



Epistle

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South Congregational Church • 110 South Street • Pittsfield, MA 01201

● March 2013

As we move into March, we enter more deeply into the season of Lent, that culminates with Holy Week and the celebration of Easter on March 31. During Lent we are beckoned by God to journey further into the life of faith so we are prepared for the joy of Christ's Resurrection. To that end our creative worship group has crafted an imaginative Lenten worship/workshop event that will take place this Sunday—March 3—in Barrett Hall. Through art, music, story, and scripture we will journey with Israel from lament and burden, to a holy encounter with the living waters of God's presence, to the ever-deepening experience of budding new life. In the process we will create a beautiful banner, have opportunity to reflect on the burdens of our lives, listen to creative music, share in the singing of Lenten hymns, plant bulbs in rocky soil, hear faithful words from the Book of Lamentations, the prophet Isaiah, and children's author Margaret Wise Brown, join in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and conclude with a pot-luck lunch together. There will be beauty and nourishment for each of us in this experience no matter our age or where we find ourselves on the journey of faith. It is an ideal service for inviting someone who is searching for new expressions of faith. Do you know such a person?

At the heart of our worship/workshop this Sunday--and at the heart of Lent--is the conviction that when we bring our real lives, with all their hurts and burdens, into the sacred space of God's abiding love, transformation takes place. Tears become the rain that nourishes life. Rocks become the soil out of which new life grows. The bread and the cup become symbols of the self-giving love of Christ healing our hearts and making new our lives. From such moments of personal transformation we are then empowered to be instruments of God's healing, justice, and peace in our wider world. The journey inward leads to the journey outwards.

To guide us on that journey, as part of our worship/workshop we will not only plant bulbs for ourselves, we will create kits for shut-ins and our pantry guests. Since many of our pantry guests arrive on foot, bicycle, motorized cart, or pushing a cart, it was important to design a simple, sturdy way to take home a container, gravel, and bulb. All of us—children and adults—will help create such kits so that many of our three hundred weekly pantry guests can soon have a fragrant blossom in their homes. One might ask, why bother with flowers when pantry users really need food? My response is that human beings not only need bread for the body, but also beauty for the soul. I am so grateful that our pantry, as large, busy, and hectic, as it sometimes is, is able to also be a warm, personal, and gracious moment for our guests. By offering a simple kit of a bulb to the families we serve, we remind ourselves of the fundamental human dignity of our guests, and we give to our guests a touch of sacred beauty that may blossom in time for Easter. This is the spirit of the journey inward, journey outward.

On Sunday, March 10, worship returns to the sanctuary. I will have a guest to assist with a dialogue sermon, focusing on the story of the Prodigal Son. Wendy Krom, a faith-based community organizer and practicing Buddhist, will be my guest. She offers rich thoughts on how faith communities can work together to make life better for us all. Her warm heart and creative mind will help us journey more deeply into this holy season of Lent. And, finally, don't forget the book of daily devotions, created by the laity and clergy of our six downtown Protestant churches, that is available for use to deepen us in this Lenten season. Blessings.

EPISTLE

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The next Epistle deadline is March 31 at 11 a.m.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY:

In a recent e-mail Judy White Quackenbush sends her fondest greetings to all her South Church friends. Daughter of the late Harriet and Carlton White, she now lives in New York State, where her mother, Harriet, made her home during her final years and died peacefully just three years ago.

We are grateful for your loyalty to South, Judy, and urge you and Everett to continue to visit often.

FOOD PANTRY



Thank you to all who contributed money to the "Souper Bowl" pots on Super Bowl Sunday.

A special thanks to Lucy and Rose Garrison and Ann Roche for collecting your donations in their very large pots. Two hundred dollars and fifty-seven cents was collected and with that money be purchased 202 dozen eggs.

Our Food Pantry guests were very thankful! Remember-- March is toilet paper month.

Mary Wheat

Joyful Celebration of the Resurrection of Our Lord

This is an event that can never be ignored.

On this great occasion, our salvation was assured.

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!

Submitted by Laura Gamari

LECTIONARY FOR MARCH

March 3 Lenten Worship/Workshop in Barrett Hall with Pot Luck Lunch

Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24

Isaiah 55:1-9

Luke 13:1-9

March 10 Fourth Sunday in Lent Worship returning to our Sanctuary Dialogue Sermon with Wendy Krom Faith Based Community Organization

Joshua 5:9-12

Psalm 32

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

March 10 Evening House Church Gathering, 7 p.m.

Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32

March 17 Fifth Sunday in Lent

Isaiah 43:16-21

Psalm 126

Philemon 3:4b-14

John 12:1-8

March 24 Palm/Passion Sunday

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Luke 19:28-40

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Luke 22:14-23:56

March 28 Maundy Thursday

Psalm 116

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 13:1-17

March 31 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

Easter says you can put truth in a grave, but it won't stay.

Clarence Hall

“SHARING BRINGS JOY”

March 10th, 2013

Our One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be on *Sunday, March 10th* this year. As you make your offering, remember the many ways your gifts bring joy to you, others and God. Know that by sharing your gifts and resources, you are helping to change lives. Many times we are unable to physically meet the needs of others in person. Our gifts allow us to meet those needs and let those in need know that they are worthy because they are beloved children of the Creator and family of us all. They, too, should have the possibilities of joy in their lives. And in so doing, thanksgiving to God will abound, and more people will see how the Lord works through us. This “chain reaction of passing it on” makes God, our divine parent, joyous for a world made better by love.



These gifts help families, displaced by natural disasters or political unrest; receive food, shelter, and the comfort of a safe place to begin rebuilding their lives. They help mothers whose children are threatened by food insecurity due to drought and famine. They dig wells and provide clean water for those women who now have to walk miles for drinkable water for their families. And they build schools for children in their villages that bring learning and hope for the future.

So, please be a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7) on March 10th and feel the joy in your heart knowing that you are one of God’s beloved children extending a generous hand outstretched to help another (Matthew 22:37-40) by giving a gift of love, joy and restoration. Thank you.

Jean Robertson, Mission Board

BEING THANKFUL

A Little Holy Humor

A Rabbi said to a precocious six-year-old boy, "So your mother says your prayers for you each night? That's very commendable. What does she say?"

The little boy replied, "Thank God he's in bed!"

Submitted by Judy Quackenbush

REALIZING A DREAM: I DID IT MY WAY

By Bing Honig

A year or so ago I asked myself “If you were only to have one more year to live, what would you want to have accomplished that you have neglected?” I remembered how I had planned to have my third book printed, a companion to my *Walking in the Light*. While the bulk of it came from earlier times, I had been adding to it over the past twenty years as my life changed. Perhaps its time had come.

When I went to my first writers’ conference in 1982, it was with the hope of interesting an editor in my writing. I had in mind and heart a gentle little book, like one I had read as a teenager, *Adventures in Friendship*. It was by a country man who saw all of life as an adventure, even when it only involved his daily walks in the rural area where he lived. After a charismatic group at a local church changed my life, giving me peace and joy, I began taking my daily walk with a new and open attitude, afterwards writing down what I discovered. It was this material I wanted to see in print.

The all-male panel of editors at the conference who spoke to us, the would-be-published writers, didn’t sound open to such a subject. They wanted material which was about earth-shaking topics. While I did sell articles to various Christian magazines, *Daily Guideposts*, and the *Berkshire Eagle*, I also spent six years on a serious book, until I had finally had enough and went off on a cross-country trip with Clark in our small RV.

In time I did what Walt Whitman and many others have done, and self-published a book of poems, *An Angel—Or a Fool?* and my first book of an inspirational nature. Last year I asked Meg Huntington to be my typist and co-designer of what I call *Inner Light from a Daily Walk*. While the book itself took shape, for a frustrating year I couldn’t design a front cover which pleased me.

In November, at the church Craft Fair, I met a talented young woman, Dawn Greene, who designs and prints her own greeting cards. On one of these was an image which was just what I had been carrying in my heart. It was a serendipitous moment. She allowed me to pay her and use it on the cover, and in January three cartons of books arrived from The Troy Bookmakers in Troy, New York, who had helped me realize my dream.



MAY MATTOON

Noon luncheon for February 5th was well attended. It was a bright and sunny day with good traveling on clear roads. Upon our entrance, we were met with festive table settings of red and white trimmings in a Valentine theme, which made for a cheery atmosphere.

After consuming our lunch amidst happy chatter, a brief business meeting was held. It was noted that the cookie plates prepared and delivered to recovering patients of operations (knee, hip, or other) and shut-ins were greatly appreciated and happily received.

Pat Hill asked for help in preparing a Spaghetti Supper on Saturday, February 23rd – proceeds will help with kitchen upgrades and cleaning.

We then proceeded with our program for the day, making Valentines. Bing Honig had prepared a table with a great variety of Valentine trims consisting of stickers, hearts, lacey cutouts, and plain cards with envelopes -- all awaited our own designs. Cards were made for grandchildren, friends, husbands, shut-ins, or persons of one's own choice. Another session of happy chatter accompanied our efforts.

Hostesses for this meeting were Shirley Vickery, Pam Kueppers, and Pat Hill. Dessert was cherry cobbler topped with whipped cream. You guessed it – yummy!

Our next meeting will be Tuesday noon on March 5th. The program will be "Hearts of the Father Outreach /Ghana Project" presented by Jill Lipsky. Hostesses are Pat Hill and Arlene Emerson.

Don't forget to bring toilet articles for the Food Pantry and, of course, don't forget your sandwich. Till then...
Alice Gallup

CHURCH KEYS

If you currently have church keys and no longer need them, please return them to the church office. If you paid a deposit for the keys, your money will be returned to you. Thank you.

Join Us!

LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

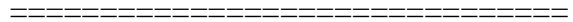
Well here we are again! Another month has passed and we are still hoping some of you will decide to come and join us on Thursday mornings at 9:30.

This month we have spent a couple of Thursdays sewing dresses for the Hearts of The Father Foundation. This organization has built orphanages and travels to Ghana, Uganda, Mozambique, India, and Cambodia bringing the children clothes, school supplies, medicine and more.

Jill Lipsky, who is part of the Hearts of the Father Foundation, has just returned from another trip and will be with us on March 5th at the May Mattoon luncheon. She will have pictures for us to see. Hopefully, the girls and boys will be wearing some of the dresses and shorts I have made. You don't need to be a member of either group to attend.

Please join us. EVERYONE is welcome.

Marge Demary



It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.

Aristotle

LORD AND TAILOR NEWS

We are looking forward to spring with some colorful pre-season clothes. Our Easter items are also out. Our sweater sale continues with buy one, get one free. There will be other specials as well, as we gradually put away winter clothes.

Thank you to all for everything you do, all the beautiful donations and most especially to our wonderful volunteers.

Don't forget our upcoming Tag Sale on March 9th from 9 to 3. We will need help for set up on Friday, the 8th, and assistance on Saturday.



Helping us helps the church! THINK SPRING!

Nancy deForest and Audra Kinner

LENTEN BOOKLETS

During Lent a book of daily devotions written primarily by the laity—and a few by the clergy—of the six downtown Protestant churches is available to deepen your experience of this holy and reflective season. This is one project undertaken by our downtown churches to strengthen the “Protestant Presence” in our community. And it’s been a lot of fun!

The book debuted at our joint Ash Wednesday service held at Zion Lutheran. Eight readings were prepared by members of South. Pam Kueppers wrote for February 13, Bing Honig for February 19, Pat Hill for February 23, Marge Demary for February 25, Cindy Dickinson for March 16, Scott Haskell for March 24, Nancy deForest for March 26, and Tora Huntington for March 28. Many thanks to all who wrote and shared their thoughts and faith.

Since there are forty eight entries overall, we have split the printed version into three sections. The first covers February 13 to February 24, the second, February 25 to March 16, and the third from March 16 to Easter Sunday. Copies are available in the church office or in the parlor. Alternatively you can access the daily readings online at: Pittsfieldprogressives.tumblr.com.

Enjoy the journey of Lent.

Joel



GOD’S WHISPERS

The man whispered, "God, speak to me" and a meadowlark sang.
But the man did not hear.



So the man yelled, "God speak to me" and the thunder rolled across the sky.
But the man did not listen
The man looked around and said, "God let me see you." And a star shined brightly.
But the man did not see.
And then the man shouted, "God show me a miracle." And a life was born.
But the man did not notice.
So the man cried out in despair, "Touch me God, and let me know you are here."
Whereupon, God reached down and touched the man.

But the man brushed the butterfly away and walked on.

This is a great reminder that God is always around us in the little and simple things that we take for granted- even in our electronic age. So let us add one more.

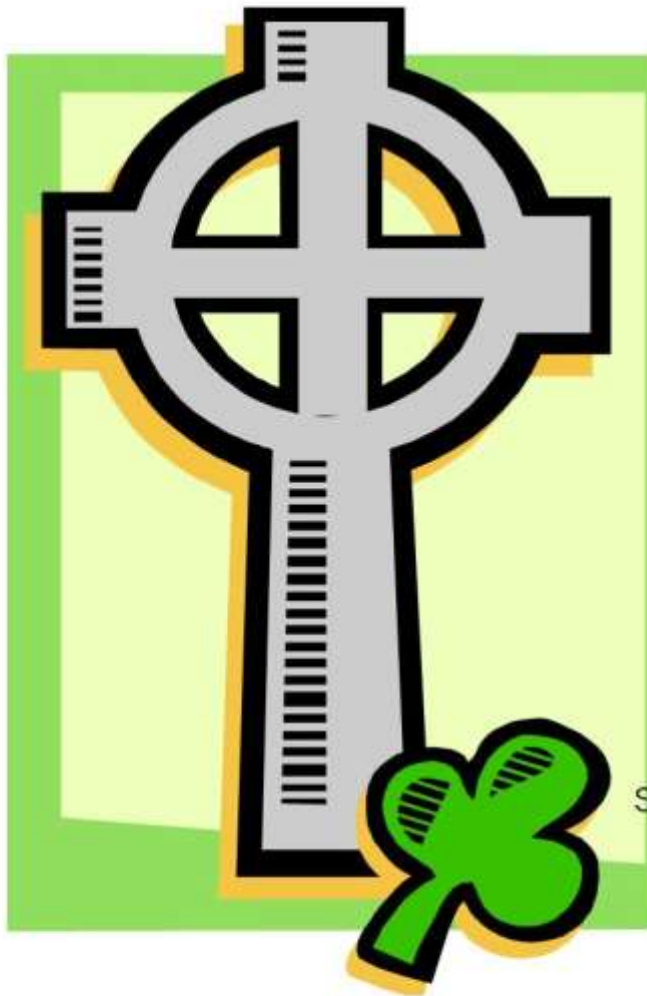
The man cried, "God, I need your help!" And an e-mail arrived reaching out with good news and encouragement. But the man deleted it and continued crying.

Don't miss out on a blessing because it isn't packaged the way you expect.



CORNED BEEF AND CABBAGE DINNER

To benefit the Elizabeth Freeman Center



Friday, March 15, 2013
5:30 p.m.
South Congregational Church
110 South St
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Tickets: \$15.00 per person \$40.00 per family
Available at the door, from church members or
For reservations call the church office at 442 - 7357



CB Easter Flowers

Dear Friend,

Easter is coming and it is time to think about Easter memorials. The flowers will be in church on Easter Sunday, March 31. If you are interested in a lily or tulip at \$15.00 a plant, or a cash gift, please indicate below and mail to:

Mary Wheat
23 Ivy Lane, Pittsfield, MA 01201

_____ I wish to order and take my lily with me after service on Easter, March 31st.

_____ I wish to order and take my tulip with me after service on Easter, March 31st.

(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 24



March 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					¹ Lord & Tailor 10 am AA 6:15 pm	² AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm
³ Sunday Worship/Workshop With Communion In Barrett Hall 10 am Pot Luck Luncheon Women's Book Club 11:30 am	⁴ Yarn Spinners 7 pm Faith Based Organizing Meeting hosted by South 1 pm	⁵ May Mattoon Luncheon Noon Men's Forum Noon	⁶ Food Pantry 8 – 11 am UCC Clergy Meeting Noon St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	⁷ Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am 12-Step Class 6:30 pm Chancel Choir 7 pm	⁸ Lord & Tailor 10 am AA 6:15 pm Tag Sale Set-Up 1 – 4 pm	⁹ AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor Tag Sale 9 am -3 pm
¹⁰ DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS Sunday Worship In the Sanctuary 10 am "One Great Hour of Sharing" Offering "House Church" In the Parlor 7 pm	¹¹ Yarn Spinners 7 pm	¹² Men's Forum Noon Mission Board 7:15 pm Diaconate 7 pm	¹³ Food Pantry 8 – 11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm Called To Care 5:15 pm Trustees 6 pm	¹⁴ Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am 12-Step Class 6:30 pm Chancel Choir 7 pm	¹⁵ Lord & Tailor 10 am AA 6:15 pm Mission Board Corned Beef Dinner 6 pm	¹⁶ AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm Pittsfield Squares 7pm
¹⁷ Sunday Worship 10 am New Members Gathering 11:30	¹⁸ Yarn Spinners 7 pm	¹⁹ Men's Forum Noon	²⁰ Food Pantry 8-11 am Berkshire Place Worship 10:45 am Church & Ministry 4 pm St. Joe's Dinner 5:00 pm	²¹ Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am 12-Step Class 6:30 pm Chancel Choir 7pm	²² Lord & Tailor 10 am AA 6:15 pm	²³ AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm
²⁴ PALM/PASSION SUNDAY Sunday Worship 10 am Receiving of New Members	²⁵ Yarn Spinners 7 pm	²⁶ Men's Forum Noon Church Council 7 pm	²⁷ Food Pantry 8-11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	²⁸ MAUNDY THURSDAY Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Maundy Thursday Worship 7:30 pm	²⁹ GOOD FRIDAY Lord & Tailor 10 am AA 6:15 pm	³⁰ HOLY SATURDAY Lord & Tailor 10 am AA 6:15 pm
³¹ EASTER SUNDAY Worship 10 am Epistle Deadline 11 am						