



Epistle

SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

110 South Street



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June 2013

*Deep in the sea are riches beyond compare.
But if you seek safety, it is on the shore.*

This quote by an old Sufi mystic, Saadi of Shiraz, accompanied me on my recent Appalachian Trail hike through New York State. There are many ways to find our way into the riches of the deep sea, leaving the safe shore behind. Whenever I come upon a trailhead or a place along the road where a hiking trail disappears into deep woods, I sense magical riches beckoning. Both literally and figuratively asphalt roads represent our need to get somewhere, from point A to point B. When one leaves the paved road behind and enters the woods a different set of experiences opens up. I traveled the AT from the Connecticut border over the Hudson River—about 53 miles. But the real riches were things like encounters with small creatures: a beautiful spotted frog that sat with me one afternoon while I purified my water by a stream, a host of efts--small red salamanders that dotted the trail every few feet for hundreds of yards, a remarkable boardwalk that led me through a swamp and into the world of warblers, beavers, and creatures I cannot name, and then there were the lady slippers, wild geraniums, violets, buttercups, and other beautiful flowers and grasses. I also had wonderful conversations with other hikers, finding out what it's like to be a public defender in New York City, or the challenges of starting the AT in Georgia in February and fighting through three foot snow drifts in March. And it was fun camping out on the grounds of a Franciscan monastery, walking over the Hudson on a bridge 150 feet over the river—on a very windy day—and meeting Tora at the Bear Mountain Lodge and having a wonderful dinner together. All this, plus the sheer task of carrying everything I needed for five days on my back, ushered me into the world of riches that old Muslim Sufi saint knew so much about.

There are other ways of leaving the paved road behind and discovering remarkable riches. When the Peirson bequest was given to the church in 1989 for the express purpose of educating seminarians, the first thought was to simply make a gift of it to a seminary. But then we pushed off into deeper waters and imagined what it would be like for South to have a summer internship program for seminarians. With the help of Sandy Drager, Ralph Cianflone, and others this idea became a reality. Barbara Rice is our 15th Peirson Intern. She is moving into her newly painted and renovated office—thanks to Pam Kueppers, Dave and Darlene Boyce, and others—and will be with us for the summer. Barbara loves to preach and was the Chapel minister at Union Theological, which means she led worship and preached often. She plans to preach for six of the eight Sundays I will be away in July and August. The church will be in for a treat with such a consistent and thoughtful preacher. What a world of riches the Peirson program has offered to seminarians and to this congregation.

As that old Sufi mystic knew, to keep the life of faith alive there needs to be a willingness to take risks and push off into deep water. This coming Sunday we will do a bit of that as Danna Faulds, yoga poet and insightful soul joins us for worship and a dialogue sermon. We will read one of her poems about the raising of Lazarus and explore what it means to be ushered into new life. Both Danna and I are intrigued with the interface of east and west, sensing there are riches waiting in that deep sea of shared faithfulness. What an adventure!

EPISTLE

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The next *Epistle* deadline is June 30th at 11 a.m.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

To Pat and Bob Hill – sincere congratulations!

On May 11th Pat and Bob celebrated 50 years together as man and wife, mother and father, and grandmother and grandfather.

We want to thank you both for the many, many hours of work and creativity you have given to South Church to enrich the life of our congregation.

In memoriam:



Priscilla (Chris) Colburn --May 22

Chris, a life-long member of South Church, served as secretary for almost 30 years, working with the Reverends John Adams, Luther Durgin, Chris Criswell and Joel Huntington. She displayed her creative talents and love for crafts in leadership roles of many annual Church Fairs.

Our condolences are also extended to **Will Garrison and to Seth Christopher** on the recent deaths of their fathers Bill Garrison of Bantam, Connecticut and Chris Christopher of North Adams, Massachusetts.

“It is not flesh and blood, but the heart which makes us fathers and sons.” ~Johann Schiller



***SOUTH CHURCH
FINANCIAL
STATEMENT***

	Through 5/1/2013		
		YTD	ANNUAL
Income		Actual	Budget
	Operating	\$68,986	\$174,502
		YTD	ANNUAL
Expenses		Actual	Budget
	Salaries	\$41,106	\$ 146,230
	Operating	<u>\$28,875</u>	<u>\$ 80,200</u>
	Total	\$69,981	\$ 226,430
Net Surplus (Deficit)		\$ (995)	\$ (51,928)

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

Dale Prindle,
Chairman, Board of Trustees

FOOD PANTRY

Thank you for all the food and toilet paper you have donated to our Food Pantry guests. To buy a one-week supply of toilet paper costs over \$200, so with the restricted budget it is necessary to limit the distribution.

The number of different families keeps increasing. For example, this past week there were 376 family units. One new visitor was so excited to be able to come because she had four people in her family and no food in her refrigerator. Many at the end of the month are in great need! Another was in tears as she had no food and no diapers, and no money to buy diapers.

Food stamp allotments are being cut at the same time food prices are going up.

In the last *Epistle* the word "food" was left out of the phrase "food-insecure people."

Correction: Many food-insecure people (354 families) came this past week to our pantry.

Mary Wheat

FROM OUR PEIRSON INTERN

Dear South Church,

I am looking forward to meeting you all very soon! Thank you for this wonderful opportunity to be a part of your community over these summer months. I am excited about the work we will do, and the ways we will grow and learn together.

I graduated, just days ago, on May 17th from Union Theological Seminary in the city of New York, with my Masters of Divinity. I am “in care” with the Western North Carolina Association, within the Southern Conference, of the United Church of Christ. I have had a thirteen-year career as a psychotherapist in North Carolina, and in 2010 finally answered a call to go to seminary and begin the path towards ordained ministry.

I love reading, writing, preaching, hiking, running, cycling, backpacking, and playing Frisbee with my golden retriever, Bela. I also love bluegrass and roots music, which is why my dog is named Bela after my favorite banjo player, Bela Fleck. I am also passionate about social justice issues, particularly around issues of race, gender, class and sexual orientation. Though my blood is southern, as is my accent, I am growing increasingly fond of New England, and am excited about becoming more familiar with this beautiful part of the country. My partner, Kate, will be visiting often on weekends, and will be with us occasionally in worship on Sunday mornings.

Over the summer I will be in the larger “search and call” process within the UCC, looking for an associate position in a parish, while working here at South, getting to know all of you. I will also be co-authoring a book with my mentor, Rev. Dr. Hal Taussig, called *Baptizing Oneself*. The book is a combination of narrative essays and exegesis based on a non-canonical text, *The Acts of Paul and Thelca*, first century, Thelca, who baptized herself because the male leaders of the early church would not do so.

Please do not hesitate to be in touch with needs, suggestions, or any other matters you would like to share with me. I would love to know what you are interested in studying and learning this summer, and can tailor offerings accordingly. I will see you this coming Sunday, June 2nd!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Things are buzzing again! May 5th was my first official Sunday as Director of Children and Youth Ministries here at



South Church. It is a very exciting time as we are moving forward to offer Christian Education for children and youth of the families of South Church. Music, art, games and celebrations are in the works for the month of June.

On Sunday, June 16th we will honor the close of the Sunday school year. The church service will involve the children and youth. The children are having a great time crafting “Regal Robes” which they will wear for the service. There will be a short skit to enjoy and also ---just to kick things up a bit --- David Grover will join us for some fun by sharing his wonderful musical talents.

After the service the youth will host a SERRV sale. SERRV, a non-profit, fair trade organization, helps farmers and artisans worldwide. Last year our youth spent time on a Mission trip working at the SERRV store in Maryland. We have found it is a great organization that we would like to continue to support. There will be spring products from India, Cameroon and Bangladesh, also an assortment of coffees and chocolates from Uganda, Peru and Nicaragua, just to name a few.

So --- Come and join us as we learn and grow. Anyone is welcome anytime.



Congratulations to Our Graduates

Arianna Bashara –Mt. Greylock Regional

Kyle Gallup – Pittsfield High

Jenna Skutnik – Pittsfield High

Marisa Swail – Pittsfield High

John Dinopoulos – Brockton, Mass. College

Page Emerson – Elms College

Shea Garner – Syracuse University

Tim Hill – University of Massachusetts

John Skutnik – Endicott College

And a happy belated birthday to Lucy Garrison whose birthday was May 19th – Pentecost Sunday. Lucy decorated her own birthday cake which was served at the coffee hour and enjoyed by many.

Ann Roche, Children and Youth Ministries

TRUSTEES REPORT—FACILITY PROJECTS

In the April issue of the *Epistle* we outlined facility projects that we expected to tackle prior to the Capital Fund Drive. After careful review we have decided to drop the repair of the bulging wall as the first priority. This is due to the fact that it appears to be stable with very little movement over the past decade or so.



The roofs have been inspected. Bids from three contractors to apply a sealing coat to the flat roofs and to replace the steeple roof shingles, will be reviewed.

We are requesting bids for repairs and blacktopping of the parking area and driveway. Bids for installing energy efficient windows in Barrett Hall and other windows in the brick addition have been requested.

We are in the process of obtaining quotes for facility work in the kitchen and upgrades to our refrigeration system used by the Food Pantry. Also in the process is an application for a 5 K grant to cover a portion of the Food Pantry refrigeration costs.

Status of Facility work budgeted for this year:

- Tree removal and trimming. - complete
 - Split Rail fence – contract awarded
 - Stairwell carpet – soon to be started
 - Barrett Hall floor – no action to date
- Dale Prindle, Board of Trustees

THRIFT SHOP NEWS

Summer has arrived!! The shop is full of bright, cool summer wear. The gift of beautiful jewelry has helped boost our income. This month we were able to give the church \$600 for a grand total of \$2600 so far this year. Since our income goes toward building maintenance, we enjoy seeing minor repair projects being completed.

All of this can only be accomplished through the efforts of our great volunteers; your beautiful donations and our wonderful customers.

Nancy de Forest and Audra Kinner

LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

We are still finishing up some quilts that we found in the “Mystery Closet.” We finished the quilt that was made many years ago signed by the members of South Church. We hope to have it hung in the parlor soon for everyone to enjoy.

The Yarn Spinners have made many Prayer Shawls over the past few years and now the Ladies Benevolent Society plans to make some lap quilts for people in wheelchairs. We will be making them out of scrap material but the finished product will be **so beautiful**.

Diane St. Martin comes occasionally, and Irma Sisson and Joan Cordello are back from Florida. We still have plenty of room for anyone who would like to attend. If you can't make it every week, come when you can.

You are missing out on a lot of fun and great conversation, not to mention the delicious desserts we share.

Marge Demary

MAY MATTOON

Tuesday evening May 7th, the May Mattoon class had their Spring Dinner out. It was held at the Zucchini Restaurant and was well attended by 28 members and guests. Everyone was pleased with their menu choice and a festive atmosphere prevailed.



Our next meeting is June 3rd, a Monday evening event featuring a potluck supper. The program for the evening will be “Game Night.” I’m not sure what this entails, but I’m looking forward to finding out.

Don't forget to bring a dish to share and your own place setting. Also, toilet articles are needed for the food pantry clientele. Hostesses will be Karen Allender, Lois Moore, and Pat Nixon.

See you there.

Alice Gallup



The best thing about the future is that it comes only one day at a time.”

Abraham Lincoln

LECTIONARY FOR JUNE

June 2 – Second Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 66:10-14
Psalm 96:1-9
Galatians 1:1-2
Luke 7:1-10

June 9 – Third Sunday after Pentecost with Poet Danna Faulds and a Dialogue Sermon

1 Kings 17:8-16, (17, 24)
Psalm 30
Galatians 1:11-24
Luke 7:11-17

June 16 – Children’s Sunday with David Grover

1 Kings 21:1-10, (11-14)
Psalm 32
Genesis 1:26-31
Luke 7:36-8:3

June 16 – House Church at South

At 7 p.m. the “House Church at South” will meet in the parlor for an evening of music, meditation, and sharing, featuring singer/songwriter, Linda Worster. Rev. Huntington will invite a discussion on the abundance of God, based on Luke 7:11-17.

June 23 – Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

1 Kings 19:1-4, (5-7), 8-15a
Psalm 42 and 43
Galatians 3:23-29
Luke 8:26-39

June 30 – Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20
1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21
Psalm 16
Luke 9: 51-62

The Berkshire Lyric Chorus* *Sunday, June 9

The Berkshire Lyric Chorus will celebrate its 50th Anniversary with a gala concert at Ozawa Hall, Tanglewood. The Blafield Children’s Chorus will also sing. Special guests include Maureen O’Flynn, Metropolitan opera soprano, and Bob Blafield, founder of the Berkshire Lyric.

One of the highlights of the concert will be a choral composition written by Bob Blafield, crafted around a poem by Danna Faulds. For tickets or further information, call 413-298-5365 or www.BerkshireLyricInfo.org.

Our Heartfelt Thanks

As the Chancel Choir concludes another season of faithfully serving the church through the ministry of music, I pause to simply say “Thanks” for all the ways you help lift and enlarge our weekly worship experience. Your devotion to the task of crafting beautiful music week by week helps us remember that the Word of God is not just something spoken in words, but is a deeper experience of the heart. That experience is channeled through the words of Scripture, my words in the pulpit, the symbolic acts we share together, and through the music that weaves all our worship together.

I, and the whole church, have deeply appreciated your gifts this year. Beyond that, your gifts would not be what they are without the guiding, directing, and shaping hand of Bob Blafield. Thank you, Bob, for your depth of knowledge, openness of heart, and for your joyous spirit that makes our ministry of music such a gift to all.

Chancel Choir Members

Sally LeBarron	Sonia Tynan
Sam Barnes	Erica Moore
Louise and Ralph Cianflone,	John Moore Mary Rentz
Cindy Dickinson	Janet and Jack Rusk
Vivien Elmslie	Diane St. Martin
Bing Honig	

~ Pastor Joel

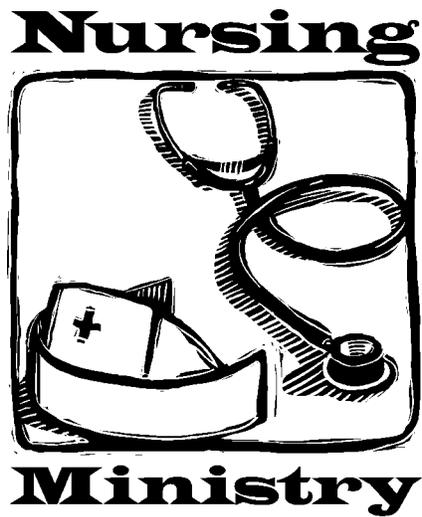
Housatonic River Clean-Up

Saturday, June 22 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

First Church and South Church are working with the Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT) and the Housatonic Valley Association (HVA) for a series of river clean-ups. The second clean-up event is scheduled for Sat., June 22 from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. behind the Wahconah Ballpark.

Some collection from canoes as well as wading and pulling out large items such as tires, carts, bicycles and mattresses will be done. This area is a non-PCB area. Bring water, sunscreen, bug repellent and gloves. A morning snack and lunch will be provided. Registration is required.

For questions or information, please contact Dick Noble from First Church at noble1@berkshire.rr.com or at 413-441-4357.



Susan Kaufman
Parish Nurse

RICHARD M. BASILE, MD, FACS
Vein Specialist

If you're suffering from vein pain or are embarrassed by unsightly, bulging or swollen varicose veins, look to the leading vein specialists in the Berkshires to help you feel and look better.

**Come and hear from the expert about advances in the treatment of
varicose veins**

When:	Wednesday June 19th 7:00 PM
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Where:	St. Charles Church Hall Briggs Ave. Pittsfield, Mass.
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FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
Light Refreshments Served

Sponsored by the Parish Nurse Ministries of Berkshire County

OH, WHAT A YEAR IT WAS!

On June 18 the Men's Forum will shift gears and move into our summer mode with Bob Skidmore and me fading into the background and Jim Kresge assuming the moderator's role.

In the early years we were a much smaller group meeting weekly from October to mid-June. For a number of years now our membership has grown slowly but steadily and we are currently meeting every Tuesday except when holidays coincide. Bob and I share the program development role in the fall and winter series while Jim fulfills that responsibility in the summer.

Over the years our programs have been interesting and challenging, but this particular season has been one of the most captivating. During the year we took a field trip to the Crane Paper Museum in Dalton and welcomed several visiting speakers to our meetings. Bill Sexton, international correspondent and editor, spoke to us twice. Chet Gallup brought us a film (and its producer) telling the story of the decline of manufacturing in New England, using North Adams as an example. John Bissell, Executive Vice President of Greylock Federal, told us of the new reading program the bank is supporting. Dave Westall, the architect who designed the new environmentally-inspired building on East Street, was the kickoff speaker for our series on environmental concerns – a series that covered every aspect of the environment and included eight of our members as presenters. Jim Pelletier took a block of time to discuss the pros and cons of our health care situation, and Bob Skidmore rounded out the season with PowerPoint presentations of two books.

It WAS a good year and ended with enough enthusiasm to ensure a repeat in October.

John Anthony

HAPPY FATHERS' DAY



“The perfect Fathers’ Day happens when--the sun is shining, the birds are singing, the hammock is swinging and the lawn mower is broken.”

With apologies to
Dave Barry

SUMMER PROJECT

In order to clean up our library and to properly preserve the historic Bibles and records that were stored there, all the printed materials have been moved temporarily to the third floor. Our historians, Cindy and Will, and John and Priscilla will be working on a plan for restoring and storing our precious books and records. We hope that if you have any interest in them, you will take the time this summer to look through them. Written instructions will be available for the books you are interested in – i.e., you might want to keep some, or perhaps want them kept in the library, etc.

Thanks to David and Darlene Boyce and Jeannine Rontowski, the Peirson Intern's office has been freshly painted. Please take a look and see how nice it looks. The library also needs to be painted and we are looking for volunteers to commit about six hours of their time for the job! Please let us know if you can help.

If you have any thoughts about what the library/historic room should be used for, please let us know. We are hoping to formulate a plan for it during the summer.

Pam Kueppers and Pat Hill

GOD LOVES US

Laura Gamari approached Rev. Huntington with a brief but important message for the Epistle. They talked it over and the following is what came of the discussion:

I would like to bring to everyone's attention that in the Gospel of Mark 15:25 it says, “It was at nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him.” In each of the Gospels it was at three o'clock when Jesus cried his last saying, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me”? So, Jesus suffered on the cross for six hours, not the traditional three hours as is often thought—remember all the ‘noon to three’ Good Friday services.

This is meaningful to me because it expresses just how much God loves us by all Jesus was willing to suffer for us. This strengthens my gratitude and lifts my spirit. I hope you find this bit of Bible study helpful to your faith as well.

Laura Gamari

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An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.”
Benjamin Franklin



MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

Beginnings and endings mark the month of June, even for those of us long-removed from the classroom. We celebrate our high school and college graduates and send them forth with blessings.

In May we welcomed Ann Roche to her new role as Director of our children's and youth ministry. Now she is planning Children's Day and summer engagement with the youth. Inspired by her many years as a church school teacher under Kathy Noble, Ann has plans to re-engage families and youth in the creative nurture of a strong faith. Our children's ministry is beginning anew, even as the church school years ends.

We must pause to thank Rachel and Arianna for being faithful, caring and fun stewards of our children in the months since Trish left.

Barbara Rice begins this week as our Peirson Intern. How good to be able to provide that opportunity again! We look forward to getting to know Barbara, individually and as a church, and hope her experience with us will be a wonderful start for her ministry.

June should see the launch of our South Church website, southchurchpittsfield.org. Bob Hill, Joel and I have been working on it in fits and starts, but it is looking as though it will come together this month. Our hope is to make it a place that you will want to come back to over and over again.

Choir is ending for the summer season, but Bob will continue to tickle the ivories and bring us joyful music over the summer. Bob makes our rehearsals so enjoyable. Thank you, Bob!

June is bringing My Fair Ladies back together to begin the miniature Christmas trees and planning for the Fair. Come join the knitters on Monday nights or the quilters on Thursday mornings, or speak with Pat Hill or Mary Wheat or me.

Capital projects will be starting up here and there from now on. Dale Prindle and the Trustees have been working on a punch list that is amazing. Please give Dale and his crew a hearty thanks.

Some things keep on going, like St. Joe's Kitchen and the Food Pantry. Our quiet angels, John Moore, Mary Wheat and their many workers are extending helping hands to our community each week. Our church staff, Paula, Sato and Tom work quietly behind the scenes.

Summer blessings to all and especially to Joel, as he prepares for the next phase of his sabbatical.

Mary Rentz

JUNE 2013

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
						1 AA 10:15 am Habitat Work Day 8 am – 2 pm Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm
2 2 nd Sunday after Pentecost Worship with Communion & Choir Appreciation 10 am Women's Book Club 11:30	3 May Mattoon Covered Dish Supper & Games 6 pm	4 Men's Forum Noon Church Council 7pm	5 Food Pantry 8 – 11 am UCC Clergy Noon St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	6 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am My Fair Ladies Noon Berkshire Emergency Food Program Meeting 1 pm 12-Step Class 6:30 pm	7 Lord & Tailor 10 am AA 6:15 pm	8 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm
9 3 rd Sunday after Pentecost Worship 10 am "House Church" In the Parlor 7 pm	10 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	11 Men's Forum Noon Mission Board 7 pm Diaconate 7 pm	12 Food Pantry 8-11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm Trustees 6 pm	13 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am 12-Step Class 6:30 pm	14 Lord & Tailor 10 am AA 6:15 pm	15 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm
16 CHILDREN'S SUNDAY with DAVID GROVER 10 am "House Church" In the Parlor 7 pm	17 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	18 Men's Forum Noon	19 Food Pantry 8-11 am Berkshire Place Worship Service 10:45 am St. Joe's Dinner 5:00 pm	20 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am	21 Lord & Tailor 10 am AA 6:15 pm	22 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm
23 5 th Sunday after Pentecost Worship 10 am	24 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	25 Men's Forum Noon	26 Food Pantry 8-11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm Church & Ministry 4 pm	27 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am 12-Step Class 6:30 pm	28 Lord & Tailor 10 am AA 6:15 pm	29 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm
30 6 th Sunday after Pentecost Worship 10 am <i>Epistle Deadline 11 am</i>	JULY 1 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	JULY 2 Men's Forum Noon	JULY 3 Food Pantry 8-11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	JULY 4 INDEPENDENCE DAY	JULY 5 Lord & Tailor 10 am AA 6:15 pm	JULY 6 AA 10:15 am