

The Messenger

May 2011



The United Methodist Church, Clinton, CT
Pastor M. Craig Fitzsimmons



By God's great mercy we have been
given a new birth into a living hope
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ
from the dead...

1 Peter 1:3



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At 6:30 on Easter morning we gathered at the Clinton Beach gazebo surrounded by fog and the age-old proclamation was made: He is risen! He is risen indeed! Thus began our celebration of the central fact of our faith. Even though it happened two thousand years ago, we come together each first day of the week to worship the one who has given us salvation through his life, death and resurrection. Sometimes we seem to get to the point where we take that for granted week after week. Easter, with all its wonderful readings, hymns and music, brings back to us the power of the resurrection and its meaning for each one of us.

I came across an article which poses the questions: Find yourself taking life for granted? Find yourself not seeing the extra in the ordinary? Listen to these words written 1400 years ago by Gregory the Great: "Those things which are full of marvels for an investigation deeper than we can reach have become cheap from custom in the eyes of men." He then gives some examples:

"... if a dead man is raised to life, all men spring up in astonishment, yet every day one that had no being is born, and no man wonders, though it is plain to all, without doubt, that it is a greater thing for that to be created which was without being than for that which had being to be restored. Because the dry rod of Aaron budded, all men were in astonishment; every day a tree is produced from the dry earth... and no man wonders. Five thousand men were filled with five loaves; ... every day the grains of seed that are sown are multiplied in a fullness of ears, and no man wonders. All ... wondered to see water once turned into wine. Every day the earth's moisture, being drawn into the root of the vine, is turned by the grape into wine, and no man wonders. Full of wonder then are all the things which men never think to wonder at, because ... they are by habit become dull to the consideration of them."

I realize that as four of us from this congregation join with others to travel to Haiti, we may become more aware of the ordinary and what we tend to take for granted each and every day. It is just one of the ways that people of this church are putting their faith into action and celebrating the fellowship of the people of Christ. Be sure to go through this month's Messenger to find out about PETs at the Bike

Day, the CROP walk for hunger, the mother/daughter banquet, music Sunday and a whole host of other ways we try to celebrate the new life we experience each and every day as resurrection people.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

Craig



CROP Walks provide funds for local, national and international hunger relief efforts, including our own Soup Kitchen. Register to walk on May 15 beginning at 1 PM at First Church of Christ in Old Saybrook.

Walk 1 – Leaves at 2:00 and continues for approximately 2.5 miles.

Walk 2 – Begins at 2:30 and follows a 3.5 mile route.

Walk 3 – Starts at 2:00 with Walkers 1 and continues on with Walkers 2 for about 6 miles.

Each walk has rest and water stops. Family fun events are provided throughout the afternoon at First Church, ending with a pizza party at 4 PM. Please see Arline Johnson or Beverly Jones for donor envelopes so you may find sponsors.

Easter Sunrise

There were wonderful sunrise services at 6:00 in the cemetery; at 6:30 in the Town Beach Gazebo; but they might as well have been at 7:30 when the sun finally appeared through the fog!

Twenty-two United Methodists and guests met in the Town Gazebo where Pastor Craig led the service accompanied by many red-winged blackbirds in the salt marsh.

Most people returned to the church for a great breakfast prepared by Sharon Minick, Gary Hawes, Tammy Drena and Gay McPhee. Thank you all!

Month of Easter Sundays

May 1

Second Sunday of Easter

Greeters

Frank and Winnie Milnes

Ushers

Dennis Scaglione, Bob McLeod,
John Pope, Gerald Cotter,
Alan Anderson

Infant/toddler care

Linda Symmes

Acolytes

Sound coordinator

Tammy Drena

Camera operator

Lisa Sutherland

Worship leader

Mickey Brown

Lectionary scriptures

Acts 2:2-14a, 22-32; Psalm 16;
1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

Sermon

Pastor Craig Fitzsimmons

Communion steward

Evelyn Scaglione

Fellowship hosts

The Lohutkos

May 8

**Third Sunday of Easter
Mother's Day**

Greeters

Lisa Sutherland and Tammy Drena

Ushers

Rachel Benisvy, Haley Parent,
Jonas Thelin, Alex Attanasio,
Megan Lohutko

Infant/toddler care

Linda Symmes

Acolytes

Sound coordinator

Ally Gates

Camera operator

Dan Attanasio

Worship leader

Fern Pope

Lectionary scriptures

Acts 2:2-14a, 36-41; Psalm 116;
1 Peter 1:17-23; John 24:13-35

Sermon

Mickey Brown, Lay Speaker

Fellowship hosts

May 15**Fourth Sunday of Easter**

Greeters	???
Ushers	Evelyn Scaglione, Sharon Minick, Gay McPhee, Ellen Hoyt, Lynda Larson
Infant/toddler care	Linda Symmes
Acolytes	
Sound coordinator	Jonas Thelin
Camera operator	Mickey Brown
Worship leader	Tammy Drena
Lectionary scriptures	Acts 2:42-47; Psalm 23; 1 Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10
Sermon	Rev. Dr. Robert Martin Walker
Fellowship hosts	United Methodist Youth luncheon

Deborah Circle to meet at the church

The Deborah Circle, a bible study group open to all women of the church, will meet in Fellowship Hall at 7:30, May 17, 2011.

May 22**Fifth Sunday of Easter
Music Sunday**

Greeter	Sally Cotter
Ushers	Sally Cotter, Ginny Burr, David Moore, Lyle Cubberly, Drew Dupre
Infant/toddler care	Linda Symmes
Acolytes	
Sound coordinator	Tammy Drena
Camera operator	Lisa Sutherland
Worship leader	Bob Hale
Lectionary scriptures	Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31; 1 Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14
Sermon	Pastor Craig Fitzsimmons
Fellowship host	Jackie Blomberg

May 29

Sixth Sunday of Easter

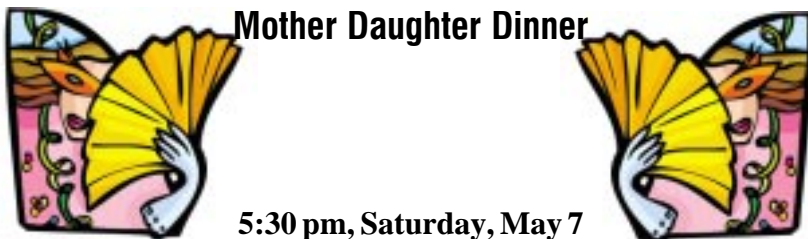
Greeters
Ushers

The Gates Family
Dennis Scaglione, Bob McLeod,
John Pope, Gerald Cotter,
Alan Anderson
Linda Symmes

Infant/toddler care
Acolytes
Sound coordinator
Camera operator
Worship leader
Lectionary scriptures

Lisa Sutherland
Dan Attanasio
Acts 17:22-31; Psalm 66;
1 Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21
Sue Alexander, Lay Speaker

Sermon
Fellowship hosts



Mother Daughter Dinner

5:30 pm, Saturday, May 7
“The History of Fans” by Vera Smith
Dinner by United Methodist Men
Tickets from Gay McPhee

\$10 - women \$5 - girls, ten years or younger

Camping season is almost here

We have received the promotional material for the New York Conference Camps. Please look at the poster in Fellowship Hall and contact any camp that might interest you.

The New York Conference has three camps — **Quinipet**, named for the five large boulders grouped in the middle of a beautiful location for swimming, kayaking and sailing on Shelter Island, New York; **Epworth**, a farm-like atmosphere in High Falls, NY; and **Kingswood**, a woodsy retreat in the Catskills with equipped camp sites and real beds!

There are programs and space for all ages.

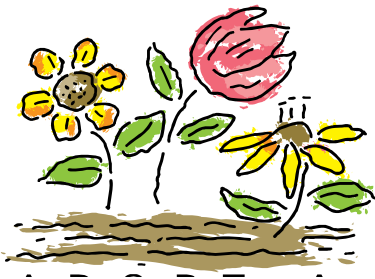
How many animals can we buy?



The Sunday School children have been bringing money for Heifer, International for over a year. During the month of May they will be learning about the worldwide work of Heifer, Int'l and deciding what can be done with the funds amassed.

Wildflowers Helping Our Funds to Grow

During May and June the Mission Committee is inviting the congregation to once again help with our spring fundraiser. Your \$5.00 donation will help to support 2 mission funds. This will add funds to our ongoing support of W.I.C. (Women-Infants-Children) and Calisto Arlindo Samo Jairesse, our Theological student from Mozambique. We will be showing our appreciation with wildflower seed packets for your generosity in "helping to make our funds grow!" Look for us after church in Fellowship Hall. Thank you.



The Missions Committee

A matter of bread

Jesus challenges his followers to do all they can to help the hungry to find food. Everything that his people place in his hands, he multiplies on behalf of others. He wants the hungry to have bread for body, mind and soul.

Jesus describes himself as the Bread of Life. This makes clear that bread is more than flour or meal mixed with milk and then baked. Bread is everything necessary to sustain, nourish and satisfy human life. People can't really live without meaningful relationships with God and man — without the living Word that is Jesus Christ — without convictions that motivate and hope that inspires.

What do you find to be true, nourishing and tasty? What makes life worthwhile for you? What keeps you going? What in your experience proves to be the bread of life? Share it with hungry people. Eliminate injustice and inequity. Fight poverty and boredom. Give your money “bread”. Above all, give love; share how Jesus feeds your life.

“Evangelism is one beggar showing another beggar where to find food.” Gandhi said, “There are so many hungry people in the world; to them God can appear only in the form of bread.” No wonder some Evangelism Committees welcome new residents with the gift of a loaf of bread and a bag of salt as well as an invitation to worship.

from a 1969 Fortress Press bulletin cover

Food pantry needs

Them beans, them beans, them green beans! ... always appreciated by our Soup Kitchen guests.

Any nonperishable foods are welcome. Please put them in the basket in Fellowship Hall and Carol Bell will sort them so they will be used to feed those whose funds are stretched to the limit.



Budgets and the Bible

Much has been said recently about fiscal responsibility both public and private. The national debt, the budget deficit, the subprime mortgage crisis, corporate greed, and growing credit card debt all have headlined the national news. Not surprisingly the discussion has been often framed in religious terms. For instance, Congressman Paul Ryan when introducing his budget cutting bill said that reducing the federal deficit was a “moral imperative”. In response, Jim Wallis of Sojourners wrote that in targeting the elderly and poor, “Theologically, this is an assault against the very people God specifically instructs us to protect, and whose well-being is the biblical test of a nation’s righteousness.” The spiritual rhetoric also has been invoked to condemn excessive executive pay and unbridled materialism as well as other matters of fiscal restraint.

How we manage our personal and national budgets certainly requires sober consideration and our philosophical and religious inclinations can’t help influencing our decisions. However, the discussion need not be dogmatic or doctrinaire or so contentious. On a federal level pragmatism will have to be balanced by compassion. On a personal level some reflection is necessary. Simply, priorities need to be made. Immediate needs have to be taken care of. The things that are important will need nurturing. And if the spiritual life has value for you, as I suspect it does, the church should figure strongly in your budgeting considerations. And, “when we give we should give in proportion to the way the Lord has blessed us” (Deut 16:17).

S. Steven Yang

on behalf of the Stewardship Committee

May United Methodist dates

- 1 Joseph Albright born in Montgomery County, Pa. 1759
- 1-11 General Conference in Baltimore, Maryland, 1984
- 3 Death of Bishop Thomas Coke, 1814
- 8 Festival of the Christian Home, 2011
- 8 Native American Ministries Sunday, 2011
- 12 Wm. McKendree, 1st American-born Bishop elected, 1808
- 22 Heritage Sunday, 2011
- 24 Aldersgate experience of John Wesley, 1738
- 28 Jesse Lee appointed to New England, 1789

Wisdom from Bob Hawes

On the first day, God created the dog and said, "Sit all day by the door of your house and bark at anyone who comes in or walks past. For this, I will give you a life span of twenty years." The dog said, "That's a long time to be barking. How about only ten years and I'll give you back the other ten?" So God saw it was good.

On the second day, God created the monkey and said, "Entertain people, do tricks, and make them laugh. For this, I'll give you a twenty year life span." The monkey said, "Monkey tricks for twenty years? That's a pretty long time to perform. How about I give you back ten like the dog did?" And God, again, saw it was good.

On the third day, God created the cow and said, "You must go into the field with the farmer all day long and suffer under the sun, have calves and give milk to support the farmer's family. For this, I will give you a life span of sixty years." The cow said, "That's kind of a tough life you want me to live for sixty years. How about twenty and I'll give back the other forty?" And God agreed it was good.

On the fourth day, God created a human and said, "Eat, sleep, play marry and enjoy your life. For this, I'll give you twenty years." But the human said, "Only twenty years? Could you possibly give me the twenty, the cow gave back, the ten the monkey gave back and the ten the dog gave back; that makes eighty, okay?" "Okay," said God, "You asked for it."

So that is why for our first twenty years, we eat, sleep, play and enjoy ourselves. For the next forty years, we slave in the sun to support our family. For the next ten years, we do monkey tricks to entertain the grandchildren.

And for the last ten years, we sit on the front porch and bark at everyone.

Life has now been explained to you. There is no need to thank me for this valuable information. I'm doing it as a public service. If you are looking for me I will be on the front porch.

Bob Hawes



An attitude of gratitude

There was a time when I was in a state of utter despair, immersed in guilt over promises made on which I had not delivered. I went to my vocal coach, Fred Wilkerson, weeping copiously. He asked what was the matter. I responded, “I’m going crazy. I am almost at the brink of suicide.”

He offered me a legal-size, lined yellow pad and a pen. He said, “Write down your blessings!” Furious that he didn’t understand my condition, I shouted, “Don’t talk nonsense, I’m telling you I am going crazy.” He said, “Write down that you could hear me say ‘write down’ and think of the millions who cannot hear the cries of their babies, or the sweet words of their beloveds, or the alarm that could help them seek safety.

Write down that you can see this yellow pad and think of the millions on this planet who cannot see the smiles of their growing children or the delight in the faces of their beloveds, or the colors of the sunrise and the softness of the twilight.

Write down that you know how to write. Write down that you know how to read.”

Wilkie, as he was known, gave me that lesson in 1955. Fifty-five years later, I have written thirty-one books, essays, plays, and lyrics for songs— all on yellow pads. I remain in an attitude of gratitude.

Maya Angelou
performer, poet and author

Homeless in Connecticut

Last year, our state’s emergency homeless shelters served approximately 11,700 people, including more than 1,500 children. More than 3,000 adults in families and 1,579 children slept in shelters and there were 1,312 emergency shelter users between the ages of 18 and 24.

*from CABHN Fever
the Connecticut Alliance For Basic Human Needs
newsletter.*

Habitat for Humanity - New Haven



Paul Brown, Judy LeVesque, Alan Anderson, Megan Lohutko, Sally Cotter, Pastor Craig, Mike LeVesque and Bob McLeod holding the sign



May Birthdays

Alexandra Attanasio	1	Lawrence Remetta	18
Mary Krutz	3	James Cave	19
Matthew Schuyler	3	Justin Hauser	19
Elizabeth Miller	5	Jill Spina	19
Sarah Asbury	7	Zachary Brown	21
Fern Pope	10	Ellen Tollefsen	21
Carrie Stepp	10	Emily Gonzalez	24
Jason Bell	11	Lauren Symmes	24
Michael Clare	13	Cynthia Howe	25
Arline Johnson	13	Deborah Strukus	25
Jacqueline Blomberg	17	Jeff Bowen	26
Sandi McKinnon	17	Allison Gates	29

Austin Shogren graduates in Groton



Austin Shogren shaking the hand of the Commanding Officer of Naval Submarine School during his graduation on April 8th from Basic Enlisted Submarine School in Groton, CT. He will have more schools to attend before he receives orders to his first submarine but this was the big first step.

How many health kits will be needed?

If a tsunami hit your town?

If the tornado flattened your farm?

If the levee on the river was breached?

If the enemy burned your village?

All of these things have happened recently and the United Methodist Committee on Relief responds. The Missions Committee and Ginny Burr will be creating Health Kits to take to the New York Annual Conference on June 8, where they will be loaded into a truck leaving for the UMCOR depot on Friday, June 10.

Please bring these items to Fellowship Hall: hand towels - from 15 x 25 to 17 x 27 inches, wash cloths, large, sturdy combs, metal nail files, clippers, bath-size soap, toothbrushes, band-aids and \$1 per kit for purchasing toothpaste at the time of shipping to the needy.

Thank you for participating.

Blue and gold stars

During one of our adult Sunday School classes the subject of “blue star mothers” was mentioned. The service banner for those serving in the Armed Forces during wartime was a very common sight during World War II. Our house had a one star banner for my brother and my aunt’s house had three stars - unfortunately one became a gold star when her son Raymond’s plane was shot down.

Fern Pope learned online that these banners are still available.

White stars

Memorial Day is on May 30 this year and the day when we begin to display the American flag and its white stars for the summer.

One Memorial Day, some children were asked what the holiday meant to them.

“That’s the day the swimming pool opens!” answered one eager boy. That he didn’t realize or appreciate was that he can freely go to the pool because more than one million people have put their lives on the line to preserve America’s democracy. Many of them have died so citizens of other countries might also enjoy the privileges of political, social and economic freedom.

Memorial Day is our opportunity to pause and remember the sacrifices of many of America’s best citizens. They made the supreme sacrifice on our behalf, so please remember to honor these heroes on May 26.

Fannie Ellis Bailey

Rev. Joseph G. Bailey always said Fannie Baker was the prettiest little thing to come down that road in West Virginia. Until he died in 2005 they only had eyes for each other. The Baileys served the UMC of Clinton from 1981 until retirement in 1989 when they moved to Kingston, NY to a house that he had built and named Baileywick.

Fannie was born in Abbs Valley, Virginia on November 25, 1922 and died on March 29, 2011 at Carrington Place, Wytheville, Virginia leaving five sons: Joseph, Jr. and Meg in Columbia, SC; Alvin and Margaret Ann in Port Jefferson, NY, Stephen and Sherrie in Kingston; Timothy in Ellenville, NY and Mark in Ossining, NY; six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Fannie was also survived by five sisters: Vernon, Zane and Louise in Wytheville, Virginia in Bluefield, VA and Charlotte in Lexington, KY. She was preceded in death by an infant daughter, Jennifer, a grandson, Jake, two sisters, Edith and Nellie and two brothers, Blaine and William.

Fannie's memorial services were held at the Dudley Memorial Chapel in Bluefield, Virginia on March 30 and in the Reservoir UMC in Ashokan, New York on Wednesday, April 13, 2011.

For the healing of the nations

“Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we know about living. We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount.”

General Omar Bradley

Little things are BIG

In response to the article on opportunities to purchase little items for the church, Tom Gladwin contributed funds to enlarge a closet to hold the new television and its stand. We are very happy about this and are delighted to have Pastor Craig build a closet to house the TV.

We do have a list of items now - most cost between \$25 and \$50. These items will be of good use around the church and grounds, but are not fancy enough to be “memorial gifts.” Who would want a memorial shovel or tea kettle?

Church family notes

Jude Houpert sends her thanks for the congregation card which you signed on March 27th. Remember our friends who are not able to come to church every week and let them know we care by signing a card each week.

18, 2011

We received the lovely photo card of the church members and we were very pleased and touched by such a thoughtful gesture. It is nice to be missed!

We have had some health issues that have prevented us from attending church services...

We hope to see everyone soon and we send our love and sincere thanks to all.

William and LaVerne Atkinson

Building communities...one house, one family at a time

Habitat for Humanity of Greater New Haven, Inc. gratefully acknowledges a gift of \$110 given by the United Methodist Church of Clinton on April 26, 2011. Thank you!

Habitat for Humanity of Greater New Haven, an affiliate of Habitat International, has been creating homeownership opportunities for working, low income families since 1986. Habitat's mission is to eliminate poverty housing around the world. Your gift to Habitat will help improve the lives of the families we serve. (See Page 14)

First Thursday at Connecticut Hospice

Connecticut Hospice, Inc., 100 Double Beach Road, Branford, invites you to attend an informational session on Thursday, May 5 at 6PM. All of your questions about Hospice history, philosophy and care giving will be addressed. Please call Pat Corradino at 203-315-7510 for reservations.

Are you creative? Is your hobby carving? or woodworking? Can you knit, paint, sew?

Our Holly Fair is popular for having a tasty made-from-scratch luncheon, home prepared baked goods and handcrafted decorations and gifts made by church members.

Now is the time to be creative and if you don't make items for the church at home, you can attend a crafting group in Fellowship Hall and perhaps learn a new talent.

Recently little snowmen have been growing on Tuesday mornings as the Clever Crafters work. They not only make things for the Holly Fair, but for area convalescent institutions to brighten the days for their residents. Work begins at 11:00 am and please bring a bag lunch - desserts provided.

On Tuesday evenings after Easter, the Holly Crafters begin crocheting, knitting, cross-stitching, making jewelry and decorations mainly for the Holly Fair, but also we bring in that craft or mending that we just don't have time for at home. With bright lights, table space and good company, the tasks seem much easier.

Jackie Blomberg has the answers for most knitting problems and an endless supply of exotic yarn. Fredda Wood is also a talented knitter - if she could just find the first sock of the pair she finished.

The church itself has several shelves of supplies for crafts, i.e. feathers, yarn, beads, ribbon, etc.

If you work with wood, you are on your own, although George Hoyt has made several pieces of furniture and could probably give advice. Former "best sellers" are balsa tree decorations made by Walter Hull and footstools made by Ted Wahle.

Whether you are ready to create things for the Holly Fair or want to learn a craft, don't hesitate to help us make Holly Fair 2011 the best ever!

Editor's Corner

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SAA