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4pm AA 6:15 pm	28 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm Al-Anon 7 pm	
29 Palm/Passion Sunday Worship 10 am May Mattoon Spring Bake Sale Lord's Prayer Study Group 11:30 am Epistle Deadline 11 am	30 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	31 "Falling Upward" Study Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon					

Bread and Roses *Coffee House*



Friday
March 20, 2015
7:00 pm

Parlor
South Congregational Church
110 South St
Pittsfield, MA

Donations accepted to support
St. Joe's Kitchen/Pantry at South Church
and the musicians

Please join us for an evening of magic with two of the Berkshires best musicians, Linda Worster and David Grover, as they entertain us with a mix of old favorites and original music.



Save these dates for upcoming Coffee Houses

April 17, 2015 – Linda Worster & Mark Kelso

May 15, 2015 – TBA

June 19, 2015 – TBA

The mission of the Coffee House is to support and promote local charities, as well as the musicians, with donations at the door