



Epistle

SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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April 2015

As I sit to write these words Holy Week has just begun. We are entering the darkness of Jesus' final days and stand in the shadows of his betrayal and death. But by the time you receive this Epistle Easter will be upon us and we will hear these words from the Gospel of Mark: *"Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, here is the place they laid him."* On Sunday, with Bob Blafield at the organ, we will be awakened to the light of the resurrection as we sing majestic Easter hymns and experience anew the Presence of Christ. There will be rich anthems from our Chancel Choir, who will be joined by trumpeter, Steven Russell, and soloists, Becky Hoffman, Campbell Bridges, and Elena Pullano. We will share Easter greetings, enjoy the beauty of tulips and lilies, build a tower of tuna—making visual the ways God multiplies our small gifts—and reflect on the meaning of the Resurrection. Following worship there will be an Easter Egg hunt for all the children. It will be a day of joy.

What is the meaning of Resurrection? What does it mean to believe that Jesus rose from the dead? The disciples met the Risen Christ. The Gospel writers wrote about it. The Church made it into a doctrine to be confessed. But what does it really mean for us? It's something that happened a long time ago and is meant to give us hope that in the end God will transform all the death, evil, and pain of this world into light and love. But is the Risen Christ with us now in the midst of our world and its troubled mix of light and dark, shadow and sun? Can we experience Resurrection today? The angel in Mark's Gospel tells the women at the tomb to *"Look!"* They were to let go of fear and agony and truly look at what was and wasn't there in the tomb. Jesus wasn't there, which was in itself a glimpse of something more--something holy. Often, we need angels of one kind or another to help us get beyond our self-absorption--our fears, anxieties, and all the rest--to see glimpses of that something more that is right here.

Ministry gives me the opportunity to encounter the troubling mix of light and dark nearly every day. And ministry at South gives me ample opportunity to encounter glimpses of things deep and holy. For instance, this week our photo exhibit "Take Another Look" opens at Pittsfield's Lichtenstein Art Center on Renne Avenue. Nick DeCandias's tender and powerful black and white photos of various sizes are on display. They are candid portraits from our South Church Pantry, the community Thanksgiving Distribution we host, and our weekly St. Joe's Kitchen. These photos of guests, volunteers, and moments of connection are revealing. In the daily rush it's easy to not really see very much. But through the eye of an artist we are invited to see all the way down. When we follow that lead we see what's truly in front of us. Then we begin to see what's below—our complex human identity and reality etched on the faces looking back at us. But then if we keep going we begin to catch glimpses of something more. What is it? Maybe it's nothing. Maybe it's my imagination. But is that the reflected light of the face of Christ shining through the tears, agony, struggle, compassion, mercy, and gentle smiles of those faces? Is the risen Christ right here on display at the Lichtenstein Art Center? You tell me. Go, take a look—and maybe be changed like those women at the tomb.

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
- Food Pantry Mary Wheat
- May Mattoon Alice Gallup
- Ladies Benevolent Marge Demary
- Men's Forum John Anthony
- Production and Mailing Paula Haskell

The next Epistle deadline is April 26 at 11 AM.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Sincere congratulations to Mary Rentz!

Mary was one of three honorees awarded the BERKSHIRE AWARD for 2015 on March 13th. This honor is bestowed recognizing those in the greater Berkshire community who create, keep and promote our artistic, historic, and natural heritage.

We salute you Mary, and are happy you are in our midst here at South.



In memoriam:

- John "Jack" Dietrich Tuesday, March 3
- Janet Monterosso Wednesday, March 26

We welcomed two new members into the fellowship of South Church on Palm Sunday, March 29th:



Lyndsay Isham- Morton, sponsored by Ann Roche, and Michael Sullivan, sponsored by Kerry Sullivan.

Congratulations to you both; we wish you many meaningful years of participation and friendships.

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES

During the Lenten season the children have been exploring the themes of facing fears, staying faithful, embracing change and the mystery of eternal life.



On March 15th the Lenten Workshop took place.

Following a pot-luck meal, a Bible study was offered for adults and a craft time for children and families. Children of all ages enjoyed planting seeds, sand art, face painting and decorating felt crosses. The following Sunday our moderator Kerry Sullivan joined us. With Kerry's fun and loving guidance, we baked "empty tombs." While they were baking, an interactive lesson explored the death and resurrection of Jesus. Children role-played as Jesus' disciples and Mary Magdalene. Thank you Kerry!

As Easter approaches the members of the Children and Youth Committee are busy preparing for the Annual Easter Egg Hunt! This annual event will take place immediately after the Easter Sunday Service. All children are welcome to join in the fun. We will meet in the red carpet area following worship.

Lessons for later in April will explore how Jesus is present with the disciples in a new way, and our own struggles to understand how Christ is alive and with us today. The curriculum follows the great 50 days from Easter to Pentecost. There's a lot to learn and look forward to!

Ann Roche, Youth and Children's Director

SOUTH CHURCH BOOK CLUB

Our next books, dates and a fun Field Trip are as follows:

April 12th - The Girl on the Train by Hawkins

May 3rd - Sara & Eleanor by Pottker

We have planned a trip to the Roosevelt homes in Hyde Park and probably lunch at the CIA on May the 8th. All are welcome; just let us know you will be joining us.

June 7th - Mill Children by Marshall

We meet shortly after church and discuss our current book and choose future selections.

Pam Garrett



DOWNTOWN EASTER CELEBRATION

*Sunday, April 19th, at
2:00 p.m.
Front Lawn of St.
Joseph's
on North Street, Pittsfield*

Worship

Music

Barbeque

Sponsored by Cathedral in the Night

Questions, please call 413-448-8276

TAKE ANOTHER LOOK

**A Photographic Essay on Food
Insecurity in Pittsfield:**

Nicholas DeCandia, Photographer
Videography by Michael Sinopoli,
Greylock Productions

LICHTENSTEIN CENTER FOR THE ARTS

April 3 – April 25, 2015

Opening April 3, 5-8 pm

Gallery Hours WED – SAT. 11 am – 4 pm

Collection Site for non-perishables: Tuna, Soup,
Spaghetti Sauce, Peanut Butter

Through these images from the South Church Food
Pantry and the documentary, *A Place at the Table*,
comprehend the dignity, strength and dilemma of
neighbors trying to feed themselves and their
families on minimal wages and incomes.

From the Board of Missions

“In the course of history, there comes a time when humanity is called to shift to a new level of consciousness, to reach a moral ground. A time when we have to shed our fear and give hope to each other. That time is now.”



Wangari Maathai - A beautiful and touching story of a tribe in Africa called “Ubuntu” (oo-boon-too).....

An anthropologist had been studying the habits and customs of this tribe. As he was waiting for transportation to the airport to take him home, he was surrounded by the children of the tribe. So to help pass the time before he left, he proposed a game for the children to play.

He'd bought lots of candy and sweets in the city, so he put everything in a basket with a beautiful ribbon attached. He placed it under a solitary tree, and then called the kids together. He drew a line on the ground and explained they should wait behind the line for his signal. And, when he said, “Go”, they should rush over to the basket and the first to arrive there would win all the candies.

When he said, “Go”, all of the children unexpectedly held each other's hands and ran off to the tree as a group. Once there, they shared the candy with each other and happily ate it.

When the anthropologist asked them why they had gone together, especially when the first one to arrive could have won everything in the basket, a young girl simply replied, “How can one of us be happy if all the others are sad?”. It was at this moment, the anthropologist really understood their true essence.....

Ubuntu - I am because we are.

“Africans have a thing called Ubuntu. It is about the essence of being human. It embraces hospitality, caring about others, being willing to go the extra mile for the sake of another. We believe that a person is a person through other persons; that my humanity is caught up and bound, inextricably, with yours. When I dehumanize you, I inexorably dehumanize myself. The solitary human being is a contradiction in terms. Therefore you seek to work for the common good because your humanity comes into its own in community, in belonging.” Desmond Tutu

Submitted by Jean Robertson

MAY MATTOON

As you entered the Parlor, you knew instantly that the hostesses were acknowledging St. Patrick's Day. Green plates, green napkins with white polka dots, green shamrocks and dishes of green grapes decorated the tables. Also decorative pots of white and green geraniums filled out the décor. The sight of all that green was a "pick-me-up" moment. Looking forward to seeing more green, especially outside.



During the business meeting, it was voted to hold a Bake Sale on Sunday, March 29. Be prepared to bake and contribute. May Mattoon voted to purchase two lilies in memory of past members.

It was decided to give a gift of \$100 to Nick DiCandia, who is presently documenting the people who are part of the community Food Pantry and meals at South Church. This work along with a previous photo essay on the Christian Center will go on view at the Lichtenstein Center for the Arts in April, under the title of "Take Another Look."

Our program for this meeting was entitled "Underground Railroad" and presented by Bertha Lawrence. The Underground Railroad was not underground nor a railroad. It was called by that name because of the swift and secret way in which Negro slaves could escape to the North. In that period, quilts were fashioned containing symbols designating routes and locations to obtain help.

For instance, if a square in the quilt contained bow ties it conveyed a location where clothing could be obtained. Flying geese gave direction and so on. They were told to travel in the spring when tracking would be more difficult. Other squares indicated a waterway escape route when overland was considered more dangerous. It was necessary to pack only essentials, which included a few hand tools. Many went all the way to Canada. Obviously it was a frightful, tough, and dangerous journey. The talk was very informative – a sad segment of American history.

Also on display was a beautiful quilt by Sandy Rawson, a new member of our May Mattoon class.

Hostesses were Pat Hill and Arlene Emerson who served a tasty pumpkin cake with a nutty butter cream frosting. Excellent! For our Tuesday, April 7th meeting, hostesses are Mary Wheat, Janet Rusk and Alice Gallup. The presentation will be by Kathy Reilly of the Local History Department of the Berkshire Athenaeum. Remember your sandwich and Food Pantry toilet articles for both men and women.

Alice Gallup

THE FOOD PANTRY

Thanks

The Food Pantry has been very busy serving and helping families. (This week we had 475 families come for food.) Without your help we would not survive.

Thank you to the Mission Board for raising money through their Coffee House and the Sunday School for their Souper Bowl donation of food and cans of tuna fish for Easter.

On April 3rd, Good Friday, "Take Another Look" will try to bring awareness of the needs of the people who use the Food Pantry. There will be pictures, videos, and recordings at the Lichtenstein Center for the Arts from 5 to 8 p.m. The Center will be open Wednesdays through Saturdays in the month of April. I hope you will come and view it.

The movie "A Place at the Table" will be shown on Sunday, April 12th at the Berkshire Museum followed by a question and answer period.

Thank you for your help and your donations. April will be toilet paper month.

Mary Wheat

LORD & TAILOR NEWS

Our big event this month was our very successful tag sale on March 21. We are pleased to have made \$1400 between the sale and the shop. Thanks to all who volunteered. It made the setup go very smoothly, and we really appreciated the help. Also thanks to all who donated. There were a lot of very nice things. Thanks, too, to those of us who are our best customers and who just couldn't leave empty handed.

Our half-price sale on clothes is still going on, but we will have some spring items out soon. We will be giving the church \$700 this month.

HAPPY EASTER! HAPPY SPRING!

Nancy deForest and Audra Kinner

NOT PAYING ATTENTION

As I put together this issue of *Epistle*, snow is falling outside the window.

It appears that Mother Nature does not consult the calendar.

Priscilla Anthony



THE LAND

To establish a frame for this paper, it is helpful to view a period photograph of South Church with the original tall steeple posted in the church hall. Paving has not yet appeared for the walkway and the graveled roadway called South Street. At the front and side of the church is a series of chains supported by concrete posts marking the property boundaries. South of the church is the parsonage of First Congregational Church, inheritor of the First Congregational Society. The term "church" was not in general usage in early settlements. The First Congregational Society was a large landowner in the town of Pittsfield and residents were required to pay a tax to the Society to remain in good standing. In 1843, the First Congregational Society sold the subject and following property assets to the Trustees of the Congregational Ministerial Fund.

The measurement of land beneath South Church actually starts at a point 149 feet to the north measured from the south side of Thomas B. Strong's office. This measured point then becomes the marker from which all dimensions are based and called the northeast corner of South Church property. This would be what is now known as the "southeast corner of Church Street in the southerly line of South Street". Thomas Strong was a Justice of the Peace, who signed the first two deeds of the land. The brass plaque in the sidewalk is dated 1848, the correct year of the beginning.

Over time, four pieces of property were purchased and are beneath the church building, parish house, and elevator. The first purchase was 46 feet wide and 139 feet deep for \$2150 sold by Lemuel Pomeroy to the South Congregational Society. The "Old Lecture Hall" was located on this piece. This deed was recorded June 10, 1848. Nine days later, on June 19, 1848, the Trustees of the Congregational Ministerial Fund sold a second piece 34 feet wide and 139 feet deep for \$1 to the South Congregational Society. This sale was based on an authorization vote by the First Congregational Society on April 10, 1848. This was adjacent to the first piece and it is recorded the sale was for the site of a meeting house. The last stipulation in the deed is that a good and sufficient fence would be maintained on the south and west side.

Sixty three years later, on March 6, 1911 the First Congregational Parish in Pittsfield sold a piece of "The Parsonage Lot" to South Congregational Church 70 feet wide and 329 feet deep for \$5800 adjacent to the first two pieces. A stipulation in this deed is that no structure may be erected closer to South Street than the present parsonage building. A later 5 foot right of way on both sides of the church southern property line was negotiated with the Masonic Association. This right of way is the 10 foot driveway between the Masonic building and the church property. The deed states that it is to be built and maintained by the Association and/or its successors. The fourth and last purchase in 1996 is a 10 foot square piece from an adjoining residential property for the elevator. This completes the land beneath South Church.

For reference, on August 30, 1912, the First Congregational Parish sold to the Pittsfield Masonic Association for \$13000 all the remaining property of "the Parsonage Lot".

Compiled by John Moore - January 2015

Bread and Roses Coffee House

South Congregational Church

*110 South St
Pittsfield, MA*



Linda Worster &

Mark Kelso

Friday, April 17, 2015

7:00 pm


In the parlor

*Donations accepted to benefit
The Kid's Place*



April 2015

South Congregational Church

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
			1 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am UCC Clergy 12 noon St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm <i>Trustees 6 pm</i>	2 Maundy Thursday Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Seder Meal 5:45 pm Service 7 pm	3 Good Friday Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm "Take Another Look" Photo Exhibit 5- 8 pm <i>(at the Lichtenstein Art Center)</i>	4 Holy Saturday AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm Al-Anon 7 pm
5 Easter Sunday 10 am Worship Easter Egg Hunt 11 am	6 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	7 "Falling Upward" Study Group 10 am May Mattoon Luncheon 12 noon Men's Forum 12 noon	8 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am Berkshire Interfaith Org. 12:30 pm St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	9 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Chancel Choir 7 pm	10 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm AA 6:15 pm	11 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm Al-Anon 7 pm
12 Worship 10 am Book Club 11:30 am Viewing of "A Place at the Table" 2 pm <i>(at the Berkshire Museum)</i>	13 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	14 "Falling Upward" Study Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon <i>Diaconate</i> 7 pm	15 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am Berkshire Place 10:45 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	16 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Ladies Benevolent Chancel Choir 7 pm	17 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm AA 6:15 pm Coffee House Concert 7 pm	18 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12 noon – 4 pm Pittsfield Squares 7 pm Al-Anon 7 pm
19 Worship 10 am <i>Coffee Hour</i> <i>Collections for the Language Project</i> Outdoor Cathedral Celebration 2 pm	20 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	21 "Falling Upward" Study Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon <i>Mission Board</i> 7 pm	22 Earth Day Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	23 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Chancel Choir 7 pm	24 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4pm AA 6:15 pm	25 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm Al-Anon 7 pm "Take Another Look" Exhibit Closes today
26 Worship 10 am Epistle Deadline 11 am	27 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	28 "Falling Upward" Study Group 10 am Men's Forum 12 noon <i>Church Council</i> 7 pm	29 Food Pantry 7:30 – 11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	30 Food Pantry 7:30-11 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Chancel Choir 7 pm		