



Epistle

SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

110 South Street



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May 2013

In my pastoral contract with South Church--signed back in June 1989--provision is made for a sabbatical leave of three months to be offered the pastor after six years of ministry. The purpose of the leave was to give the pastor time for rest and renewal so that ministry could be reengaged with energy and spirit. The parish would also have time to step back from the ongoing pastoral relationship in order to experience new forms of ministry. The hope was that the overall sabbatical experience would nourish and invigorate the ministry of South Church and lead to a long and healthy pastoral relationship. That vision put in writing 24 years ago continues to bear abundant fruit! I had remarkable sabbatical experiences in 1995, 2001, 2007, and am getting ready for a new set of experiences this summer. During those sabbaticals our Peirson Intern program gave a seminarian the opportunity to function as pastor for a summer. Beth Spaulding, Carolyn Peck, and Anne-Clark Killam each grew significantly from being our intern for a sabbatical. During those times I hiked sections of the Appalachian Trail, went to Ecuador on an eye mission clinic, took a house-building course, retraced the travels of the 17th century explorer, LaSalle, wrote a personal memoir, built a deck, climbed Mt. Katahdin a few times, canoed down the Penobscot River, spent time with Tora, Lia, and Meg, read many books, and enlarged the space in my heart for the presence of the holy. All along the way South Church has grown and deepened even as the times have kept changing and shifting. Honoring the Sabbath is a core theme of the spiritual life. South Church has modeled that principle of holy renewal faithfully and well.

Each sabbatical experience is unique. My plan for this summer is to take only one-half of the three month leave so that I can be here for the month of June to facilitate the transition with our Peirson intern and wrap up the church year. I will take two weeks off in May (May 15-29) and then be away for July and August, returning on Sunday, September 1. One of those months will be my usual summer vacation and the other a month of sabbatical. At the same time our intern, Barbara Rice, who will be graduating from Union Theological in May, will arrive on June 1 to spend three months with us in ministry. A brief background on Barbara is included in this Epistle. Our scholarship committee did a marvelous job of sorting through a number of applications, and we are very pleased to have Barbara for the summer!

During my two weeks in May I plan to hike all or part of the New York section of the Appalachian Trail. This includes hiking a bridge over the Hudson and walking through a zoo. I find such times of solitude in the woods deeply nourishing and always meet remarkable thru-hikers. I don't have grand plans for July and August. But Meg has invited me to come and spend time in Washington D.C. There I could visit and learn more about the Church of the Savior, which has been a model for ministry from the time I was in college. Lia has time free in August, and we are beginning to plan a possible hike. Tora and I plan to spend time in Maine with Tora's sister, Margaret, who has a home overlooking the Penobscot. Once there we will have some great adventures! One hope I have is to begin writing a new spiritual memoir that would help integrate the experiences and reflections of the past few years that have been so transformative. Who knows where that will lead? But that's the point of a sabbatical, to walk off the beaten path and make room to follow where God might lead. Given past experiences, this summer should be a season of abundance for both me, my family, and South Church.



WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB
March 2013- February 2014
March- The Secret Life of Bees

by Sue Monk Kidd

April- The Light Between Oceans by ML Stedmen

May- Bel Canto by Ann Patchett

June- Sarah's Daughter by Ruth Bass

July- Years of Wonder: A Novel of the Plague

by Geraldine Brooks

August- Warmth of Other Suns by Isabel Wilkerson

Sept.- Breakfast with Buddha by Roland Merullo

Oct.- Skeletons at the Feast by Chris Bohjan

Nov.- The Lost Memory of Skin by Russell Banks

Dec.- The Forgotten Waltz by Anne Enright

January- Night Road by Kristin Hannah

February- The Lower River by Paul Theroux

More to enjoy

Rise and Shine by Anna Quinlin, The Painted Girls

by Cathy Buchanan and Shelter Me by Juliette Fay.

You are welcome to join us at any time. We are having some very interesting discussions and a lot of fun!
~Susan Kaufman

HOUSATONIC RIVER CLEAN UP DAY
Saturday, May 11

Would you like to participate in a different kind of spring cleaning? The annual Housatonic River clean-up day will take place Saturday morning, May 11. We will meet at Fred Garner Park on Pomeroy Avenue at 9 A.M and paddle to Decker Landing on New Lenox Road, Lenox. Along the way all kinds of trash and debris will be collected.

At Decker Landing there will be a picnic lunch for all participants. This is a project of the Berkshire Environmental Action Team that is being supported by both First and South Church.

You can go to www.thebeatnews.org for more information about this event and other clean-ups happening throughout the summer. A sign-up sheet and posters are on display in the Parlor.

If you would like to be part of the South Church "Action Team" please speak to Rev. Joel.

The Fresh Air Fund is Looking for Volunteer Host Families in the Berkshires. Open Your Home to an Inner-City Child.

Host Families are volunteers who open their hearts and home to give city children an experience they will never forget.

Since 1877, The Fresh Air Fund has provided free summer experiences for more than 1.7 million New York City Children.

Each summer, thousands of inner-city children visit host families across 13 states. A visit to the home of a warm and loving volunteer host family can make all the difference in the world to an inner-city child – all it takes to create lifelong memories is laughing in the sunshine and making new friends. Fresh air children are boys and girls from 6-12 years old who live in New York City. Children stay for up to two weeks.

For additional information, contact Lelia Bruun at (413) 528-6701.

Postal Service Food Drive Sat., May 11th

The Letter Carriers Food Drive will be held on Saturday, May 11th. It's the 21st year of the nationwide drive and is the world's largest one-day food drive. One in six Americans live in food insecure households. Food insecurity means not knowing from where your next meal will come.



Last year the Pittsfield Letter Carriers were able to collect and donate food to over sixteen local Food Pantries within Central Berkshire County. It is very easy to participate – all you have to do is leave food by your mailbox and your Letter Carrier will pick it up.

Please help us stamp out hunger in our community.

Thank you in advance!

Mike Callahan
Food Drive Coordinator,
Pittsfield Post Office

Thank you to all of you who joined us for the corned beef and cabbage dinner on March 15. Because of your generosity we were able to give the Elizabeth Freeman Center a donation of \$500.00.

The Mission Board

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

Aristotle

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
Central Berkshire Habitat
for Humanity workday is
Saturday, June 1st. We will be
 joining First Congregational
 Church volunteers. Work hours
 are 8:00 - 2:00; location to be
 announced.



For more information, or to sign up, contact
 Will Garrison at garrisonfamily77@gmail.com or
 443-0164. Anyone over the age of 16 is welcome
 to join the fun!

Needed

One of the guests to our Food Pantry is looking
 for a gently-used, button-down dress shirt for her
 son to wear to his graduation. They are hoping to
 find a men's large, short-sleeve (hopefully blue)
 dress shirt. If you have something that may be
 appropriate and are willing to donate, please
 contact Paula at sochurch@nycap.rr.com or
 442-7357. Thank you.

LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

Our small group of quilters has increased by one
 member so far. Jeannine Rontowski has joined us
 and we are so happy to have her. There is always
 room for more, so come join us!

The Harvest Craft Fair has been scheduled for
 Saturday, November 9th and our hopes are to have
 the mystery closet projects completed before then.
 We are also looking for NEW ideas for projects for
 the Craft Fair. If you have any ideas please share
 them with us. We want to make this Fair even
 more successful than last year.

Lisa Stuart is joining us occasionally. If you
 have time on a Thursday, call the office to find
 out if she is here and stop in. She would love to
 see you.
 Marge Demary

Editor's Note: A note from Lisa expressing her
 thanks to all for kindness extended to her may be
 found on page 2 of this issue of *Epistle*.

LECTIONARY FOR MAY

May 5 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

Communion Sunday
 Acts 16:9-15
 Psalm 67
 Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5
 John 5:1-9

May 5 – 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
 of personal stories of growth and faith, based on
 Acts 16:9-15. All are welcome.

May 12 Seventh Sunday of Easter- Mother's Day

Acts 16:16-34
 Psalm 97
 Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21
 John 17:20-26

May 19 -Pentecost Sunday –Rev. Kay Loudon

Guest Preacher
 Acts 2:1-21
 Genesis 11:1-9
 Psalm 104:24-35
 John 14:8-17 (25, 27)

May 26 –Trinity Sunday – Guest Preacher

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31
 Psalm 8
 Romans 5:1-5
 John 16:12-15

WHATEVER THE WEATHER

Whether the weather be fine,
 Whether the weather be not,
 Whether the weather be cold,
 Whether the weather be hot,
 We'll weather the weather
 Whatever the whether,
 Whether we like it or not.
 Author unknown

**THE 3RD ANNUAL ST. JOSEPH CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL
HALL OF FAME INDUCTION AND BENEFIT GALA**

John Moore and Rev. Huntington attended the 3rd annual celebration of St. Joseph's High School at the invitation of Sister Kathryn Flanagan. Sister Kathryn was one of ten individuals being honored by St. Joseph's for outstanding service to the school and the wider community. The booklet accompanying the evening included a description of Sister Kathryn's work and ministry. Since Sister Kathryn, the Roman Catholic community, and South Church continue to collaborate so deeply in the ministry of "St. Joseph's Kitchen at South Church" what was written in the booklet is included below. What a gift this ecumenical ministry is to our church and community. Thank you, Sister Kathryn, John Moore, the Mission Board, and all the volunteers, for creating and sustaining this remarkable ministry.

Sr. Kathryn Flanagan, a native of Gardner, Massachusetts is one of eight children born to Irene and John Flanagan. A twin to Kevin, she is third in her family rank. Her early years of education were nurtured at Sacred Heart School and Gardner High School.

Sr. Kathryn entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in 1955 and soon after began her collegiate studies at the College of Our Lady of the Elms earning a Bachelor of Arts degree. Her graduate studies were completed at Worcester State College where she earned her Master of Education degree and certification as a Reading Specialist as well as certification in School Administration.

Professionally Sister taught at St. Mary School in Pittsfield, Westfield and Lee as well as at Blessed Sacrament in Holyoke. In 1970 she was named principal of Our Lady of Hope School in Springfield. At that time she initiated a highly acclaimed non-graded school. From 1975-1995 Sister taught English, served as Reading Specialist at St. Joseph High School in Pittsfield as well as served as Director of Community Service. During this time she instituted and served as director of St. Joseph Soup Kitchen (which has evolved to this day as St. Joseph Kitchen and Pantry at South Congregational Church.) This collaborative and ecumenical ministry serves the homeless and the needy each Wednesday evening of the year as it has done since founded at St. Joseph High School twenty-six years ago.

Presently, Sister Kathryn ministers to the parishioners of Sacred Heart Parish in Pittsfield. She also serves as liaison for Habitat for Humanity and various civic endeavors during the year. Sr. Kathryn as a Sister of Saint Joseph exemplifies the mission of her community "to unite neighbor with neighbor and neighbor with God without distinction."

FOOD PANTRY

Have you ever tried to imagine not having a house, apartment, trailer or tent to go home to, or a family and friends to welcome you?

Because of some unforeseen circumstances you find yourself alone with no housing or food, facing an operation or cancer treatment (luckily God is with everyone). Some of the people who come to our food pantry are looking for a friendly face and some food. One man helps early in the day on Wednesday mornings and yet he takes only milk, cereal, fruit and bread because he has no place to live or to cook. Many insecure people (354 families) came this past week to our pantry.

Thank you for donating toilet paper and food to help spread out the supply we receive from the pantry in Hatfield. May is toilet paper and Ramon noodle month. The homeless like the noodles because they can simply add water.

Mary Wheat



"Mothers hold their children's hands for a short while, but their hearts forever." Author Unknown

**SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Through 4/1/2013

	YTD	ANNUAL
	Actual	Budget
Income		
Operating	\$56,008	\$174,502
Expenses		
Salaries	\$32,009	\$ 146,230
Operating	<u>\$22,540</u>	<u>\$ 80,200</u>
Total	\$54,549	\$ 226,430
Net Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 1,459	\$ (51,928)

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

Dale Prindle,
Chairman, Board of Trustees

THRIFT SHOP NEWS

It must be spring, because we put our winter clothes away for a colder time. Even with the unpredictable New England weather, the shop is blossoming with bright new spring colors. Late last fall, we were given a very nice donation of wonderful spring and summer clothes that we carefully put away for this year.

Recently, we also received a very generous donation of beautiful jewelry. It has been very popular. So far this year we have been able to give the church \$2000. We are hoping to do well this year, to be able to help with the many church projects that are badly needed.

Thanks to all our special volunteers and to those of you who donate. We really appreciate it. Helping us helps our church.

HAPPY SPRING !!

Nancy deforest and Audra Kinner

MAY MATTOON



On entering the parlor on April 2nd, we were met with the colors of spring – green like the grass, yellow like daffodils, purple like crocuses, and varied colorful small plants that dressed the tables. It's was a sight that set

the mood for pleasant conversation, tasty sandwiches and flavorful desserts.

After we had consumed and digested all this, we took time for a short business meeting. It was confirmed that a check for \$250 dollars sent to the Hearts of the Father Outreach, which was our program presentation in March. A letter was read from Judie Grady sent to the "Mattooners" via Ruth Campbell. Judie sounded happy and is enjoying life in the South. She had been to a Yankee baseball game – always a highlight for Judie.

Our program for the April meeting was a delightful presentation by Ruth Bass, writer and author. Her subject was "Creating Your Own Family History – Why I Write and Why You Should Perhaps Too." Ruth provided a list of 19 questions as an outline to help get one started on such a project. She guarantees you'll enjoy it and your children and grandchildren, if you have such, will enjoy it as well, and all will enjoy going back and reading it again. We all enjoyed her shared stories relating past events from her own family history which were fun and entertaining. I feel the program inspired a lot of us to think about writing a history of our own genealogy and stories relating to family events.

The May program will be on a Tuesday evening and will be our spring dinner out. Where, time, and date to be decided. Hostesses are Ruth Austin and Ruth Campbell. Save your appetite!

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The nicest place to be is in someone's thoughts,
the safest place to be is in someone's prayers,
and the very best place to be is
in the hands of God.

Contributed by Roy Jones



The Chancel Choir wore its new robes for the first time on Easter Sunday. The robes were paid for in part with extra money from the Hymnal Project.



“Vocal music is an attempt to take the whole human being and project it into space. It is the ultimate gesture of getting out of yourself. You take a part of you that is most private, most personal, most inward, and you hurl it out into space – you project it as far as you can.

That gesture of opening this whole region of the body results in an enormous spiritual release, and is felt by other people with tremendous impact.”

Quote by Peters Sellars in Bill Moyer’s book, *A World of Ideas II*



MAY 2013

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
			1 Food Pantry 8 – 11 am Berkshire Place Worship Service 10:45 am UCC Clergy Noon St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	2 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am 12-Step Class 6:30 pm Chancel Choir 7 pm	3 Lord & Tailor 10 am – 4 pm AA 6:15 pm	4 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm
5 6 th Sunday of Easter Worship 10am Women's Book Club 11:30am Church Women United 2:30 pm "House Church" In the Parlor 7 pm	6 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	7 Men's Forum Noon May Mattoon Spring Dinner Out 5:30 pm Church Council 7pm	8 Food Pantry 8 – 11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm Trustees 6 pm	9 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am 12-Step Class 6:30 pm Chancel Choir 7 pm	10 Lord & Tailor 10 am – 4 pm AA 6:15 pm	11 Post Office Food Drive Housatonic River Trash Clean-Up by Canoe 9 am AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm
12 MOTHER'S DAY 7 th Sunday of Easter Worship 10 am	13 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	14 Men's Forum Noon Diaconate 7 pm	15 Food Pantry 8-11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	16 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am 12-Step Class 6:30 pm Chancel Choir 7 pm	17 Lord & Tailor 10 am – 4 pm AA 6:15 pm	18 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm Pittsfield Squares 7pm
19 Pentecost Sunday Worship 10 am Guest Rev. Kay Loudon	20 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	21 Men's Forum Noon Mission Board 7 pm	22 Food Pantry 8-11 am Church & Ministry 4 pm St. Joe's Dinner 5:00 pm	23 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am 12-Step Class 6:30 pm Chancel Choir 7pm	24 Lord & Tailor 10 am – 4 pm AA 6:15 pm	25 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm
26 Trinity Sunday Worship 10 am <i>Epistle Deadline 11 am</i>	27 MEMORIAL DAY	28 Men's Forum Noon	29 Food Pantry 8-11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm Parish Nurse Ministries "Building Resiliency" Presentation 7 pm	30 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am 12-Step Class 6:30 pm Chancel Choir 7pm	31 Lord & Tailor 10 am – 4 pm h AA 6:15 pm	June 1 Habitat Work Day 8 am – 2 pm AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm

"BOUNCE"



Building Resiliency

What gives some people the ability to bounce back from stress and life difficulties? This presentation will review current thinking from several fields of psychology and wellness and discuss what we all can do to become better able to overcome life challenges.

Speaker:	Mark Kenyon, LMFT, LADC-I, CEAP
When:	Wednesday, May 29, 2013 7:00 PM
Where:	South Congregational Church 110 South St Pittsfield
Free and Open to the Public	

**Light Refreshments will be served
Parking behind church off Church St**

Sponsored by: The Parish Nurse/Community Faith Ministries of Berkshire County