



Epistle

SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

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

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

March 2016

This past month Rev. Jenny Gregg, Episcopal priest and pastor of Cathedral in the Night—Pittsfield, and I attended a week-long retreat at the Kripalu Yoga Center. Our retreat was titled: “Learning How to Design and Lead Transformative Workshops”. It was a remarkable week, strengthening my skills in crafting small group experiences and introducing me to a diverse group who lead workshops in many settings. Jenny and I are continuing to consult with some of the group who are nearby and plan to visit two leaders doing innovative urban work in Hartford, CT. But, perhaps, the most creative fruit of this retreat so far is that Jenny and I—driving back and forth each day--had time to imagine a new kind of summer intern program. When I discovered that she had some funding and a desire to bring a seminarian to Cathedral for a summer of combining ministry and the arts, I thought we might be able to create a combined internship that would utilize South as a base for ministry and enable us to have an arts component at the Pantry and St. Joe’s Kitchen as well as at Cathedral. St. Stephen’s Church also has an on-site apartment that they are willing to rent out for the summer to such an intern. Having shared this proposal with our Scholarship Committee, we are ready to spread the word and see who God might bring us this summer! Printed below is our ad that will be sent to a number of seminaries and our UCC Area Conference Ministers. Keep this project in your prayers as we embark on this adventure in collaborative and potentially transformative ministry.

Are you a seminarian with an interest in the arts who is seeking a different kind of ministry experience to enhance your overall pastoral training? South Church, UCC, in Pittsfield, MA, in conjunction with Cathedral in the Night, a local outdoor worshipping community, are together offering an innovative ministry experience that will enable a seminarian to explore the intersection of art, worship, and social justice in a growing collaborative effort. This internship offers the opportunity to assist in crafting weekly worship, to preach on occasion, to share in artistic expression, and to develop skills in responding to those who come to South’s wide-ranging food ministry and to Cathedral’s outdoor worship experience. These ministries all take place within a small city in the heart of the beautiful Berkshires.

During June, July and August the intern would work with Rev. Joel Huntington, UCC pastor of South Church, Rev. Jennifer Gregg, Episcopal priest and pastor to Cathedral in the Night-Pittsfield, and a small lay committee that can give guidance and support. There is a \$6,000 stipend for this internship. Housing is included along with a travel allowance. The internship is designed to be flexible in order to nurture the growing edges of the seminarian. Our intern must have good communication skills and be able to collaborate in creative ways. Our intern does not have to be an artist simply someone who would like to explore the intersection of faith, art, and urban ministry. If you would be interested in being our intern, please send a resume and cover letter describing your interest in this new endeavor by April 15th, 2016.

EPISTLE

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Staff

Editor	Priscilla Anthony
Reporters	Each of You
Features	
Pastor	Joel Huntington
Children/Youth Director	Ann Roche
Moderator	Kerry Sullivan
Parish Nurse	Sue Kaufman
May Mattoon	Joyce Brown
Ladies Benevolent	Marge Demary
Men's Forum	John Anthony
Production and Mailing	Paula Haskell

The next *Epistle* deadline is March 27th at 11 a.m.

FOOD PANTRY

In the winter months there is a scarcity of fruits and vegetables that the pantry receives. This year, though, we are very fortunate to have been given money from the 10 X 10 Shaker Concert, and from the children of the church who collected donations at their "Souper Bowl of Caring" which was used to buy produce. Thank you very much!



Flavours Restaurant has been donating their delicious homemade soups, hot and in cups ready to be served for our Wednesday night meals. The guests and workers love this very special treat!

Giving and sharing seems to be spreading, as Guido's market is planning to donate 3 or 4 cases of vegetables and fruit each week. All we have to do is pick it up on Tuesdays.

And thank all of you for your time and donations! With your help and support we can offer more food, especially since cuts to some have been made in the Food Stamp Program.

In March we will be accepting donations of toilet paper.

Thank you,
Mary Wheat



SPECIAL OFFERINGS
ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

How many of us have watched the news and heard the plight of the growing number of refugees around the world? There are hundreds of thousands escaping the horrible violence in Syria. Africa seems always to be generating more and more displaced peoples as one faction is at war with another. In Central America and Mexico people are still trying to find a safe place to work and raise a family. We live in the midst of the largest refugee crisis since WW II. One of every 122 people (60 million) in the world today is forcibly displaced from their home, seeking refuge either within their national borders or beyond. Many refugees are vulnerable women and children whose husbands have been killed or just disappeared.

Life in a refugee camp is difficult. Most are filled to overcapacity where thousands live in makeshift mass shelters. There is limited movement, few opportunities for work, and in many camps too little food, water and sanitary provisions.

Today many aid agencies are working hard to keep place with the needs. The UCC through CWS (Church World Service) and other partner agencies are working to build new latrines, provide storage capacity for clean water and other services to keep the camps safe.

In these countries wounded by war and terror, good deeds and the solidarity of neighbors is often the only glimpse of hope available. Together, we can provide more hope and alleviate despair to ease the suffering of vulnerable families and give them an opportunity to survive the ordeal.

Please be generous by contributing to the One Great Hour of Sharing. We will receive our all-church offering for ministry in the wider world on Sunday, March 13th. If you would like the money to go to a certain part of the world such as Syria, you may designate that in the memo portion of the check.

Thank you.

Sue Kaufman,
for the Board of Missions



LECTIONARY FOR MARCH

March 6 - Fourth Sunday in Lent

Joshua 5:9-12
Psalm 32
2 Corinthians 5:16-21
Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

March 13 - Fifth Sunday in Lent

Isaiah 43:16-21
Psalm 126
Philemon 3:4b-14
John 12:1-8

March 20 - Palm/Passion Sunday

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
Luke 19:28-40
Isaiah 50:4-9a
Luke 22:14-23:56

March 24 - Maundy Thursday

Psalm 116
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-17

March 27 Easter Sunday

The Day of Resurrection

Acts 10:34-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
I Corinthians 15:19-26
Luke 24:1-12



Church Keys- Help Keep Our Church Safe

We replaced the locks to the exterior church doors back in 2014 and are trying really hard to keep the number of keys in use by members of the church and the community to a minimum. If you are currently in possession of a South Church master key and are no longer on a committee, or find that you no longer need it, we would appreciate your returning it to the Church Office. If you paid a deposit for the key, we will be happy to return it to you.

Thanks for helping us keep our very busy church a safe place.

Paula Haskell



CHILDREN AND YOUTH

We have been having a wonderful time with all the families and children who have joined us over the past few months. This great group of children has added a tremendous amount of happiness and energy to our worship and Sunday

School time. Our numbers are growing. For instance on Sunday, February 21st, we had 18 children in attendance. It was a busy and energetic morning!

In March we will conclude Unit 5, "A Way Through Lent." Passages of focus will be Luke 13:1-9 and Luke 23:3-49. Questions explored from the passages will include "Who will help me grow in God's way?" "What is God's love?" and "Was Jesus' parade into Jerusalem a happy time for everyone?"

Unit 6 will run from Easter Sunday, March 27 through Sunday, May 15th. The title of this unit is "Easter People." The unit focuses on the great event of Easter and the 50 days that follow. The first lesson begins with John 20:1-18, Mary Magdalene's story and Luke 24:1-12 of the stone rolling away. The students have been very engaged in reading stories from scripture each week as they take turns reading.

Next, I would like to welcome Bev Krol as a helper to our Children's Program. Bev will be doing a music program with the children. She has a lot of experience. She sings, plays the guitar and even writes her own songs! She plans to work with the children as a whole, having the older students work with the younger one. We hope to have two or three short songs prepared to sing for our service on Easter Sunday. How blessed we are to have her bring music to the program. Thank you Bev!

On March 6th we will have a Lenten Craft Workshop from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Cooke Center. Seed planting, sand art and decorating stained glass crosses are all part of the fun! Light snacks and drinks will be provided. All are welcome to join in the fun.

March 20th will be Pantry Sunday. This month we are collecting toilet paper.

On March 20th following worship a Seder Meal, hosted by the Diaconate, will be served in Barrett Hall; an old traditional meal depicting Jesus' last supper with the disciples. All are invited to experience foods from Jesus' time and share in fellowship.

Ann Roche

MAY MATTOON

May Mattoon met on Tuesday, February 2nd for a noontime lunch. There were 17 members in attendance. The tables were adorned in a "Valentine Theme" with lots of red garlands and hearts as well as dishes of tiny valentine candies. A delicious cherry pineapple cake was provided by hostesses Marge Demary, Pat Hill and Sharon Mercier.

It was noted that Shirley Guidetti has moved to Mt. Greylock, 1000 North Street, Room 134, phone #344-1514. A card, a call, or a visit would be welcomed by Shirley.

Joyce Brown has taken over the position of Secretary/Epistle. Alice Gallup was thanked for her years of service and Karen Allender was thanked for filling in for Alice while she recuperated from a broken arm. Pam Garret has taken the position of Program Chairman. Permanent tablecloths have been purchased for use at our monthly meetings.

A yearly schedule of programs for the coming year was reviewed by Ruth Austin. The 2016 Membership Booklet will be available next month.

Our speaker this month was Steve Radin, who spoke in length about a recent trip to Iran. He stated that after going through several steps to gain entry into Iran, he was assigned a guard who was with him at all times to protect his safety. He spoke of the Spiritual Leaders, how they rule, of their customs, so different from ours in this country. He shared many interesting pictures with us as well. Contrary to how we feel about traveling to Iran, he stated that they welcome Americans and enjoy it when they spend money in their country. We welcomed Steve's knowledge of that country that was shared with us.

The March meeting was held on Tuesday, March 1st at 12 noon. Megan Whilden was the speaker, and her talk on the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) will be covered in the April Epistle.

Joyce Brown



If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant; if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome.

~Anne Bradstreet

LORD & TAILOR NEWS

As one holiday ends, another begins. We are now trying to put a spring- like look into the shop, in preparation for Easter. We expect to be putting out spring clothing soon, hoping that this spring-like weather will continue.

And so, all winter clothing is now half-price. There are some great buys being offered with coats, sweaters and pants.

Our semi-annual tag sale will be Saturday, April 16, 9-3. Save the date. Any and all volunteers will be welcome. As in the past, we will start to set up Thursday right after the food pantry ends. Sign-up sheets will be out. We need your help, as well as the contents of your closets,

This month we'll be giving the church \$400. Thank you, as always, for your generous donations as well as your support.

Nancy deForest, Audra Kinner



LITTLE KNOWN FACTS

*Glass takes one million years to decompose, which means it never wears out and can be recycled an infinite amount of times!

*In ancient times strangers shook hands to show that they were unarmed.

*Gold is the only metal that doesn't rust, even if it's buried in the ground for thousands of years.

*Zero is the only number that cannot be represented by Roman numerals.

*Kites were used in the American Civil War to deliver letters and newspapers.

*The military salute is a motion that evolved from medieval times, when knights in armor raised their visors to reveal their identity.

*Nine out of every 10 living things live in the ocean.

*Everything weighs one percent less at the equator.

Easter BLESSINGS

Letter sent to Mary
Wheat from a very
caring child.

Hello my name is Makai.

I would like to donate \$20.00
to the church.

I collected cans so that
I could donate money to the
church. I was able to help
out this year during the
turkey distribution. I was
shocked to see how many
people were hungry and need
food.

I hope this money can
help those people over
the holidays.

Thank you so much
Makai



Recently, our Pantry received this anonymous note from a grateful guest:

The most important thing I have learned in my ¾ century tour of our planet Earth is that flowers are for the living. So I want to take the time to thank you for the grace-full blessing you are providing to our community. I am new to this circumstance, and I can tell you it is not easy to embrace this opportunity to know humility in its purest form, but your presence provides the perfect complement and turns potential humiliation into loving grace, a manifestation of God's love for even the least among us. The gift of food is life-saving, but the gift of unconditional love and acceptance, which radiates from every volunteer here, is soul-saving and there is no price to equal that.

Thank you for all you are doing, but most especially for the way you are doing it.

With sincere gratitude, A Grateful Client



Easter Flowers



We have a tradition at South Church of decorating our sanctuary on Easter Sunday with memorial 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 along with your payment **by Sunday, March 20th**.

Mary Wheat, 23 Ivy Lane, Pittsfield, MA 01201
413-442-3706

_____ I wish to order and take my **lily** with me after service on Easter, March 27th .

_____ I wish to order and take my **tulip** with me after service on Easter, March 27th.
(If you sign up to take your lily/tulip with you after service, 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 20th



MARCH 18, 2016

BOBBY SWEET

Live at Bread & Roses Coffee House

Bobby is a sixth-generation musician. He began performing at age 7 in his father's band, and left at 17 to pursue his widening musical interests. As a performer, Bobby has shared the bill with some of the top country and folk artists, including Vince Gill, Bill Staines, Bill Morrissey, Martin Sexton, Bryan White, Arlo Guthrie, Pete Seeger, and Jonathan Edwards. As a sought-after lead guitarist he has played shows opening for George Jones, Diamond Rio, Asleep at the Wheel, Willie Nelson, The Bellamy Brothers, Waylon Jennings, and many others.

Stylistically, Bobby's music resides somewhere between John Prine, Jackson Browne, Guy Clark, and a countryfied Bruce Springsteen. An engaging storyteller, he is at home on the stage, whether performing solo, with his eclectic trio, or with the full band.

Please join us for an evening of song and story with one of the Berkshire's own rising stars.

7:00 p.m. Friday
March 18, 2016

....."Bobby Sweet has long been the Berkshire's best and most popular singer-songwriter." Roger Houston-*Chronogram*

"Perhaps the Berkshires' finest singer-songwriter working today." Dave Madeloni- *The Berkshire Eagle*

"A rare combination of music-maker, story-teller, and outstanding performerhow Sweet it is". *The Country Journal*

Free will offering
to benefit the
George B. Crane
Memorial Center

BREAD & ROSES
COFFEE HOUSE

South Congregational
Church, UCC
110 South St
Pittsfield, MA

Friday, March 18, 2016
7:00 p.m.

March 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Spiritual Support Group 10 am May Mattoon Luncheon 12 noon Men's Forum 12 noon <i>Square Dancing 7 pm</i>	2 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am <i>Music Together Bridge 12 – 4 pm</i> St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	3 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am <i>Music Together</i> Quilting-Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am UCC Clergy Book Discussion 10:30 am and Meeting 12 noon Choir 7 pm	4 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm <i>Bridge 12 – 4 pm</i> AA 6:15 pm	5 <i>AA 10:15 am</i> Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm <i>Al-Anon 7 pm</i>
6 Fourth Sunday in Lent Worship returns to the Sanctuary at 10 am with Communion Lenten Workshop for all ages 11 a.m. <i>Bridge 3 - 7 pm</i>	7 <i>Bridge 6 -10 pm</i> Yarn Spinners 7 pm <i>NA-There is Hope Group 7 pm</i>	8 Spiritual Support Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon <i>Square Dancing 7 pm</i> <i>Diaconate 7 pm</i>	9 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am <i>Music Together Bridge 12 – 4 pm</i> St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm <i>Trustees 6 pm</i>	7 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am <i>Music Together</i> Crafts-Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am <i>Bridge 6:45 pm</i> Choir 7 pm	11 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm <i>Bridge 12 – 4 pm</i> AA 6:15 pm	12 <i>AA 10:15 am</i> Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm <i>Al-Anon 7 pm</i>
13 Daylight Savings Begins! Fifth Sunday in Lent Worship 10 am "One Great Hour of Sharing" Offering New Member Meeting Book Club 11:30 am <i>Bridge 3 - 7 pm</i>	14 <i>Bridge 6 -10 pm</i> Yarn Spinners 7 pm <i>NA-There is Hope Group 7 pm</i>	15 Spiritual Support Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon <i>Mission Board 7 pm</i> <i>Square Dancing 7 pm</i>	16 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am <i>Music Together</i> Berkshire Place 10:45 am <i>Bridge 12 – 4 pm</i> St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	17 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am <i>Music Together</i> Quilting-Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am <i>Bridge 6:45 pm</i> Choir 7 pm	18 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm <i>Bridge 12 – 4 pm</i> Coffee House Concert 7 pm AA 6:15 pm	19 <i>AA 10:15 am</i> Lord & Tailor 12 noon – 4 pm Pittsfield Squares 7 pm <i>Al-Anon 7 pm</i>
20 Palm/Passion Sunday Worship 10 am Receiving New Members May Mattoon Spring Bake Sale Coffee Hour Collections for the Language Project South Church Seder & Meal <i>Bridge 3 - 7 pm</i>	21 <i>Bridge 6 -10 pm</i> Yarn Spinners 7 pm <i>NA-There is Hope Group 7 pm</i>	22 Spiritual Support Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon <i>Church Council 7 pm</i> <i>Square Dancing 7 pm</i>	23 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am <i>Music Together</i> Exec Comm of UCC Berk Assoc 10 am <i>Bridge 12 – 4 pm</i> St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	24 Maundy Thursday Food Pantry 7:30-11 am <i>Music Together</i> Quilting-Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am <i>Bridge 6:45 pm</i> Tenebrae & Communion 7 pm	25 Good Friday Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm <i>Bridge 12 – 4 pm</i> AA 6:15 pm	26 Holy Saturday <i>AA 10:15 am</i> Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm <i>Al-Anon 7 pm</i>
27 Easter Sunday Worship 10 am Easter Egg Hunt <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> April Epistle Deadline 11 am </div>	28 <i>Bridge 6 -10 pm</i> Yarn Spinners 7 pm <i>NA-There is Hope Group 7 pm</i>	29 Spiritual Support Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon <i>Square Dancing 7 pm</i>	30 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am <i>Music Together Bridge 12 – 4 pm</i> St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	31 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am <i>Music Together</i> Quilting-Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Choir 7 pm	Apr 1 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm <i>Bridge 12 – 4 pm</i> AA 6:15 pm	Apr 2 <i>AA 10:15 am</i> Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm <i>Al-Anon 7 pm</i>