

THE CHURCH MOUSE

MAY 2010

The Go-To Guy

Around the church property we have what amounts to a bad habit of relying on certain people for certain tasks. Once someone learns how to work a machine or effect a fix on something, he or she becomes the expert and too often the sole keeper of the knowledge. The typical way to become a "go-to guy" is to miss the cue to step away more quickly.

Not being handy with tools, I am more inclined to be a go-to guy with knowledge. My reputation as a passionate bird-watcher makes me the local avian expert. Because I'm eager to share my joy, I love being asked questions about birds. Recently an egg appeared on my desk begging identification. This one remains a mystery at the moment, one I'm eager to solve.

Of course, I'm also the go-to guy with theological, religious and spiritual questions. While it comes as part of my job, it is also something I would hope to offer even if I weren't ordained. Regardless of training or position, we all can and should be go-to guys of faith. There is a whole world out there that is full of people with questions and needs and longings. They need go-to guys of faith to, well, go to with all of that. Surely you have something to offer them. You very well may be someone else's expert on matters of faith simply because you practice yours. I hope that you feel a passionate fervor to share the joy and hope that is yours because of your faith. You don't have to go out of your way to share it. Door to door pamphletting is by no means necessary (in fact, it's likely not terribly effective anyway). No, you just need to be available to be gone to.

"But I'm no expert," you say. But of course you are. Remember that most of our in-house experts are just the people who didn't step aside soon enough to let someone else be the expert. You have the knowledge of your walk with God, don't underestimate how much that might help someone else. It has helped you tremendously after all hasn't it? And even when you don't have a ready answer (as I don't with the identification of that egg) you do know where and how to research the answer. You have the best research tool in world, prayer.

Don't hide your light under a bushel, my brothers and sisters. Let the world see the light of God shine out from you. When they see that, people will go to you to have you show them the way to the source of that light. It really can be a lot of fun sharing the expertise that God has given you.

Pastor:	
Rev. Ian Lynch	245-9429
Secretary:	
Joyce Beaton	267-4798
Clerk:	
Anne Dutka	245-7266
Sexton:	
Judith Sessler	283-4605
Moderator:	
Richard Morris	245-7350
Administrator:	
Vacant	
Treasurer:	
Sheila Noyes Miller	245-6118
Assistant Treasurer:	
Linda Weston	245-9325
Financial Secretary:	
Ron Christensen	283-3520
Auditor:	
Mark Richter	245-6508
Historian:	
Joyce Beaton	267-4798
Council Members-at-Large:	
Rose Cadieux	283-3833
Dorothy Perman	245-9831
Steve Carlson	436-7386
Board of Worship & Education:	
Cynthia Truax	245-3940
Cynthia Clark	245-3826
Patricia Northcott	413-230-8963
Jennifer Power	774-241-0309
Board of Fellowship & Outreach	
Gina Lynch, Chair	245-9429
Lynn Bouteillier	245-9340
Joanne Baldrige	245-6638
Carol Foster	508-347-7657
Anne Dutka	245-7266
Board of Membership & Ministry	
Carolyn Haley	245-3267
Diane Midwood	283-3783
Vivian Wells	245-9276
Jeanne Davis	
Board of Finance and Properties:	
Jack Riddle, Chair	245-7040
Michael MacFadden	245-7530
Paul Watson	245-9276
Judith Sessler	283-4605
Carol Foster	508-347-7657
Pastoral Relations Committee:	
Jan Fitzgibbons	245-3589
Michael MacFadden	245-7530
Cynthia Truax	245-3940
Bill Midwood	283-3783

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BrimfieldUCC@gmail.com

Peace,
Ian

MAY BIRTHDAYS

5/01 John Curtis
 5/03 Bruce Bennett
 5/04 David Ryan
 5/05 Pamela Moriarty
 5/06 Michael Koprowski
 5/07 Rose Cadieux
 5/07 Leslie McKearney
 5/08 Becky Girouard
 5/10 Stephen Phifer
 5/12 Tony Bys
 5/13 Bill Midwood
 5/13 Julia Davis
 5/13 Lydia Boland
 5/18 Matthew Richter
 5/19 Kimberly S. Donze
 5/21 Emily Truax
 5/28 Jan Fitzgibbons
 5/28 Janelle Richter
 5/31 Todd J. W. Donze

If you know of a birthday that's missing from this list, please contact the church office.

PLEASE NOTE:

The meetings/events etc. shown on the calendar reflect the information made available to the church office at the time of printing. Changes may occur. If you know of any changes please submit them in writing by the 20th of the month to the church office. Thank you.



MARK YOUR CALENDERS:

May 6 Day of Prayer service
 May 11-16 May Flea Market
 May 23 Children's Sunday & Reception of New Members

PRAYER CHAIN

If you don't have email and would like to receive news about prayer requests when they come up, please tell Pastor Lynch. Email is a quick and efficient way to share information, but we don't want to exclude anyone who may appreciate a phone call instead. Once we know how many, if any, phone calls are involved, we can develop a response.

RECENTLY IN OUR PRAYERS

Joys

Name	Joy to Share
Ashley Lynch	Got a job in Watertown, graduates Job Corps soon
Mike MacFadden	All those who helped clean up the church yard Thankful that together the work load was light
Heather Dickinson	Grateful for her safe travel on vacation
Lynn Bouteillier's friends and family from France	Safely returned after being stranded here due to Icelandic volcano

Concerns

Name	Request
Derrick, Gina Lynch's friend	Has a job interview on Monday
Gina Lynch's friend Phyllis	Moving from Oregon to Warren next month
Damian, 2 years old	Broken leg and back, brain surgery, shaken baby syndrome
John, Elizabeth Sutton's brother	Going to rehab after having a series of small strokes
Percy Moore	Remembrance and thanksgiving for his service as sexton
Brian Baldrige's mother	Suffering side effects of chemo
Kathleen Bales	Signed up for 2 years with VISTA
Family of Bill Whitten	Bill died this month
Bill Midwood's friend	Facing hard times
Lariviere and Galant families	Roger Lariviere passed away this month

A BIG THANK YOU

A lot of work was done cleaning up the church lawn this month. Many hands made for light work. Those hands belonged to Jim Adams, Tony Bys, Kitty and Larry Lowenthal and the Adamses: Dawn, Caelyn, Jacob and Zeke. Many thanks to all of you!

FLEA MARKET

May Flea Market starts on Tuesday the 11th and runs through Sunday the 16th. We will need all the help we can get for parking, so please let the office know what time you have available during that week.

PASTOR'S VACATION

From May 10-16, Pastor Lynch will be on his annual adventure to the wilds of New Jersey for the 27th Annual World Series of Birding. He is also using this opportunity to help support the Opacum Land Trust by taking pledges based on the number of bird species he and his group register. If you would like to help, let him know how much you are willing to pledge per species. His team, the Wicked Witchities, typically can reach the 190's. They are kicking it up this year in an effort to finally top 200. He'll report the number when he returns and will gather the pledge money to give to Opacum.

BLOOD DRIVE

We are hosting a Red Cross Blood Drive at the Brimfield Congregational Church - Friday May 21, 2010 from 2-7pm. We are seeking volunteers to work two hour shifts at the registration desk and canteen. Donations of cookies and other baked goods are also needed. If you would like to volunteer please call Viv Wells at 245-9276. To schedule an appointment to give blood please call 1-800-GIVE LIFE.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

There is a Day of Prayer service scheduled for Thursday, May 6, on the Sturbridge Common at 7:00 p.m. to which we are all invited.

BAMS CONCERTS

The Brimfield Area Master Singers, Inc. spring concerts are scheduled for the following dates and locations. All of the concerts begin at 7:00 PM.

May 18 Sturbridge Federated Church
May 25 First Church of Monson
June 1 United Church of Ware
June 8 First Congregational, Brimfield

LBS NEWS

We have had a couple of baking sessions during March and April, and now have enough pies made and frozen for the May Flea Market. We are most grateful to those people who participated.

In addition to these pies, we will, of course, also need home baked goods for the Food Booth. If you have some time, please consider helping us out. Brownies, cookies, bars and small breads go very fast during Flea Market. They may be left at the church any time between now and noon on Thursday, May 13. Thank you in advance for your help.

PENTECOST SUNDAY

On Sunday, May 23, we will mark the birthday of the Christian church, Pentecost. That was the day when Peter preached and a multitude was baptized, creating the first church. We won't have a multitude, but we do have a few people joining the church that Sunday. Also, the children will be recognized for what they have learned this year and help a bit to lead us in worship. This will be a special Sunday, so we hope to see all of you there!

HANDBELL CHOIR CONCERT

*6th Annual Molly Frances Watson
Memorial Handbell Concert*

You are invited to attend on Sunday May 23rd, 2010 at 2pm at the First Congregational Church of Brimfield, Main Street, Brimfield, MA Spring Handbell Concert featuring the Brimfield Bells, directed by Vivian Wells, performing music by local composer, Dorothy Van Andel Frisch with special guests-the Elm Street Belles and Beaus, directed by Dianna Silverman & the First Congregational Church of Brimfield Choir, Steve Carlson, director and the talented Joan Allen, organ; Loren Jenks, piano; Ian Lynch, guitar & Mary Bernstein, drums Dessert reception. A free-will donation will be accepted to benefit the Songs of Love Foundation and the Handbell Music Fund. For more information please call (413) 245-9276

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We have received a request from the Central Association of the Mass. Conference of UCC asking for volunteers to join them in lay participation on their Committee on Ministry. This Committee meets monthly on the third Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Partial-term slots are available for people who want to try it out before making a longer commitment. It is a big time commitment, but it is also an awesome, committed group of people doing important work. You must be a member of an Association church in order to serve.

Other committees that have openings include the Board of Directors: a 2-year commitment, fourth Thursday at 7:00 p.m. Sept-Nov and Feb-June. Duties include planning the two Association meetings, nominating, participation in ordinations and other special events, and oversight of other committees.

There is also the Nurture and Fellowship Committee that meets as needed to plan the retired clergy luncheon, the administrative assistants' luncheon, and fellowship events for clergy.

Nominations will be made at the spring meeting in early May, so please give some thought to serving, and let Rev. Doreen Oughton know by e-mailing her at pastorfccleicester@verizon.net or by calling 978-846-6498. Thank you and Blessings from Rev. Oughton.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS NAMED

At the Annual Meeting, we voted to establish an ad hoc committee of 5 people to explore the feasibility of a capital campaign for the church. The committee was appointed by the Church Council when it met on March 14. The committee consists of the following persons: Carol Foster, Ellen Lovett, Mike MacFadden, Bill Midwood and Paul Watson. This committee will not be responsible for the capital campaign, it will simply suggest the process for engaging in one or recommend not having one. The committee is charged to report to the church no later than Rally Sunday in the fall.

HISTORICAL NEWS

Following the departure of Rev. Richard Treat in 1734, the church was without a pastor for two years. Several calls were given to various prospective pastors, but no responses were forthcoming. Then in January of 1736 Mr. James Bridgham was "called by a unanimous vote to settle in the work of the ministry." It was stipulated that the town should pay one-third of the salary of £140/year, with the balance to be "paid in grain, meat and labor."

Mr. Bridgham was born in Boston on March 21, 1707 and graduated at Harvard in 1726. He was regarded as an evangelical preacher and after serving for forty years in Brimfield he was "remembered with affectionate esteem." During his tenure 139 new members were added to the church, and 716 baptisms were recorded in his records.

He began to have health problems after 40 years and was unable to perform all of his duties. Finally, he gave his written consent to the church installing another pastor. He then continued as senior pastor for a year and a half before he died in Brimfield on September 19, 1776 at age 69 and was buried in the Brimfield Cemetery.

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING

Our annual Strengthen The Church offering will be received on Pentecost, which falls on May 23 this year. This offering funds new and renewing churches, youth and young adult ministries, and lay and pastoral leadership formation – especially among women and people of color. It is administered by your church's Conference, Local Church Ministries and the Still Speaking Ministry. More than 1200 UCC churches participate in this support.

FOOD PANTRY

You can continue to help us support the Food Pantry by donating kid friendly food items such as cereal, tuna, mac and cheese, pasta and sauce, spaghetti O's, ravioli, canned vegetables, peanut butter, etc.



PUB THEOLOGY

A rabbi, a priest and a minister walk into a bar...

OK, so we won't have a rabbi, but on June 4th at 6:00, Father Peter Preble of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Southbridge and Pastor Lynch will host a gathering at the Dark Horse Pub, 12 Crane Street, Southbridge that they are calling pub theology. The idea is to have a relaxed evening discussing religious and spiritual topics in a public setting. It is both a form of evangelism and a way to help those who gather to find common ground as well as embracing the differences within the body of Christ. The Dark Horse serves delicious food as well as beer that is brewed on site. If you can't make this one watch for future dates as we hope to make this a regular event.

GRACE HOUSE NEEDS

The SIHN shelter in Southbridge, Grace House, is in need of the following items: Cereal, hot or cold, low sugar; muffins, bread for toast, English muffins & bagels; peanut butter; crackers, graham & animal; fruit, oranges, apples, grapes, berries; granola bars, cereal bars; healthy snack foods; fruit juice, 100%, in cans; napkins, paper towels, toilet paper; cleaning supplies, laundry detergent, sponges. This is an opportunity for those who do not feel they can help staff the shelter on weekends or evenings to make a real contribution to the operation of this much needed shelter. If you would like to donate any of the items mentioned, please contact Vivian Wells.



The 20th of each month. The next deadline is May 20th. Please don't forget that we would appreciate receiving articles.