



Parish Tidings

AVON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

SEPTEMBER, 2010

Pastor's Message

The Weight of Years

A long and deep connection to any beloved community weighs upon us with strong and true memories of people and events that, while past, remain profoundly compelling. Returning to Ring Lake Ranch after an absence of one summer, I saw at every turning of every path the faces of the many dear friends with whom I have shared prayer and study and laughter. The new young head wrangler is a wonderfully skilled ride leader, but she was not and could not be Stacy or Jon from my first summer.

The grizzled assistant's face was Burt's face who worked with horses in 1999. The new guests, the new seminar leader, the hike leader, the cooks and housekeeper and fix-it guy were invisible behind the memories of those who held those positions in the last two decades. Their words and ways constantly rushed in to my thoughts.

I felt the presence of those companions who accompanied me to the ranch. I saw and felt deeply all the ways the seminars, the hikes, the rides, indeed every little ritual, chore and moment had been done in the past. Indeed, on my arrival in my cabin I was almost crushed by the absence of the rocking chair, upon which had sat so many friends sharing coffee or a soda and always intimate fellowship. After a moment of panic and near anger (who dared remove this holy object) I realized it had only been removed to the porch. My heart was not satisfied until I brought it in and restored it to its proper place.

I realized at that moment that I had to find a way to lift the burden of then to live now. The weight of past times, dear as it is, had to give way to a wait for God each day as we rode, hiked, washed dishes, attended our seminars and worshipped together. The staff and guests and habits and customs may change, but the special holiness of the Ranch as a place where God is especially near remains always to be rediscovered.

So it is there. So it is here on our corner in the midst of Avon's busy whirlwind.

— Ken Fuller



September 12

**Breakfast
8:30-9:30 a.m.**

Come for an all-church Homecoming/Welcome Back Breakfast. No need to eat breakfast on the first day back to Church School—we'd love to see you, so come and join us! We'll start at 8:30 and serve continuously until 9:30. If you would like to bring a dish to share (baked goods or a breakfast casserole), please contact the church office at 860-678-0488.

Christian Education Notes

By Jennifer deSimas, Director of Christian Education

Notes from Christian Education

Children today are often keenly aware of the sadness experienced by others around the world. They might wonder why violence or natural disasters happen to people who love God, why He doesn't magically intervene to save them. These are questions that people of all ages struggle with, and there are no easy answers. Sometimes I simply have to agree with an old idea I heard somewhere that God weeps beside us during those times – that even though God created a perfect world, this world doesn't always run perfectly.

But if you look to the Bible, you'll find – if not an answer – instruction on how to deal with the sorrows of the world.

Throughout the Bible are stories of heroes, regular people who performed extraordinary acts, individuals who found sudden strength to overcome huge odds, or even just folks who did the right thing. Think David, Esther, Noah, Jeremiah, Miriam. Turn to the New Testament and you'll meet Mary and Joseph, the Good Samaritan, Paul, Joseph of Arimathea and Mary Magdalene. These stories give us inspiration and teach us ways to cope with adversity and conflict. They also show us that the answer to solving the sadness of the world is right inside us, that God created an unpredictable world that can daunt us, but He also gave us the tools and fortitude to overcome the obstacles we encounter.

If you need more direct instruction, look again to the Bible – Matthew 22:37-39: “Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” We are here to follow God's commandment of love by caring for each other. By loving Him, we will find strength and guidance to help right the wrongs we see, to lift up the grieving, to feed the hungry, to house the homeless, to heal the sick.

A few months ago, the ACC Board of Christian Education sat down to map out a curriculum for the Sunday school. We plan to create a custom curriculum for our students that we believe will serve them here and now, that will teach them the tenets of our faith as well as how to apply them to real life. The Bible was the most obvious place to start; it is instructive as well as inspirational. Our kids will study these old stories week after week and examine how they teach us to be disciples of Christ. They'll see that the people of the Bible also asked how the world could be so sad or cruel – and how they, too, prevailed.

Our Church School theme this year is “Let Your Light Shine.” We will focus on how to recognize the godly gifts inside us all and how to shine those gifts on the rest of the world to make it a better place. Because the eye is often associated with the idea of shining and awareness, we decided to concentrate our mission efforts on organizations that work to preserve eyesight. Locally we will support Guiding Eyes for the Blind, and, internationally, we will support OneSight, which works to restore and preserve clear vision for adults and children worldwide. We hope that you will join us in these efforts as our children and youth find the talents that God has placed in them to help Him care for His people.

Faithfully,

Jennifer



Church School Notes



Church School Registration

Sunday, September 12th

Come, register and meet your Church School teachers. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. at the west entrance to the Fellowship Wing (near the playground). All families, new and “experienced,” are asked to register so that our records are up-to-date. As per our routine, children will attend the first part of our worship service (starting at 10 a.m.) and leave with their teachers to attend Church School after the Children's Message. If you have questions, please contact Jennifer deSimas at 860-678-0488 or ceminister@avon-church.org.



Crib Room:

Abby Morgan, teacher;
(assistant needed)

Pre-K (ages 3-4):

(teachers & assistant needed)

Grades K-2:

(teachers & assistant needed)

Grades 3-4:

Lee Morgan, teacher;
Zack Coleman, assistant

Grades 5-6:

Amy Schröder, teacher;
Emily Inglis, assistant
(another teacher needed)

Grades 7-8:

(teachers and assistant needed)

September Worship at ACC

- September 5** Communion at ACC, 10:00 a.m. with Pastor Fuller
- September 12** **Homecoming Sunday**
8:30 - 9:30 a.m. - Welcome Back Breakfast
9:30 a.m. - Church School Registration
10:00 a.m. - Worship
- September 19** Regular Worship, 10:00 a.m.
- September 26** Regular Worship, 10:00 a.m.

Office Hours

Regular church office hours will resume on
Wednesday, September 1, 2010
Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The office will be closed on Monday, September 6th - Labor Day



- 1 All Youth:** Watch your mail boxes and in-boxes for the new activities and events calendars!
- 2 The 2010-11 Confirmation class** is now forming. Rev. Fuller will teach the class, which is open to teens in the eighth grade and above. Please contact Mrs. Beeney in the church office if you would like to join this year's class. More details will be coming in the next few weeks.
- 3 Adults,** are you willing or able to spare some time helping out with the youth groups? We will need drivers and helpers throughout the year. Contact Jennifer deSimas at 860-678-0488 or ceminister@avon-church.org. Thank you!

And finally...

Last spring, Isabella Matos' senior "biography" information was omitted from the June issue of Parish Tidings. Because several of you inquired about Isabella's plans, we have included her bio here:

Isabella graduated from Canton High School in June and will be attending Saint Joseph College this fall. She was active in our Church School program, helping in the classrooms and in the Crib Room. She was also in the Youth Choir and volunteered with Stone Soup, St. Ann's Cares Day, and she attended the high school youth mission trips to New York and Philadelphia. Isabella was on the CHS lacrosse team and was a member of the school band. She was a Girl Scout for nine years and volunteered with seniors in town. She will be majoring in Early Childhood Special Education at SJC.

September Bulletin Board

Special Events

- 6.....Labor Day - Office Closed
- 12.....**Homecoming Sunday**
- 13.....Nursery School Classes Begin
- 18.....Stone Soup
- 25.....Avon Day (raindate 9/26)

Women

- Tuesday.....Tuesday Crafters
- 16.....Paperbackers

Music

- Celebration Ringers.....9/13, 20, 27
- Gallery Singers.....9/15, 22, 29
- Wednesday.....Youth Choir

Adult Fellowship/Education

- Tuesday.....Tuesday Crafters
- 16.....Paperbackers

Service & Board Meetings

- 7.....Christian Education
- 7.....Diaconate
- 12.....Christian Service & Outreach
- 13.....Nursery School Board
- 19.....Building & Grounds
- 19.....Music
- 27.....Finance
- 28.....Council

Parish Tidings Deadline

Sunday, September 19

Committee Minutes Due

Thursday, September 23





October 1st
at
Avon Congregational Church

Featuring:

**Mama Boswell's Flaky Chicken Pot Pie
&
ACC's renowned desserts**

After a summer hiatus, the popular First Friday monthly dinners at Avon Congregational Church resume October 1st. Our talented Church Supper cooks under the direction of Mama Boswell will be serving everyone's favorite, Chicken Pot Pie. Come and join the fun, have a delicious meal, and meet old friends and new. All dinners help support a good cause: a portion of the monthly proceeds are donated to support Avon Congregational Church's programs and services, as well as a charity based on local as well as global needs. A portion of the October proceeds will benefit Connecticut Catholic Charities Migration & Refugee Services whose mission is to coordinate services (employment, education, health, housing, etc.) for refugees in Hartford, CT to maximize their potential for self-sufficiency and to integrate the families fully into the community.

All are welcome to drop in on October 1st, stay for dinner (or get as take-out) between 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Talented and friendly cooks serve continuously. The dinner will feature: chicken pot pie, fresh tossed green salad, rolls, homemade "signature" desserts, and beverages.

The dinners are \$12 (adult), and \$8 (child 10 and under). Diners may purchase tickets at the church office, Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., or at the door. The past few suppers have almost sold out so plan to get your tickets early.

Mmm....Mmm...Good!

Nominating News

Now that we return from the June and July months when some committees may not have met, I want to repeat the thanks for those who have helped in the past, and for those who officially started on committees on July 1st (see June Parish Tidings for names and details).

Since the submittal of the June 2010 article, I am glad to report the addition of the following people who have stepped forward to help the church, who have been approved at Council Meetings since April, and some of whom have already been active in the months since then: Peter VanLoon - 12 W. Main St. Trustee has been helping as our Rental Agent, Jamie Smithers - Fellowship Committee, Sharon Malkemus - Personnel Committee, Dick Lytle - Member at Large, and Rebecca Baierwick is the new youth member on Christian Education.

We have opportunities for three people who can help with the very important outreach projects of the church via the Board of Christian Service and Outreach (CS&O). For a description of the many forms of outreach this important committee performs, see the CS&O report on page 11 of the May, 2010 Annual Report.

The Diaconate has two openings. We have a need for people to take minutes on Building & Grounds Committee and the Avon Nursery School Board. Two positions are open on Nominating, and one each on Membership Growth, Christian Education, and Audit committees. We also have an opening for a youth member on Membership Growth.

Helping on a committee can provide life-long memories of time well-spent, opportunities to facilitate, if not witness the outreach to those less fortunate, an opportunity to know more about the work of ACC, and a chance to get to know others in the church.

Please contact Dave Will, John Hall, or Sue Macy if you can help. We all thank you and best wishes!

—Dave Will
Chair, Nominating

Music Notes

By Benita Rose, Director of Music Ministries



September Resolution

by Benita Rose

Have you ever noticed that we always want what we don't have? I guess it's human nature. The grass continues to be greener in the other guy's yard. This past winter we had so much snow, a hot summer such as we have had this year was what we were longing for. Yet when the first heat wave hit, we all wanted our winter back again! When the kids are at school, they can't wait for vacation, yet after a few days of vacation, our kids are bored and missing their friends. When we are home, we wish we were travelling. When we travel, we look forward to returning home. When we have company, we look forward to their arrival, but before the week is over, we look forward to their departure! When we are home alone, we feel lonely, and when everyone's home, we want some space.

When we spend our lives wishing for this or that, we are not living in the moment, nor are we living each moment we have been granted to its fullest. We cannot fully experience each moment of our lives if we are longing for, coveting, envying, or wishing for a moment that is not the present one.

Though to everything there is a season, how about enjoying each moment of the season we are in rather than longing for the opposite end of the spectrum? My dad turned eighty this summer. When I paid him a visit one day, I asked him if he would like me to bring him a fan, assuming that he, too, was now longing for "the other" weather. He bluntly replied, "Please do not do that. I do not want a fan. In fact, I hate fans." His reply surprised me, as he and my mom do not have air-conditioning. "I love to feel the weather. When it is hot, I want to know it is hot, feel it, and truly experience it. And it makes a cold drink all the more enjoyable!" He continued spiritedly. "I love the summer. When it is hot, I love to sweat. But don't get me wrong, when the first snowflakes come I will delight in them, when they come."

September is a great time for new beginnings. Let's resolve to enjoy each moment God has given us by enjoying the company, the conversation, the love of who we are with, and the weather of the moment. Let's savor each moment of our lives without coveting any other moment or variation to it. You just may find what's missing in your life. You wouldn't want to miss it. Remember each moment is a gift from God.



The Celebration Ringers

(Adult Handbell Choir)

will begin fall rehearsals on Monday, September 13, at 7:00 p.m.

New ringers are welcome.

The Gallery Singers

(High School Students through Adults)

will begin fall rehearsals on Wednesday, September 15th at 7:00 p.m.

We welcome all who love to sing.

Men's Choir

A short term Men's Choir will be forming.

Stay tuned for starting date and rehearsal times.

In Review . . .

The Gallery Singers have had a busy summer. They were requested at the memorial services of Karen Smith and Jerra Barit. What an honor! The families expressed such thankfulness, appreciation, and joy in hearing our renditions of "The King of Love My Shepherd Is", "The Trumpet in the Morning", and "You Raise Me Up". The choir had a total of four summer rehearsals to make their singing exquisite. That is dedication! Tony Gibbs provided the sound of the trumpet in "The Trumpet in the Morning".

Gallery Singers

We will miss the incredible voices of Torie Eells, soprano, and Karen Doersch, alto. Torie will be attending Columbia University graduate school to study social work. Karen will be attending Texas A&M Medical School. Congratulations to them both on their successes. These extra fine young women will be missed by the choir and the congregation not only for their beautiful singing voices but for their wonderful presence at ACC.

The Gallery Singers welcome Jamie Smithers to the alto section and Victoria Gibbs to the soprano section.



Join the Choir...

**You'll Be Glad
You Did!**

We Need Your Labels!

Christian Service & Outreach is collecting labels from Campbell's products (V-8 and Franco-American, too) for the Children's Home in Cromwell, a full-service Christian facility for at-risk children. The Home provides family/residential treatment programs, a special education school and summer camp in a safe and supportive environment. Labels are used to purchase items needed by the children. We need the UPC code from the back of the label only. A basket has been placed in Fellowship Hall for the label collection. Thanks for your help!

Transitions

Deaths:

07/13/2010 Karen A. Smith

New Members:

06/27/2010 Robert C. Ericson
Gary C. Pomeroy
Roxanne K. Pomeroy
Garret J. Reynolds
Jamie L. Smithers



Stone Soup has Returned....to its regular schedule. Join us in the ACC kitchen on Saturday, September 11th at 8:30 a.m. while we prepare a meal for Loaves and Fishes, a Hartford soup kitchen serving 130 meals a day. Sign-up sheets for ingredients and workers are on the bulletin. Come for an hour or the whole session; we'd love to have you join us!

AVON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Minister

The Rev. Kenneth D. Fuller
(860) 321-7115

Christian Education & Music:

(860) 678-0488

Director of Christian Education
Jennifer A. deSimas
Director of Music Ministries
Benita Rose

Church Office (860) 678-0488
FAX (860) 674-1516

Church Administrator
Beth Ferrari
Church Secretary
Denise Beeney

Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.
Church School: 10:15 a.m.
www.avon-church.org



Parish Tidings

Published by the
Avon Congregational
Church Office

Typing, Editing & Layout
Denise Beeney
(860) 678-0488

Mailing
Tuesday Crafters

Avon Congregational Church
West Main Street
Avon, Connecticut 06001

TIME SENSITIVE - DO NOT DELAY

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID
AVON, CONN.
PERMIT NO. 8