



Epistle

SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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June 2017

Have you ever felt that your life consists mostly of trying to keep up with the ‘bouncing ball’? I can remember when I was a small child watching a children’s program on our grainy, black and white TV in which the host sang a song as words scrolled by with a little, white, bouncing ball keeping the rhythm. The host invited me to sing along in time with the ball. But I was so fascinated by the speedy motion of the little ball and how the words kept scrolling by that I never caught on to the singing part. That probably was the death knell for my musical career. But the memory still holds meaning for me. I can so easily go through my day trying to keep up with all that needs doing that I don’t pay any attention to the deeper song of life that is offering itself to me moment by moment.

A couple of Wednesday’s ago I had finished up some afternoon visits and activities and landed in Barrett Hall at the close of St. Joseph’s Kitchen just in time for dinner. The evening Pantry was distributing food, people were sweeping up, I was partaking of a great meal, and some of our guests were talking with me. I was keeping an eye on the clock because the Trustees were meeting soon and I only had a few more minutes. In other words, life was flowing as usual and I was busy keeping up. The bouncing ball was zipping along. Suddenly it stopped. A little girl walking behind her mother, who was holding a baby, caught my eye. The mother, who had just received food from the Pantry, was perusing the clothes set out on tables for our guests to take as needed. The babe in her arms was sound asleep and her daughter was busy keeping herself occupied. The little girl discovered the children’s book table and proceeded to find a treasure. It was a picture book about the planets. I could see this because as I continued eating, the little girl--for whom our tables were shoulder height--was leaning against the line of tables where I was eating sounding out the words. She was about ten feet away, moving her lips, and turning the pages. Then I watched her disappear. The little girl was no longer in Barrett Hall with all of us. She was somewhere else--out there exploring the Solar System. Her facial expression changed. She looked enchanted and amazed. For me, the bouncing ball had landed on her head and stopped moving. Sacred space had opened. Something holy was happening. A different quality of beauty and grace was revealing itself in this otherwise busy moment. I was enchanted and amazed, taken back to those moments in my childhood when books revealed to me a larger, more wondrous reality that transcended the mundane and difficult. What is this world where such moments can happen? Where do we go when we are enchanted and amazed? How is it that a church hall can suddenly be a sacred realm? Who are we to see such things? Who is this God whom we worship?

This coming Sunday we will celebrate Pentecost, the special day when the Spirit blew, transforming the fearful church into a disciple community of love and holy intention. It’s a crazy story of tongues of flame resting on the Apostles’ heads and a mighty wind blowing. It doesn’t feel any more crazy, however, than the universe opening up in Barrett Hall on a Wednesday evening. I could almost hear the singing of the spheres or the voices of angels rejoicing at the miracle of life that night. May we all hear that tune more often as we follow the bouncing ball of life. Peace.

EPISTLE

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The next *Epistle* deadline is June 25, at 11 am.

Pentecost



*“And they were filled
with the Holy Spirit.”*

Acts 2-4

Berkshire Immigration Center Fundraiser

Antique Appraisal Day

Saturday, June 24th from 1 – 4 p.m.

at South Congregational Church

Bring your treasures for appraisals
by antique experts.

\$5 per item/\$10 for 3 items.

Items should be small enough to carry by hand.

Quilt Raffle, Bake Sale, and Auction for items
donated by local artisans and businesses.

For additional information call 413-446-8604 or
email cehurlbut001@nycap.rr.com

or visit their Facebook page, Antique Appraisal Day,

Pittsfield to see pictures of items to be raffled,

learn about the appraisers and more!

www.berkshireic.com

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

*A Letter from Carol (Johnson) George to the
Congregation at South Church:*

Dear Friends,

I was so blessed to have been a part of this congregation for 6 months this fall, winter and spring. Thank you all for this love.



I left Pittsfield on Tuesday, May 2, 2017, and stopped near Carlisle, PA to see my grandson and my infant great-grandson again. I arrived in Sacramento on Sunday, May 7. The only incident along the way was a flat tire in Indiana - the only rainy day I experienced. My roadside assistance policy had me back on my way in less than 2 hours. The rest of the weather was good for travel and my journey went smoothly. God truly was with me.

It is good to be home. I am comfortable. I even know that I was missed. I told very few people that I was returning. Their joy at seeing me again was very heartwarming. The sky is blue; the air is warm; my body is more comfortable in the warmth. I am learning to live the new routine my husband and son have established while I was gone. This is my new life's challenge. I have returned to my Bible study (Colossians) class and Sunday school (the Book of Daniel) that meets before church every week. I still crochet - a lot - because I watch baseball a lot at this time of year.

Once again, I miss every one, you are blessings in my life.

Carol George

"We rise by lifting others."

Robert Ingersoll



*“I’ve found that most people
are as happy
as they make up
their minds to be.”*

Abraham Lincoln

LECTIONARY FOR JUNE

Sunday, June 4 – Pentecost Sunday
with Linda Worster, guitar and Paul Celebi, piano

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
1 Corinthians 12:3-13
Acts 2:1-21
John 20:19-23

Sunday, June 11 –Church School Sunday
and Choir Recognition Sunday

Genesis 1:1-2:4a
Psalm 8
2 Corinthians 13:11-13
Matthew 28:16-20

Sunday, June 18 – Second Sunday after Pentecost
Father's Day

Genesis 18:1-15
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
Romans 5:1-8
Matthew 9:35-10:8, (9. 23)

Sunday, June 25 – Third Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 21:8-21
Psalm 86:1-10, 16, 17
Romans 6:1b-11
Matthew 10:24-39



June 4th is Pentecost Sunday, and the last Sunday of Unit 6, “Fresh Winds Blowing.” The children will parade around the sanctuary with banners to celebrate the birthday of the church. Extra ribbons are available for members who would like to join us. The theme of the lesson for the day is “Open to the Spirit.” We will explore the idea that Spirit has come to disciples of every culture and generations to bring courage, hope, passion and truth to the world.

June 11th will also be an exciting day. It is the final Sunday of the 2016-2017 Sunday school year. This day is traditionally called “Children’s Sunday.” The students will sing a song entitled “I Love Loving Jesus” with the Chancel Choir, under the direction of Bev Krol. Students will also take on the tasks of liturgist and ushers. During the service Sunday school volunteers will be recognized for the hard work and dedication that makes our program a success! Afterwards we will celebrate with a special cake in Cook Center.

I am happy to announce from June 18th to August 27 the Christian Education Program will offer a summer session for students on Sunday mornings during Worship. The program is entitled “Adventures in Faith.” Many of the Old Testament readings are from Genesis and the new Testament readings are mainly from Matthew. Questions that will be explored are:

- How do we see God?
- Does God really love everyone?
- Where is God?
- How does God help hurting people?

These questions are always on children’s minds, and adults too! I am looking forward to working with the children and observing their responses!

Thank you to all the members and volunteers who contribute to the success of the program for our children. Also a big thank you to Pastor Joel for all your children’s sermons and deep, loving commitment to everyone involved!

Happy summer to all!

Ann Roche

WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS

EXPLORING SOUTH CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

The Diaconate is hosting a new-member exploration gathering on Sunday, May 28 following worship. With help from Rev. Huntington the group will talk about what it means to become a member or associate member and how such a step can help deepen relationships and strengthen our ability to hear the call of the Spirit in our lives.

There will be additional gatherings in June and the plan is to receive new members on Sunday, June 18. Speak to Joel or Cindy Dickinson for more information.

LORD & TAILOR NEWS

Our shop is looking better than ever, with many new additions of spring and summer clothes and wonderful jewelry.

Save the date! **On June 23-24**, we will have another half-price sale on everything in the shop. Our last sale like this was very successful. It should coordinate well with the antiques appraisal event on June 24. Come browse and bring your antiques!

Thanks to all who have stepped up to help in response to my plea for help. Help is always appreciated. A special thanks to Pam Garrett who really improved our storage area.

Nancy deForest, Audra Kinner

MAY MATTOON NOTES

May Mattoon met on Tuesday, May 2nd at 12 noon in the Parlor. There were 15 members present, Pastor Joel and guests, Ellen and Stuart Masters. Hostesses were Ruth Austin, Ruth Campbell and Alice Gallup. The tables were decorated in a spring theme complete with lovely flowers from Ruth Campbell's garden.

Our speaker was Ellen Masters, a member of the National Board and Regional President of Hadassah. Ellen, who has visited Israel many times stated that today, May 2 Israel celebrated its 69th anniversary as a Modern



State. She explained the history of what transpired when 23,000 died in 1948. (A moment of silence was held at this time.) In 1912 Hadassah started a hospital in Jerusalem and just recently the first robot spinal surgery was performed there. Ellen noted that this hospital does not discriminate on any level. In 2005 the hospital was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Ellen and Stuart shared many lovely pictures taken in Israel. Of note, there are over 300,000 Hadassah members in the United States. It was a most interesting and informative afternoon.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 6th – a field trip to the Norman Rockwell Museum with Priscilla Anthony as our guide. Information on this meeting will be sent to members in advance.

Joyce Brown



Thanks to the hard-working letter carriers from the Post Office and everyone who donated food, our Pantry recently received about 8000 pounds of food. The carriers picked up the food bags left for them at your homes, brought them to the Post Office, unloaded them, weighed the food and sorted it all for the local pantries.

Lynn Reynolds and her granddaughters, Andrew Hall, John Sandifer, Ed and Mary Wheat brought the food to the church. It was fun, very rewarding, exciting, (and wet!) to receive so much food.

Then on Monday a crew of very hard workers came to sort the food – Ed Caine, Scott Haskell, Art Kaufman, Karen Allender, Lynn Reynolds and her granddaughter Brittany, Heather Burke, Cindy Dickinson, Annie Pennesco, Mary Rentz, Melanie and Mike from Illinois and Mary Wheat.

Luckily we received that quantity of food, as we had over 550 families come to the Food Pantry this week which caused our food supply to go down rapidly.

This week we are trying something new in the Pantry to help our clients make healthier choices. It is called "My Plate." This campaign encourages guests of the Pantry to divide their plates into four parts – fruits, vegetables, proteins and grains. In the Pantry, we have begun sorting foods into these categories, hoping to encourage more awareness of healthy food and proportions.

Mary Wheat



*The greatest gift I ever had
came from God; I call him Dad.
Happy Father's Day!*

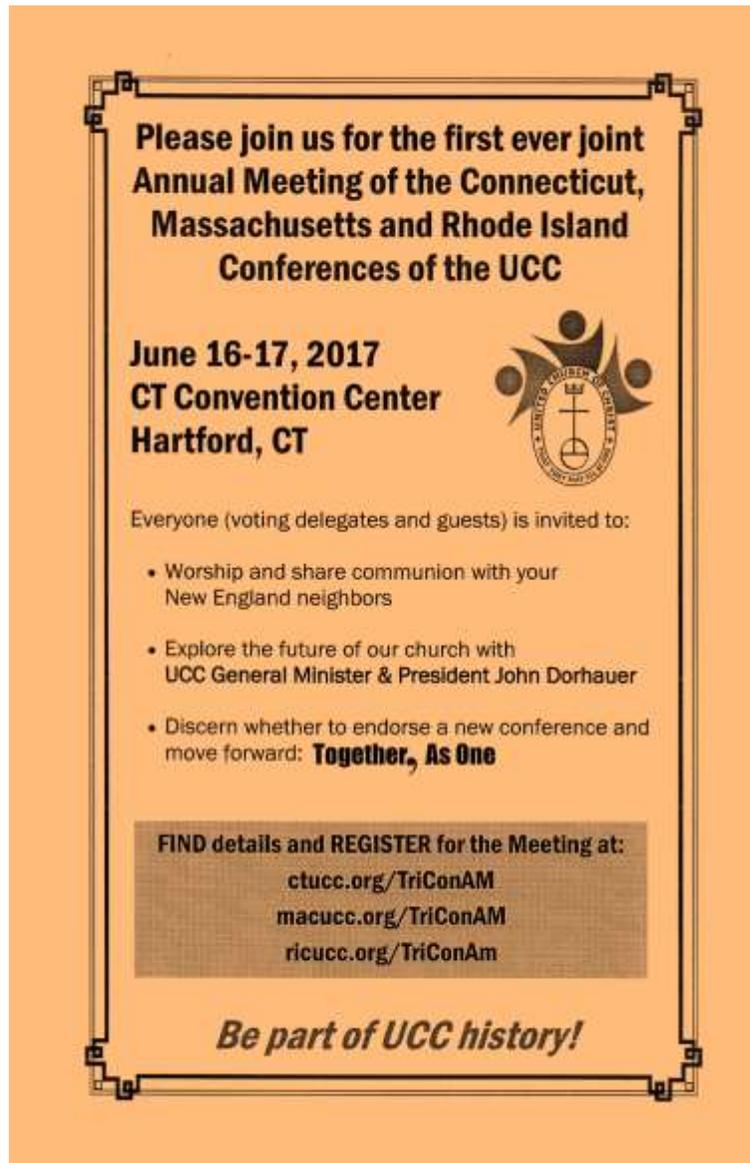
June Worship

On Sunday, June 4, we will celebrate Pentecost, the wind, breath, and fire of the Spirit filling the early church with vision and vitality. Linda Worster, with her compassionate songs of life and spirit, will help me lift up the holy meaning for us of this special day. Paul Celebi will also be with us to enrich our music and lead the Choir.

On Sunday, June 11, we will celebrate our Church School and their ministry of learning and creativity. I will call this day “Creation Sunday” in honor of our Older Testament lesson—the creation story of Genesis 1. The children will participate in worship; we will recognize our teachers and staff; and Bev Krol will lead the children and Choir in a special song celebrating the love of God in Jesus. This will also be Choir Recognition Sunday. The Chancel Choir has been such a joyous and consistent presence all year. They deserve a break for the summer and our abundant thanks for all they do to lift our spirits each Sunday!

On Sunday, June 18, we will receive new members into the life of South Church and focus on what it means to be a church that follows Jesus in prayer and action in our troubled world.

On Sunday, June 25, I’m hoping to have a dialogue sermon with a community partner. I haven’t confirmed this yet, so keep your ears open. This will be a rich and meaningful month of worship, taking us to deep places of gratitude, wisdom, and hope. Join us and invite a friend.



**Please join us for the first ever joint
Annual Meeting of the Connecticut,
Massachusetts and Rhode Island
Conferences of the UCC**

**June 16-17, 2017
CT Convention Center
Hartford, CT**



Everyone (voting delegates and guests) is invited to:

- Worship and share communion with your New England neighbors
- Explore the future of our church with UCC General Minister & President John Dorhauer
- Discern whether to endorse a new conference and move forward: **Together, As One**

FIND details and REGISTER for the Meeting at:
ctucc.org/TriConAM
macucc.org/TriConAM
ricucc.org/TriConAm

Be part of UCC history!



Friday June 16, 2017, 7 p.m.

The Echoes, Tistrya Houghtling, Judy Zimmer, and Doug Banker, a trio based in New Lebanon, NY, came together in 2016 to provide music for a couple of community events in the town park. Discovering a shared love of folk, indie pop, soft rock and traditional spiritual music, they decided to continue and have played at the New Lebanon Library, the New Lebanon Country Market and Melbourne place in Pittsfield.

If the ensemble can get the audience to sing along, their mission is accomplished. So bring your voice, whistle or just clap along for a delightful evening.

Admission by donation
to benefit

Redfield House

a program run by
Berkshire Children &
Families

One resident's story – Ashley and her daughter arrived at Redfield House by way of a homeless shelter. Ashley shared with Redfield staff her dreams of a career in the medical field, and she soon completed her GED. She enrolled in a nursing program at Berkshire Community College, earned a nursing degree, and is now employed at Berkshire Medical Center. She is pursuing further nursing education, while securing her daughter's future.

Coffee, tea and variety
of desserts for sale

BREAD & ROSES COFFEE HOUSE

Parlor
South Congregational
Church
110 South St, Pittsfield

Southchurchpittsfield.org

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1296572823707890/?ti=icl>

June 16, 2017

7:00 p.m.

June 2017

South Congregational Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Quilting-Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am UCC Clergy 12 noon	2 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm Bridge 12 – 4 pm AA 6:15 pm	3 AA 10:15 am Music Together Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm Al-Anon 7 pm
4 Worship 10 am with Communion with guests Linda Worster on guitar and Paul Celebi on piano	5 Bridge 12 – 4 pm Yarn Spinners 7 pm NA-There is Hope Group 7 pm	6 May Mattoon Field Trip Men's Forum 12 noon	7 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am Bridge 12 – 4 pm Pantry Steering Committee 12 noon St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm Food Pantry 5:30 – 6 pm Trustees 6 pm	8 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Music Together Quilting-Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am	9 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm Bridge 12 – 4 pm AA 6:15 pm	10 AA 10:15 am Music Together Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm Al-Anon 7 pm
11 Worship 10 am Church School Sunday and Recognition of the Chancel Choir Outdoor Cathedral at 2 p.m. with Rev. Joel presiding	12 Bridge 12 – 4 pm Yarn Spinners 7 pm NA-There is Hope Group 7 pm	13 Men's Forum 12 noon Diaconate 7 pm	14 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am Music Together Bridge 12 – 4 pm Healthy Pittsfield 2 pm St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm Food Pantry 5:30 – 6 pm	15 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Music Together Quilting-Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am	16 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm Bridge 12 – 4 pm AA 6:15 pm Coffee House Concert 7 pm	17 AA 10:15 am Music Together Annual Meeting of the CT, RI and MA Conference of the UCC Lord & Tailor 12 noon – 4 pm Al-Anon 7 pm
18 Father's Day Worship 10 am Receiving of New Members Coffee Hour Collections for the Language Project	19 Bridge 12 – 4 pm Yarn Spinners 7 pm NA-There is Hope Group 7 pm	20 Men's Forum 12 noon Mission Board 7 pm	21 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am Berkshire Place 10:45 am Bridge 12 – 4 pm St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm Food Pantry 5:30 – 6 pm	22 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Quilting-Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am	23 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm Bridge 12 – 4 pm AA 6:15 pm	24 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm Immigration Center Fundraiser 12 – 4 pm Al-Anon 7 pm
25 Worship 10 am	26 Bridge 12 – 4 pm Yarn Spinners 7 pm NA-There is Hope Group 7 pm	27 Men's Forum 12 noon Church Council 7 pm	28 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am Bridge 12 – 4 pm St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm Food Pantry 5:30 – 6 pm	29 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Quilting-Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Thanksgiving Angels 1 pm	30 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Quilting-Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am	

July/August
Epistle
Deadline
11 am