



The Lighted Tower

BRAVE ENOUGH TO LOVE

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Dear Church Family,

Here are some words I share with you for summer meditation. They are excerpted from *A Prayer To Humankind* by Manitonquat (aka Elder Medicine Story) of the Wampanoag Nation.

Inside this Issue

- 1** From the Minister
- 2** From the Assistant Treasure
From the Planning Committee
- 3** Planning Committee
Gardening Volunteers
- 4** Pastoral Search Update
Centerites
- 5** Mission Moment
Blankets
- 6** Church Fair News
- 7** Center Church's Apartment
Fellowship
- 8** Christian Ed.
Upcoming Events
- 9** Thank you notes
In Our Prayers
Birthdays

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Hear, O Humankind, the prayer of my heart.
Life is the only treasure.
We are custodians of it, it is our sacred trust,
To bring peace and health and harmony to ourselves,
To each other, to the one web that connects all that is.
Life is wondrous, Awesome and Holy, a burning glory,
And its price is simply this: Courage . . .
We must be brave enough to love.

Hear my heart's prayer, O Humankind,
Trust in love, don't be afraid, I love you
As I love life, I love myself, please
Love me too, love yourself, for perfect love,
As a Wise One said, casts out all fear.
If we are to live there is no other choice,
For love is life believing in itself.

These are powerful words to ponder. The "Wise One" who Manitonquat references is the Apostle John who declares boldly and correctly in his first letter "Perfect love casts out fear." When we consider our motives they usually can be boiled down to fear or love. Following the Way of Christ, Christians are always trying to love more than they fear.

It's interesting to note that the Apostle John closes his Gospel with this report of a Post-Resurrection interchange between Jesus and Peter.

¹⁵ When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶ A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." ¹⁷ He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep."

Jesus makes it clear: If Peter really loves Jesus, he must love others. Jesus demands the same of us. Our work is love. The work of the church is love. God's love gathers each one of us into sacred family who is ever called to love boldly and welcome extravagantly.

In Christ's love,
Kendrick

From the Assistant Treasurer

Thank you, congregation, for your support in the use of the upper floor apartment at 303 East Main. As mentioned, we need to renovate the area and furnish it in order to proceed. We are almost complete, using Special Funds to pay for it. The Special Funds used are also the source for filling in the gap in the Operating Budget and for any other maintenance beyond normal. If you feel so moved, we could use your support in replenishing the Funds. To do so, please use the "Special Giving" envelopes, noting "303 E Main" next to the "Other" choice, or simply noting that on any form of giving. Thank you.

WORKCAMP UPDATE FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

The kick-off to our church-wide mission initiative is right around the corner. From July 8-14, 23 will be supporting the Workcamp mission project hosted by First Congregational Church of Wallingford. Church youth groups from across the country will spend the week repairing homes in the Meriden-Wallingford area.

Our support for this event will include hospitality and some hands-on work at job sites. It is not too late to volunteer. There are sign-up sheets in the sanctuary and chapel. Put on your new Center Church T-shirt and join us as we share Christ's love with our neighbors.

Bakers: Cookies may be dropped off at church on Sunday, July 8th or Tuesday, July 10th. Please wrap each cookie individually in plastic wrap or enclose in a sandwich/snack bag. **(Reminder: no nuts of peanut butter)**

Popsicle Drivers: Pick up your route list and cooler of popsicles between 12:30-12:45 on your assigned day. Please return the cooler to church after delivering the popsicles.

Afternoon Snacks July 12th: Plan to arrive at Sheehan High School (142 Hope Hill road, Wallingford) by 3 pm. We will distribute snacks and thank you notes to workers as they return to Sheehan.

Job Site Work Saturday, July 14th: Volunteers will be contacted directly by Connor Filkins (volunteer coordinator from First Congregational Church). Pack a lunch and water for a day of hands-on work at sites to be determined. Workers will meet at First Congregational Church in Wallingford.

Prayers: Pray for the success of this mission and the safety of the volunteers as they work and travel. Due to their hard work, homeowners receiving help will have an improved quality of life.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

A little over a year ago, a planning committee was formed to develop mission, vision, and value statements for the church. In discussions for that purpose, the committee also came up with a list of strengths and weaknesses, challenges and opportunities.

Now we would like to give you an update because some very positive things have been happening. We have a communications committee working to make sure we and the community all know what is happening at Center Church. Did you notice the new banner on the front of the church?

Can you hear what is happening in the sanctuary? The sound system has been repaired! We have worked to accommodate handicapped people using the lavatories with grab bars and raised toilet seats. These are not big, flashy things, but they make coming to our church more welcoming and user friendly.

A care-team has been reestablished and is working. We have also encouraged more community outreach and, therefore, will be helping the summer work camp that is being run by the First Congregational Church in Wallingford. Work crews will be coming to nine sites in Meriden, and will help by providing snacks for those hungry teen-aged workers.

A second outreach program is in the investigation stages. Watch for more news on a Center Church booth at the local Farmers Market on the Meriden Green.

A group of members is also working on upgrading and furnishing the upstairs apartment next door for Chrysalis to use. Watch for the Tag Sale on July 28. The committee has also discussed several other ideas including sponsoring a T-ball Team and establishing a city wide handbell choir.

And we will all be wearing our new T-shirts featuring our name on the back and a logo on the front. People will know who we are. See Barbara Langner or Debbie Gaffney to get your T-shirt and be up to date in CCC fashion.

You Planning Committee,
Jack Brooks, Debbie Gaffney,
Karen Krick, Barbara Langner
Betty Leidy, Maggie Schillberg and Mary Zysk

GARDENING VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to help with the maintenance of the gardens around our church. Any time you can give to water the flowers in pots, weed the gardens, or deadhead the iris, roses and peonies as needed, would be greatly appreciated. Lorraine White has put together a poster with pictures and a description of what needs to be done. This poster is in the Federal Room. Thanks for any help you can give us!

PASTORAL SEARCH UPDATE

The Committee is nearing completion of the groundwork necessary in preparation for commencing the active search. That mostly means the updated profile of Center Church, that document that we provide to ministerial candidates to familiarize them with our character prior to our calling them for interview. We will be finalizing all of this prep work over the Summer and plan to commence reaching out to candidates in September.

Thank you, all who participated in survey of the leadership attributes we would most like to have in a new pastor. The survey results inform the profile and really do convey to a prospective pastor a good sense of who we are as a congregation. If you have any questions regarding the search process and where we are in it, please let ask any one of us. Again, thank you for all of your support. The Pastoral Search Committee:

Pauline Blakeslee	Jack Brooks	Roger Cerbie	Jim Chapman
Brian Comstock	Debbie Gaffney	Barbara Langner	Maggie Schillberg
Chris Tabor	Chelsea Trella	Lorraine White	Roger White
			Steve Gorman

CENTERITES GREEK OUT

What would a Greek restaurant be without lamb, olives and feta cheese? Don't know. Here's how it all went down:

Our traveling diners returned in June to *The Greek Guy* in Wallingford. We have enjoyed it there before, and this second time was no disappointment. The Greek salads are served individually, not family style, and with a slab of feta, instead of crumbles. One of us had the Moussaka because, after all, it's the Law: you just can't go to a Greek restaurant as a group without someone trying the Moussaka or the lamb.

Speaking of the lamb: we cannot speak baa-baa-baadly about it. In fact, the most popular order among the guys was the lamb shank over orzo – mouth-watering and falling off the bone; a little charred on the bottom, perhaps, but delicious.

Good bread with a cucumber-dill spread was a refreshing touch. The Galaktopoureko dessert was rich and a welcome finish to the meal. Service was homey and warm. And a group can get separate checks if so asked. That works for us.

Definitely more crowded than the previous time we were there; a sign the restaurant is gaining in popularity. The background music was a nice greekish touch, but a bit high on the volume. The restaurant was inaugurating a trivia program that evening. In conversational overhearings, Ken White was larned from our resident Herb that parsley is an edible green vegetable, not just a garnish.

Continuing the comparative exploration of all things Greek, our crew next makes landfall at *Laskara* in Wallingford on Thursday, July 12 at 6:30PM. All MEN are invited to join us there for dinner and to participate in the fun, food, and fellowship.

MISSION MOMENT



For July, the Committee has joined with our Parish Nurses, and designated our Missions donations for the backpack program in Meriden. This program which is organized by the Meriden Firefighters Local 1148, distributes age-appropriate backpacks to children (Pre-K through 8th grade) in need in Meriden. These bags are filled with school supplies for the children, and given out at a community-wide Back to School Expo which will be held on August 21st. Last year over 2,000 backpacks were distributed.

The local mission's donations for May were designated for the Planning Committee's July 12th project. We raised \$437 for snacks for the youth and adults who are participating in the First Congregational Church of Wallingford's summer work camp. They expect 440 youth and adults from all over the country to come to help under-served local families, providing close to 75 residents in Wallingford and Meriden with needed home repairs. Please see the Planning Committee's article for more information on how you can get involved in this project.



In May, we also provided funds and non-perishable food items for the Memorial Day Feed the Hungry program at Center Church.

The Missions Committee recently voted to help with the Chrysalis apartment expenses. This is a great outreach mission project for Center Church. We will designate four months during the year when local missions giving will go to the operating expenses of the apartment. Since the June donations were designated for Chrysalis, the funds raised will be put towards the operating expenses for the apartment. Please see the article in this newsletter with further details on the apartment.

BLANKETS

Announcement in preparation for Fall



The sanctuary balcony needs some cushioning in the pews. If you are cleaning out closets and don't need all those blankets we will take them off your hands. Pam Gorman (203-915-6293) will pick them up or bring the blankets to church. Thank you.

Church Fair News

Our Fair Committee met on May 20th to make plans for our “**Colonial Tymes Christmas Fair**” which will be held on Saturday, November 10th, from 9 am to 3 pm. Note the change from the first Saturday in November to the second Saturday so the tag sale people have a whole week to set up and not interfere with the Halloween party. **Tag sale item can only be brought into the church on Saturday, November 3rd** as we have no place to store them in the church.

Most of our chairpersons from last year will be back helping us again this year. Advertising and Publicity – Chelsea Trella; Kitchen Committee – Ardene Courchesne, Carla Kielbasinski, and Muriel Soroka-Pizzi; Basket Table – Maureen Hamilton with Maggie Schillberg filling in on the day of the fair; Baked Goods – Barbara Langner and Joyce Mercurio; Cheese from Vermont – Lorraine and Ken White (Pecans will not be available this year due to weather conditions); Cookie Walk – Dave Macomber; Crafts – Pauline Blakeslee and Mary Zysk; Kids Fair – Caitlin DePalma and Robin Cusacks; Setup and Breakdown ???; tag Sale- Cathy Slavin and Maria Halla; Attic Treasures – Joan Halla; Tea Cup Auction – Sue Trella; Kitchen Cashiers – Tom Schillberg; Treasurer – Pat Kenney; Used Books – Jim Chapman; Decorating Committee – Janet Dickenson; Greeters - ???; Youth table – Maureen Hamilton with plants from Jack Brooks.

The Craft Committee and the Kitchen Committee are looking for donations of seed money or buy supplies (Crafts to Pauline Blakeslee and Kitchen to Ardene Courchesne). The Craft Committee is also looking for people to come to our workshops and for ideas (contact Pauline for either. Crafts made at home are always welcome.

Our layout will continue the same with the fair spread out over three levels.

We need ALL OF YOU, however, to make it a success. Please help us by donating to one or all of our committees.

Please be saving your tag sale items, attic treasures and used books. Be looking for items for our tea cup auction as well and be thinking about what kind of a basket you could make for the basket table.

We look forward to the Fair being a good time for fun, fellowship, and profit. We want to encourage new members to get involved as it is a great way to get better acquainted with those of us who have been here for a while. We will have a sign-up sheet in the church in the fall for people who want to work the day of the Fair.

Committee chairs please note our next fair meeting will be held on September, 16th at 11:30 am in the Sanctuary.

Pauline Blakeslee, Pat Kenney and Lorraine White Co-Chairs.



Center Church's Apartment

As many of you know, the congregation voted to house a family in need at our apartment. We are working with a local non-profit organization to move a family into our apartment. The agency would provide counseling for the family. We would not charge rent for their use of our apartment, but the family would be responsible for their electricity and phone bills. Because we are not charging rent, we will not have to pay property taxes on the apartment.

We have completely renovated the apartment, which was in bad shape. In addition to painting all the rooms, the floors have been refinished, doors sanded and painted, new floor put in the dining room, bathroom floor replaced, new ceiling light fixtures, and the outdated electrical wiring replaced. The renovation will cost between \$22,000 and \$25,000.

Through the generosity of Dot LeGendre and her family, we were able to furnish most of the apartment. They have donated linens, rugs, dishes, pots and pans, two twin beds, a couple of dressers, a dining room table and chairs, several rocking chairs, and some small appliances. We are so grateful for their generosity. (Thank you to the committee that selected furniture and items from Dot's home for the new apartment – Betty Leidy, Debbie Gaffney, Pam Gorman, and Karen Krick.)

Thank you to Maureen Hamilton who donated a sofa for the apartment. We are in need of a small kitchen table and a couple of chairs. We will have to purchase a stove, refrigerator, window blinds, and two clothing closets.

The Missions Committee has been asked to help provide some funds for the operation of this outreach project. They will collect funds to help with the expenses of the apartment, such as heat, sewer and water bills, and other operating expenses. Additional congregational support may be sent to Missions, earmarked for the "Apartment".

Also, please see the article from the Assistant Treasurer, noting that any support for the renovation costs and furnishings would be greatly appreciated.

FELLOWSHIP

Koinonia – Have a wonderful and restful Summer. See you in September. Watch the September Lighted Tower and the bulletins for plans for the fall.

Others - See you in September ~ when The Summers through Others will Resume in September. Wishing you all a fun and refreshing summer!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



It's time to sign up for Vacation Bible School! *Western Roundup VBS* will occur July 23rd-26th, and runs from 9AM-Noon. Children ages 4-12 are invited to attend and campers and teens are encouraged to work as counselors. Each day is filled to the brim with crafts, games, songs, Bible Stories and yummy snacks. VBS is free but donations are always welcome. Space is limited and registration closes on July 15th. Register today <https://goo.gl/forms/mLmR3Nty0a8OVc1a2> !

Center Church is going to celebrate **Family Day with the New Britain Bees, Sunday, July 22, at 5:10PM!** We have a group of tickets right behind the Bees' dugout! Tickets cost just \$5.50 each and are limited. Please contact Maureen or Joan to reserve your seat at Christian.ed@centerchurchmeriden.org. This will surely be a fun and exciting event!



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Adult Bible Study – Wednesday mornings at 10:30 a.m. in the Federal Room
- July 1 - Communion
- July 1 - Feeding the Hungry
- July 4- Fourth of July (Office Closed)
- July 8 -13 Outreach with First Church in Wallingford
- July 12 - Centerites
- July 17 - Search Committee
- July 22 - Worship at First Congregational Church
- July 22 - Family Day at the New Britain Bees
- July 23 - Vacation Bible school 9 am -12 noon
- July 26 - Last day of VBS
- July 28 - Tag Sale
- July 29 - Worship at First Congregational Church

- August 5 - Communion Sunday – First Congregational Church will worship with us
- August 7 - National Night Out
- August 9 - Centerites
- August 12- First Church will worship with us
- August 21 - Search Committee

Sunday Worship

- 8:30am - Chapel Service – enter by rear parking lot, 30-minute service – Communion 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month.
- 10:00 am. - Worship in Sanctuary
- Holy Communion first Sunday of each month and all are welcome

Thank you



We thank Jim Chapman for treating the entire Choir at Les' Ice Cream after our last rehearsal for the season. We all enjoyed our ice cream!



Thank you to Betty Leidy for the pictures in the Narthex. Please take a minute to enjoy seeing everyone and what is going on in the church.

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS



Betty Karpinski
Dorothy Churchill
Gloria Iwerks
Barbara Newell
Betty Weiland
Kay Janiga
Mary Volker
Ray Moore
Dorothy LeGendre
Lorraine White

The Family of Betty Clarke on her passing,
in April.
And the Family of Ken Cowing on his
passing in June



JULY BIRTHDAYS

6 Robert Warena
Jacqueline Jeffers
7 Joan Halla
8 Amy Stolting
13 Susan Schroeder
14 Daniel Hatch
18 Gerald Crane
19 Amy Cerbie
24 Colleen Stack
30 Karen Maestrini



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

4 Tony Jeffers
11 Bradley Froggatt
Gloria Iwerks
13 Barbara Brooks
15 Debbie Gaffney
16 Maria Halla
17 Bonnie Crane
Judy Sullivan
21 Amanda Donsbough
22 Stuart Stack
Alyssa Laurenza
23 David Maestrini
26 Ellen Arrigoni Kucenski
Emily Adamowicz