

Elmwords

PASTOR'S CORNER

“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” John 8:12

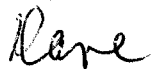
Our time of Lent is a journey through the darkness of human frailty and blindness. It is a time to look deeply into one's soul and try and discover areas that stand in need of God's healing light. Who among us is perfect? No one. We all have plenty of room for improvement. We all have “habits of the heart” that are not productive or life-giving for ourselves or for others. Perhaps one may lack strong faith and fall prey to hopelessness. Some may be too easy on themselves, while demanding too much of others. Perhaps people have not read the Bible enough to fully embrace God's Word for their life. It may be that some overlook the benefits of deepening their prayer life; their spirit goes thirsty and unrefreshed for lack of close communion with God. Each of us has several areas that warrant exploration.

Lent is a season for such introspection. It is not a time for self-condemnation. It is not a time to tear ourselves down. Far from it; we examine and critique our behavior and attitudes in order to grow in spirit as we seek to grow closer to the Lord. We are not fleeing from the darkness within; we are joyfully running toward the light of God.

Progress may be slow; it may be rapid. We may see gradual improvement; we may grow by leaps and bounds. This is sort of like what has been happening with the seasons. As winter gives way to spring, the days grow longer by a few minutes each day. At some point we look outside and say with gladness, “Wow! It is 6:00PM and look how light it is!” Thus we experience slow steady growth, slowly drawing nearer and nearer to God.

There can also be times of rapid progress; breakthroughs come fast and furious. We see connections and reasons and whys and wherefores when earlier all was confusion. Perhaps this might be likened to moving the clocks forward to Daylight Saving Time. All of a sudden it is light one hour later in the evening. What a joy it is when spring comes! What a joy it is to draw close to our Lord.

Peace,



Dave

Church Council Meeting –February 20, 2012 – Agenda/Moderator’s Notes
Meeting was called to order at 6:35pm with ten members present: Rev. Dave Congdon, Jerry Gray, Robin Lindemann, Bill Alberti, Al Croxall, Wendy Leonard, Patrick Nobou, Susan Wiley, Barb Hesse, Mickey Allgaier

Opening Prayer and Scripture (Pastor Dave): John 3:6

Moderator Notes: Confirm Diane Ludwick as newest Member-at-Large. Short-term goal: To fill in church calendar by March meeting. Large calendar for hall will be provided to include church events and renters, etc.

Robin said we’ll have an estimate to fix Conte Hall stove. Also, conversion from oil to gas could save us \$300 per month.

Minutes of the previous meeting:

Guest Speakers:

- Heather Greenstein and Michael Parratt from WH Relay for Life to discuss June 2-3 event.
- Mason Ellison to discuss anniversary of Habitat for Humanity family.

Old Business:

- Post mortem on photo shoot: must notify renters when their space must be changed. Probably should have re-scheduled.

New Business:

- March 8th – Dog Obedience Class celebrating 75th anniversary. Channel 3 “Better Connecticut” will be here at 1pm to shoot segment. Visibility for us!
- March 18th – St. Patrick’s Day Dinner – Daysha will do and plan for 80 people.
- April 1st – Youth Group wants to perform Passion Play after worship service. (unanimously approved)
- April 6th – Prayer Team will host Good Friday meditation 12-3pm.
- Lenten prayer sessions Sundays in Lent after coffee hour led by David Smith.

Committee Reports:

Deacons – Jerry Gray

- Jerry is Chair; Daysha is Secretary; Kristina W. is Nominating Committee Representative; and Pat MacDougall will continue to do facilitator’s schedule.
- New sound system purchased with capital campaign monies.
- Will use disposable communion cups for health reasons.
- Colleen will try to contact someone to estimate pew cushion repair.

Pastor’s Report – Pastor Dave

- Person who broke in was id’d at WH Police Station.
- Insurance claim submitted and adjuster’s report done.
- Pat Johnson to Brittany Farms.

Missions – Robin Lindemann – Carol Alberti, Chair; Robin (Nominating Committee)

- Cookbook idea in process.
- Items from mitten tree need to go to South Park.
- Souper Bowl collection moved to 2/12. \$128.55 for WH Food Pantry.
- April 1st – ECC next serves at South Park Inn.
- Scholarships

(moderator's notes continued)

- OGHS – Announce 3/4; collect 3/11 and 3/18.
- Tools of Hope collection will be held in the Spring.

Trustees – Bill Alberti/Chuck Peterson – co-chair; Dave Cunningham (Nominating Committee)

- Cleaning service discussion...council approves for trustees to investigate further.
- Possible rental by Greek Orthodox Church – Susan Wiley will follow up.
- Upstairs office placed on MLS.
- Amistad returned keys.
- Upstairs bathrooms being fixed.
- Exit driveway closed with cement block chains.
- Security of Sunday am collection discussed.

Christian Ed – Patrick Nobou

- Dave Smith asked how much available in capital campaign fun for CE Board.
- Wonderful Pancake Breakfast celebration! Kudos to Dave for doing an excellent job as MC.
- Movie Night was great...about 25.
- Valentines were made and sent.
- “Souper Bowl” collected \$128.55 went to WH food pantry.

Controller's Report – Susan Wiley

- Budget situation not great...still anticipate significant deficit.
- Must consider other things to generate revenue.

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Senior Member-At-Large – Al Croxall

- Some longer-term members felt it was inexcusable that expense sheet was missing from the Annual Report.
- Compliments for Mickey in running a good Annual Meeting.

Junior Member-At-Large – Barb Hesse

- Suggest that Controller speak from pulpit at Annual Meeting.
- Need microphones for pageants – kids events – especially when downstairs.
- Suggestion made that Sunday Bulletins be used for advertising.
- Youth Group still has calendars for sale at \$8.00.
- ID codes now on copier.

Newest Member-At-Large – Diane Ludwick – III – not present

Upcoming Events (Just so we're all on the same page)

- March 11th – Special Congregational Meeting
- March 12th – Circle 6 Potluck Supper at 6:00pm
- March 18th – St. Patrick's Day Dinner
- April 1st – ECC serving South Park Inn

Meeting Adjourned at 9:30pm

Next Meeting: March 19, 2012 at 6:30pm

CALL TO SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Council has been working hard to find ways to cut costs and generate revenue, while maintaining or improving service to our congregation. We feel it is imperative to hear all suggestions, discarding no ideas without first examining and considering all options presented to us.

A potential opportunity for a significant income boost is now on the table. Another church, currently meeting in a hall in East Hartford, is seeking space in this area for their worship services. They are most interested in having a sanctuary in which to worship. We need to take this offer very seriously, as the rent would put a **BIG** dent in our current budget deficit. They intend to build a church for themselves, but would likely need this rental for at least one year.

We have been strategizing ways in which we might accommodate their needs to secure this valuable rental without sacrificing our own traditions of worship. We are asking for a special "Congregational Meeting" in which we can present our ideas, hear yours, and vote on a plan to make this work for all of us.

PLEASE attend this meeting, following Sunday worship, on March 11, 2012. This decision affects each one of us; we want to be certain that all members have had the opportunity to take part in it.

Respectfully,

Margaret Allgaier, Moderator
On behalf of ECC Council

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**CALL TO SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
MARCH 11, 2012 FOLLOWING WORSHIP**

- **TO DISCUSS SANCTUARY RENTAL**

**WENDY LEONARD,
CHURCH CLERK**

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

06 Kaz Glista
07 Eleanor Kibbe
08 Sue McLarney
10 Kacie Lamb
12 Mickey Allgaier
21 Alan Waite
24 Amber Smith
28 Johanna Oppel
30 Pat MacDougall



MARCH ANNIVERSARY

20 Ellen & Robert Bucchere

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

03 Ginger Croxall
04 Carol Coffin
12 Rod Tyler
14 Patricia Rowson
15 Liz Rodriguez
16 Kristina Wittchen
17 Shirley P. Marshall
17 Ed Hansen

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

05 Cynthia & Norman Carter
20 Ernestine & Patrick Nobou

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**PLEASE REMEMBER TO CHANGE
YOUR CLOCKS AHEAD ONE HOUR
ON SATURDAY MARCH 11, 2012.**
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SYMPATHIES

Sympathies to the family of Ethel Croxall who went to be with the Lord on January 28th. A Celebration of her Life was held on Saturday, February 4th at 11am followed by a reception in Conte Hall.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER

Please join us for a Special St. Patrick's Day Dinner on March 18th. We would greatly appreciate any volunteers to cook the corned beef on Saturday morning, March 17th, or with setting up, serving, or clean up on Sunday, March 18th. A sign-up list will be posted on the bulletin board.

Thank You, Daysha Haxton

ONE GREAT HOUR SHARING

The Missions Board will be taking up a special One Great Hour of Sharing collection on Sunday, March 11th and March 18th.

BOARD OF MISSIONS

Our recent "Souper Bowl of Caring" totaled \$128.55. This collection was donated to West Hartford Food Pantry.

The Mission Board is continuing the collection of bottles of juice (any kind) and canned fruit (non-perishable) to be donated to South Park. Any donations will be appreciated and can be placed in the marked box in the front of the church. Thank you for your generosity.

HISTORIAN CORNER

A few months ago we asked if anyone knew anything about a black cape that is upstairs in the Historian Room. The cape was found in the youth room upstairs with Christmas pageant costumes.

After much research we found the answer! The cape was purchased in 1957 to be used on Sunday mornings by Pastor Sterling White to keep him warm as he stood at the Church front door greeting members and friends as they entered the Church. Unfortunately, we still don't know who donated the cape as it was given anonymously.

If you have ever been the host for Coffee Hour, please note you are carrying on a social tradition here at Elmwood Community Church.

The first coffee hour was served during the summer of 1965. Members enjoyed the coffee and the fellowship so much that committees, groups, and individual families requested the honor of being coffee hour hosts.

Ask and you will receive. The historians asked and Robin Lindemann answered. Thank you Robin for the donation of a much needed file cabinet for the historian room.

Like the crown jewels the original crown used for the annual pancake flip off has been retired and will be preserved in the historian room. After thirteen years of being worn by the prestigious winners of the pancake flip off, a series of new crowns have been purchased by the Board of Christian Education. The purchase became necessary due to the addition of set age categories brought on by popular demand. The new categories are kindergarten through sixth grade, seventh grade through twelfth, and senior young at heart.

Pat MacDougall/Ellen Bucchere – Historians

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

~ DID YOU KNOW? ~

Welcome to a features column by the Deacons! We hope you find it informative and helpful.

Did you know that there is a church calendar called a Liturgical Calendar? It starts on the first Sunday of Advent and ends on the Saturday before that. Advent, or the period of waiting for the birth of Jesus Christ, is the first season. Christmastide is next and lasts from Christmas Day or December 25th until Epiphany, which is January 6th. Between Epiphany and Lent is called Ordinary Time. Lent lasts six weeks from Ash Wednesday until Easter Sunday. Eastertide lasts from Easter Sunday until Pentecost Sunday, another six weeks, then comes another Ordinary Time called the Sundays after Pentecost, which lasts for the remainder of the year.

Each season is represented by a different vestment color (the paraments or pulpit scarves, table cloth, and the minister's stole). Advent and Lent are purple, the color of royalty and passion. Christmastide and Eastertide are white for joyous celebration. Ordinary time is green. Red represents the Holy Spirit and is used on Pentecost and for other ceremonies like Confirmation, Ordination or Pastoral Installations. When you read this column, we will be in the Lenten season so the vestments will be purple. Love and peace, Your Deacons

DEACONS CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

UPDATE

Deacons gave careful and prayerful thought to all the suggestions submitted by the congregation for how we might best use capital campaign funds. Of the \$5700 the Board received, Deacons are spending \$4400 on a new sound system for the Sanctuary from CMI Sound Systems in Newington. This is something we have wanted/needed to do for the last 13 or so years. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Capital Campaign!! The new system may even be completed by the time you read this! ☺ We have also purchased a 2-3 year supply of disposable communion cups that will be recycled. This is both a health conscious and a no-more-monthly-washing of a "zillion" little cups decision. ☺ This leaves the Board with a balance of \$1243 in capital funds. We will keep you posted. Peace, your Deacons ♥

FOLLOW THE LEADER

This sounds like really good advice - if you pick a good leader. It's great advice if you pick the ultimate leader! Recently, I had the opportunity to observe both in action. During the planning of Ethel Croxall's memorial reception, my telephone was like Grand Central Station. The ladies of Circle 6 wanted to create the perfect tribute to Ethel: to do her reception in a style she herself might've done: with the silver service, the china, the tablecloths and fresh flowers. The extra effort would help them to remember how diligently Ethel worked, how warm and welcoming she was, and how classy she was in all she did for our Church. No problem!.....except for the fact that Pat Johnson, who was the planner and organizer for all these events, was in the hospital!! How could they possibly do this without her leadership?

Despite all the worries communicated to me, I had no doubt that they would do a phenomenal job. It's my contention that the mark of a truly good leader is the performance of the followers in his/her absence. After all, it is generally true that good followers make the leader look good! I tried to encourage, soothe ruffled feathers, and challenge the ladies to move ahead with confidence. Expecting a huge turnout, we decided to grow up, show up, and each make her "signature" dish and double it. Then, each one did what they do best, and we asked God's blessing on the day.

What a marvelous tribute to Ethel! She would have been proud. The harmonious pooling of individual talents produced gorgeous flowers, a beautiful atmosphere, delicious food, and a perfect celebration of a great leader. Thank you, Ethel. Thank you, Pat. Thank you, God.

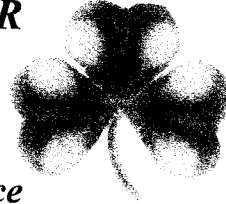
DONATIONS

Our kitchens are in need of plastic containers to be used as "leftovers to go". Donations may be left in either kitchen. Thank you.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

I have a mailbox marked "Geri Noonan, Office Manager". I would appreciate my mail being placed there instead of under the door where it can be stepped on. Thank you.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER
SUNDAY, MARCH 18, 2012



Elmwood Community Church
at 11:30am following worship service

Corned Beef or Hotdog

Traditional Irish Music

Irish Soda Bread

Potatoes

Carrots

Punch

Coffee

Tea

Desserts

Cost: \$8 for a corned beef dinner or \$4 for a hotdog dinner.

Please RSVP the office at 860-233-8203 by March 15th

The Elmwood Community Church
-----United Church of Christ-----
26 Newington Road
West Hartford, CT 06110
860-233-8203 fax: 860-233-4202
Secretary's e-mail: eccsecretary@snet.net
Pastor's e-mail: elmwoodchurch@snet.net

PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY
DATED MATERIAL

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, & 29th7:00pm Choir
March 4th6:30pm Youth Group Meeting
March 7th6:30pm Deacons
March 7th, 14th, 21st, & 28th10:00am Bible Study
March 11thSPECIAL CALL TO MEETING
March 11thCE Meeting
March 11thOGHS Collection
March 11thDAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS
March 12th6:00pm Circle 6 Potluck Supper
March 14th6:30pm Trustees
March 18thMissions Meeting
March 18th6:30pm Youth Group Meeting
March 18thOGHS Collection
March 18thSt. Patrick's Day Dinner
March 19th6:30pm Council
March 20thNewsletter Articles due in the Office
March 25thApril Newsletter Available
April 1stPALM SUNDAY
April 8thEASTER SUNDAY