

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST in MANSFIELD
549 STORRS ROAD, P.O. BOX 36, MANSFIELD, CT 06250

A JUST PEACE CHURCH

A GREEN CHURCH

OPEN AND AFFIRMING TO ALL

CHURCH CHAPTERS



Ministers: All the People of the Church

Rev. Matt McCaffrey, Interim Pastor
Louise Labbe-Fahy, Director of Faith Formation
Eileen Stock, Minister of Visitation

Jana Duffy, Office Manager
Erik Haeger, Organist
Michael Silvestri, Music Director

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Interim Pastor's Letter

Cultivation

I have gotten a little better with the names of different plants over the years, but I'm still a little shaky when confronted with a pattern of leaves or petals.

Major common flowers aren't a problem. Roses, tulips, daffodils...I'm good with those. Our family home in northern Vermont was graced with two lilac bushes that descended from the lilac tree by my grandmother's back door. Lilacs don't stump me, either in leaf or blossom.

Of course, the maple tree and its distinctive leaf are impressed deeply on my mind. Maple sugaring is a major industry in Vermont, as it is for a few of our neighbors here in Mansfield. As a child we learned not only about the sweetness of maple sap and the many products manufactured from it—we also knew how maple syrup is graded (visually) and what a factory making maple products smells like (a little cloying). Bark, branches, leaves, the myriad of coptering seed “keys” whirling to the ground...maple and I are deep buddies.

It's the lesser-known flora that elude easy memorization for me. For instance, my spouse Alison planted some beautiful little flowers off a corner of our home, something she does every year. They will flourish well into autumn with their gentle white and pink blossoms, multiplying as the season goes on, but they won't survive the later frosts. Six years now, and do you think I can keep the name of those flowers in my head? (I just asked her, and she says they are *Impatiens*. As always, I thanked her.)

The other little plants surrounding our home present the same challenge. Those spiky, ferny plants whose stems grow five feet tall by August and have a blossom resembling a daisy (*Cosmos*, she says); the purple ones that are all fuzzy blossom and stay low to the ground near our front walk (*Ajuga*); the soft green ones that retain water and seem to take over the grass (actually, that's moss—I knew that one!)...for the most part, their names seem to fly out of my head when I want them.

But, there is a flip side: their appearance every spring and summer is a fresh surprise for me. The bare ground of March and April seems to come alive by June, and by August it is as though we are surrounded with these amazing surprises. I get to learn the names of each one, all over again, just as though it's the first time.

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Church communities have their seasons as well. Some times of the year are focused entirely on preparation for an event—a holyday, a gathering, a commemoration. Others are for reflection and taking stock.

In our part of the country, these months of June, July, and August traditionally are for cultivation and renewal. We become acquainted all over again with the bounty of the earth; we explore old, familiar places of recreation and retreat; we sit on our back porches and watch the river flow by.

You may already know the names that mark “summer” for you. I hope that for yourself, for those you consider family, for your church, you will call out and cultivate those names in this season of growth.

Yours in Christ,



Rev. Matt McCaffrey
Interim Pastor

Letter from Louise

Dear Friends,

June 2009



Every month I struggle with what I'm going to put in the newsletter. The newsletter deadline comes and goes and Jana patiently waits for my letter. Need less to say, this will not be the part of my job I miss. In fact, it may be the only part I don't miss! It has been both a privilege and an honor to be here with you over these last two years. Each and every one of you holds a very special place within my heart.

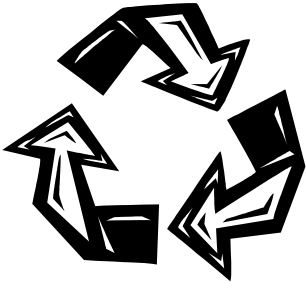
You have been there to love, support, and comfort me through the death of my dad. You have been open, and gave me a safe place in which to try out different ideas and forms of ministry. Some were good...and some not so good. But thank you for being open to new ideas. We have all grown and learned together. And in the end, that is what it is all about to be part of a loving Christian community. We walk together no matter how rocky or smooth the path may be. We walk together, and in doing so, we walk with Jesus.

So continue to love, comfort, support each other. Continue to be open to new ideas and ways. Continue to grow and learn together. Continue to show the world what a loving Christian community looks like. And most of all continue walking each day with Jesus.

I love you all.

Shalom,

Louise



GREEN TIPS

FOR THE MONTH OF

May

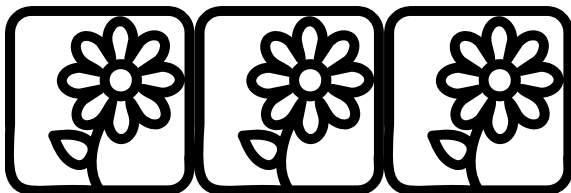
SIGN UP FOR HOME ENERGY AUDIT WEEK OF MAY 3, 2009

The Connecticut Clean Energy fund has not only been restored. It has actually been increased. Once again home energy audits are available free, if your home is heated by natural gas or electricity. The ordinary price, if you heat with either oil or propane, is \$300. If you complete your home energy solutions by July 1st, however, the cost will be just \$75, which is a savings of 75%!

“PLANT A WILDFLOWER MEADOW” WEEK OF MAY 10, 2009

Flowers are always nice on Mother’s Day. Plant some now and they’ll be showing up for years to come, since most wildflowers are perennials. As Joanna Yarrow (now there’s a flowery name) says: “Instead of having a large, manicured lawn, try planting an area of your garden with a wildflower mix. Wildflower meadows grow best on poor soil, so don’t require any fertilizers (or weed killers, of course), need cutting only twice a year, are gorgeously colorful, and attract butterflies, birds, and bees.” (1) With less lawn to mow and care for, most Dads will probably be happier, too.

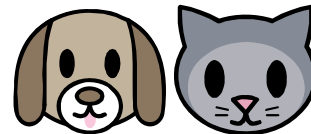
(1) Joanna Yarrow, “1001 Ways to Save the Earth,” Chronicle Books, San Francisco, 2007, Tip # 425, page 146



THE “TWO-MILE RULE” WEEK OF MAY 17, 2009

“Up to half of journeys made by car in developed countries are less than two miles long. Sadly, this is when car engines are at their least efficient and most polluting. Make it a rule to walk or cycle journeys of less than two miles.... Your legs and heart will thank you in the long run.” (1)

Joanna Yarrow, “1001 Ways to Save the Earth,” Chronicle Books, San Francisco, 2007, Tip # 413, page 410



GREEN TIP – CAN THE CANS WEEK OF MAY 24, 2009

“From canned pet food, gradually switch your dog or cat’s diet to dried foods packaged in large cardboard or paper containers. They’re lighter, saving on transportation costs and energy use, and the packaging is less resource- and energy-intensive (and can be added to your compost pile.”

Source: Joanna Yarrow, 1,001 Ways to Save the Earth, Chronicle Books, San Francisco, 2007, Tip # 380, page 132

**Please Note:
Deadline for the
July Newsletter
is
Monday, June 22nd**



Tree of Life

Please remember in prayer:

Arline Burkinshaw

Anne & David Hall

Helen "Muffet" Dawson

Anna Storrs

Ellen Shirshac

Blanche Brauneck

Shirley Olsen

Christina Gordon

Helen Fish

Leland Hawkins

Eileen Stock

Adelaide Corcoran

Ellie Lamb

Susan Eastwood & Tony Paticchio & family

whose mother, Helen Paticchio is in

Hospice Care



To:

Diane Wright for all the beautiful planting around the church.

Michelle Femc-Bagwell for helping with the 30 Hour Famine & for staying overnight.

Gloria Bent for leading First Hours during May.

Ellen Boehle for helping to facilitate the "Middle School Confessions".

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

1st Arline Burkinshaw, Matt Marcellino

2nd Eva Eaton

4th Anne Hall

5th JoAnn Waide-Wunschel

6th Russell Martin, Jay Erickson

8th Karen Christianson,

Janice Chamberlain

10th Zach Anthony

12th Emma Lane

15th Pat Dobush, Grant Messier,

Mitchell Kerensky, Maya

Zuckerman,

Sheryl Savino

17th Daniel O'Connell

19th Christopher Knoecklein, Matt Butwill

20th Loris Masterton

21st Libby Scott

22nd Emma Eastwood- Paticchio

23rd Celeste Griffin, Tom Giardina,

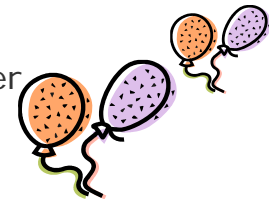
Gwen Cherner

24th Elizabeth Martin, David Schaffer

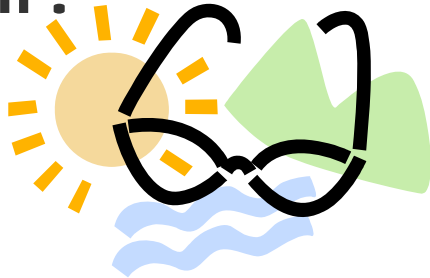
25th Rick Eschholz

28th David Little

30th Nannette Kyer



"Weekly Seeds" is on vacation !



**"350" BELL RINGERS
NEED FOR THE
SUMMER MONTHS**

***Please see details
and sign up in
Fellowship Hall***



**ATTENTION
MUSICIANS!
SIGN UP FOR
SPECIAL MUSIC**

**CALLING ALL INSTRUMENTALISTS
AND VOCALISTS
IN ONESIES AND TWOSIES
AND THREESIES OR MORESIES!**

**Please sign up in Fellowship Hall for the
date(s) you prefer to do Special Music. First
come, first reserved. Pick your time early to
ensure you get the date you want.**

**We need your help!
Church Summer Cleaning
on Saturday, June 6th from
9 a.m. – noon**



Many hands make light work – and
a clean church community!
The Business Committee has
planned a series of church work
days to correspond with our
seasonal needs. The summer work
day will be Saturday June 6th and
will include installation of air
conditioners and preparation for
insulation of the sanctuary

Coffee and donuts provided!



**High School Youth Group
Looking for Fun
and Creative Work
Opportunities**



The High School Youth Group is looking for
work opportunities to raise funds for their
mission trip to Boston in February 2010.
If you have any work that needs doing, please
contact Julie Menard @ 429-9638.

Feel free to be fun and creative with your work
opportunities!!

Like: having a back yard party or picnic - hire
the youth group to help set up, serve, and clean
up after wards,

Or, if need your plants watered or pet cared for
while you are away ...



Sewing and Service Group

We will continue to meet during the summer on the Second Monday mornings of July and August. We are a small group committed to preparing health kits, school kits and layettes for Church World Service to send to people in need either locally or internationally.

Please join us if you are able. Some sew, knit or crochet for local nursing homes, hospitals, or to make quilts for children in The Hole in The Wall Gang camp, or sleeping bags for the homeless.

July 13th or August 10th from 9:00 am until 1:00 pm we will bring a sandwich for lunch and some fruit to share.

We will start filling school bags first as sales for school supplies occur over the summer. We hope to continue providing at least 50 of these during the year and have bags ready to fill.

~Adelaide Corcoran & Carol McMillan

Items Needed:

- 150-200 page notebooks
(or 70-80 pages)
- Rulers (with centimeters)
- Blunt children's scissors
- Large Erasers

Dear Friends,

In the past month the number of non-combatant Iraqi civilians killed since the start of the Iraq war surpassed 100,000. A sad milestone indeed. Although the current U. S. administration is working toward decreasing our occupation of Iraq it cannot guarantee the loss of civilian lives will cease. While there does not appear to be any clear cut action we as citizens can undertake to insure further loss of life, it is imperative to be mindful that the war continues. Prayers are needed for soldiers and civilians on both sides of this conflict.

I am very proud of this Congregation for our effort to make real, the loss of lives, by the use of the lawn signs. I still hear from people how powerful an impact the signs have on them. I truly look forward to the day we are able to remove their constant reminder from our view. Until then, let's all Keep Hope Alive.

Peace,
Steve Lane



300th Anniversary

The 300th Anniversary of First Church of Christ officially starts this October and extends until October 2010. A few people have expressed interest in helping to plan for this event but so far no committee or planning group has been established.

For any who would like to participate in preparation for the event and ways to finance a celebration or some form of recognition of the milestone please plan to remain after church, the congregational meeting and the fellowship time on June 14th. We can share ideas and establish preparations, continuing over the summer. Working together in pairs or small interest groups should spread responsibilities around, i.e. religious observances, historic or community activities, fundraising ideas. Please attend and help provide input in how we proceed.

CWS – Father’s Day – June 21st

There are gift announcement cards available for any who would like to honor their fathers or favorite men in their lives by donating to the “Tools of Hope” project of Church World Service. The tools may be fish nets, tools for farming, help providing wells and many other projects which help in impoverished areas. Donations can be made by check directed to First Church (with notation CWS-Father’s Day or CWS “Tools of Hope”) and placed in the offering or collector’s mailbox. The announcement cards are found in Fellowship Hall, near the mission bulletin board and in church entrances.

Stewardship Committee – June, 2009

How Much Does Pente-cost?

All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need ... and, day by day, the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. (Acts 2:44-45, 47b)

A mother took her daughter for her first time at a restaurant with table service. There was a placemat with crayons to help her wait. After a successful lunch (both in tastiness and behavior), the server cleared the plates and the mother pulled out her wallet to pay the bill. When this process was explained, the little girl asked, “*How come the waitperson gets fifteen percent and God only gets ten?*”

Here’s a tip -- the fifteen or twenty percent we give to waitstaff, hotel housekeepers and cabdrivers is part of the Pentecost revolution. On May 31, we celebrated the holiday that informs our church life for the next half year. Acts 2 tells the story of rushing wind and fiery tongues that rested on 120 men and women so they could share the gospel of Jesus Christ in three ways -- the languages of the world, the water of baptism, and economic support. Word, sacrament and financial interdependence

were Spirit-connected. Giving to others is giving to God.

I know a church with a weekly updated cork board of job leads. Another writes in every Sunday bulletin – “As the offering plate is passed, please give money if you have it, please take money if you need it.” People do! One church hosts ESL classes after coffee hour, another has a monthly “Resurrection Resumes,” where volunteers help people write résumés and do mock job interviews, and a third offers informal internships in the trades.

We are a Pentecost people in a stressful economic time. We all have something to offer one another. Maybe you are out of work. Watch out for the little girl with a big smile. She’ll hand you a placemat and crayons, “This is for you while you are waiting!”

Author: Rev. Maren Tirabassi

Provided as a Stewardship resource through OCWM funds.



MANY THANKS for the participation of all those who participated and others who attended and encouraged us, making the May Basket and Bake Sale a success; Pam Bridgeford, Liz Bosco, Cheryl Chase, Adelaide Corcoran, Alice Eschholtz, Carol Fineout, Louise Labbe-Fahy, Elizabeth McCosh-Lilie, Claire Reynolds, Debbie Richards, Julie Sherman, & Carol Tetzlaff.

After expenses, we were able to provide \$790 to the general fund. It was a somewhat intensive but fun activity to benefit our church and we hope to repeat it next year. Our committee consisted of Janice Chamberlain, Carol Drescher, Ava Little, Carol McMillan and Diane Wright.

The Library Box

Since I started the Library Box page of this newsletter, the amount of books being borrowed is startling. It is just awesome! While faith formation may look different to each of us at different points in our lives, this seems to be one that this congregation enjoys at this time. Keep borrowing, keep reading, and keep bringing them back!

Leaving Home With Faith by Elizabeth Caldwell

The author explores themes faced by adolescents, their families and their congregations, and seeks to answer such questions as what changes are our adolescents experiencing?, what are the implications of these changes for those who live with and work with them?, and what consistencies of family, congregational life, and faith are necessary in order to support them. Recommended for parents of adolescents, family members and other caring adults who view the Christian faith as the focal point where adolescents, parents/family, faith, and the church intersect.

Roots by Alex Haley

When was the last time you read this book? As James Baldwin states: “Alex Haley’s taking us back through time to the village of his ancestors is an act of faith and courage, but this book is also an act of love, and it is this which makes it haunting... it suggest with great power how each of us...can’t but be the vehicle of the history which produced us.” Recommended for high school age or older.

The Education of Little Tree by Forrest Carter

Little Tree is Carter’s autobiographical remembrances of life with his Eastern Cherokee Hill country grandparents. But *Little Tree* is more, much more than a touching account of the 1930s depression-era life. This book is a human document of universal meaning. *The Education of Little Tree* speaks to the human spirit and reaches the very depth of the human soul. Recommended for middle school age or older.

Middle School Confessions video put out by HBO Family

This video features candid interviews with students of different socioeconomic backgrounds from across the country. Age 11-14 years old, they reveal their sometimes disturbing inner lives and how the intervention of concerned parents and school faculty members is essential to helping them navigate what can often be a treacherous rite of passage. Recommended for parents and all adults who care about adolescents. A great conversation starter with your teen.

The Intentional Family, Simple Rituals to Strengthen Family Ties by William J. Doherty, Ph.D.

“A home improvement manual for the modern family...The advice will build strong and loving families.” –Mary Pipher, bestselling author of *Reviving Ophelia*

