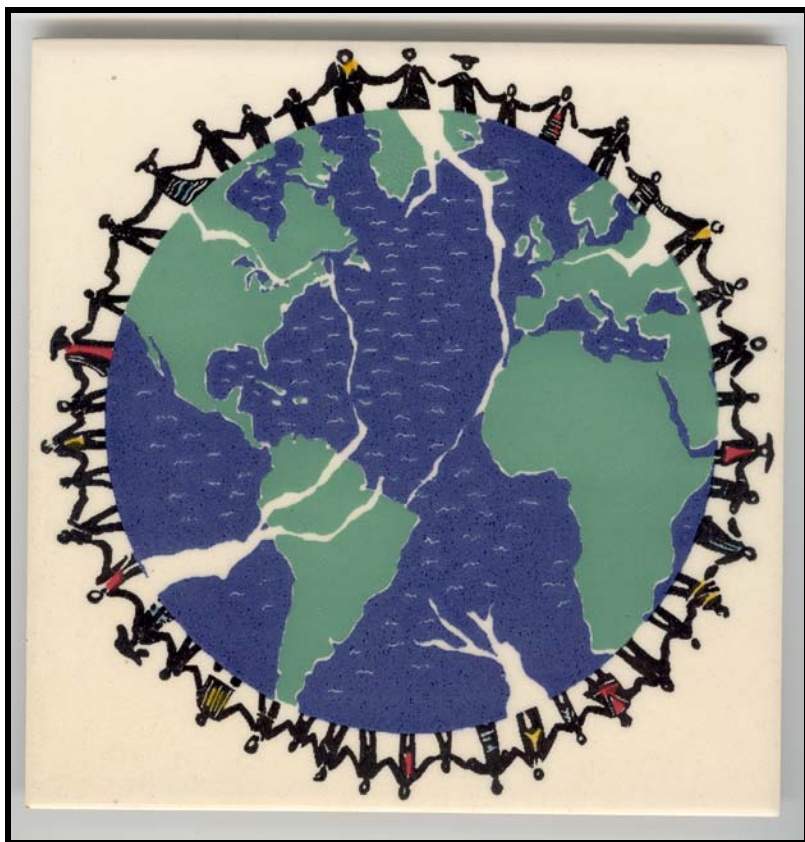


*The FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
of OLD LYME*



*MISSION ENGAGEMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES  
2005-2006*

***THE LARGER THE WORLD IN WHICH  
YOU LIVE,***

**THE HAPPIER YOU WILL BE IN YOUR  
OWN BACK YARD.**

We urge all our church members and friends to become actively engaged in the ministry and mission of the church, not only for the sake of the world that is so broken and so much in need of our love, but also for the sake of our own spiritual well-being as well. The prophet Isaiah had wise advice, “when you do for others, your own healing will be quickened.” Furthermore, it is my belief that we become more fully the “children of God” we were created to be when we work in community with one another for the “healing of the nations” and for the restoration of God’s creation.

This philosophy has led the First Congregational Church of Old Lyme into a variety of cross-cultural, “mutually enriching” partnerships as we work together with others in what the bible refers to as “the ministry of reconciliation.” Jesus said, “go ye into all the world”, and for us, that means extending ourselves beyond the four walls of our church building and doing all that we can to bring the love of God to all creation. This means being actively engaged in a variety of ministries of kindness, justice, hope, peace and compassion.

Please read through these “opportunities for mission engagement” to see where you might become involved. We need you!

The Rev. David W. Good

## ***HURRICANE KATRINA***

As this pamphlet is being prepared, our country is heavily engaged in trying to help those in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama who have suffered so much from the hurricane. As the year progresses, we anticipate having teams of people – skilled and unskilled – work in partnership with Habitat for Humanity. For some, that might mean traveling down to areas affected by the storm. For many of the rest of us, there will be opportunities to work in this region or other regions of the country to build “a house in a box”, building prefabricated components that will help in facilitating the completion of a house.

If you would like to be a part of this effort, please visit our church’s website – [www.fccol.org](http://www.fccol.org) -- where under “Katrina”, you will find a questionnaire to be filled out. Please mail or drop off your completed form in the church office. Any questions, please speak to one of our ministers.

## ***CHRYSSALIS PROGRAM OF THE YORK PRISON IN NIANTIC, CONNECTICUT***

The Chryssalis program at the York Prison in Niantic is under the direction of the Rev. Laurie Etter and the Rev. Valerie Dixon. The program offers support for women at the prison who have applied to take part in a special course for spiritual enrichment and guidance.

This year we have been asked to try to find some volunteer “prayer partners” who can agree to give a couple of hours each Wednesday night to be in partnership with one prisoner, offering friendship and encouragement and affirmation. If you would like to know more about this opportunity, please contact Carleen Gerber for all the details.

***SOUP KITCHEN  
AND  
FOOD PANTRY OPPORTUNITIES***

Our church is fortunate to be the host site for the Saturday meal and food pantry outreach of the Shoreline Soup Kitchens. With the Shoreline Soup Kitchens as the overseeing body, we help to serve meals on Saturdays at noontime here in our Fellowship Hall, as well as to disperse the groceries from the Food Pantry which is located in the basement under our Meetinghouse. Louise Lynch, of our church, is the coordinator of the Food Pantry and meal-site activities and she is always happy to receive offers of help and support. You can reach Louise at 434-7062 or you can leave her a message in our church office. There are opportunities to volunteer weekly, or to serve on one of the four “teams” who cook and serve the meals over the course of the year.

Our church also prepares and serves a meal on the fourth Sunday of every month at the New London Soup Kitchen. This urban soup kitchen site has seen a significant increase in its numbers and more help is always welcomed. Julie Kuja (739-9498) coordinates these meals and would be glad to help you find a place on a team of volunteers. Please call her for more details.

## ***CROP WALK***

Each year in partnership with the CROP WALK Lyme/Old Lyme Council of Churches we urge our members and friends of all generations to take part in a “Crop Walk” that raises awareness and also financial support for the work of Church World Service. “We walk because others have to walk” for their daily sustenance – food and water. You can walk the entire route (about 4 miles) or a portion of it, depending upon your physical situation. Along the way, there will be various educational stations, led by members of our respective congregations, that will help us to become better informed about the complexities of world hunger.

This year the walk will take place on **Sunday, October 16<sup>th</sup>**, starting at the corner of Lyme Street and mcCurdy Road at **2:00**. Because of the severity of **Hurricane Katrina**, the work of Church World Service is more important than ever. Immediately after the storm, they were hard at work on our behalf offering shelter, food, water and clean clothing for those made homeless by the storm.

For questions, please speak to one of our ministers. For a sponsor sheet, please pick these up in the church office.

## ***BRIDGES OF HOPE***

In 2003, our church initiated a friendship with the community of Beit Sahour, a small community neighboring Bethlehem on the West Bank in the Israeli occupied territories of Palestine. Beit Sahour is a predominantly Christian community that prides itself on being the direct descendants of the shepherds of 2000 ago who were blessed with an angelic visitation on the night that Jesus was born: “peace on earth, good will to all.”

In an effort to show the “human face” of Palestinians so often stereotyped and dismissed as “terrorists”, in the summer of 2004 and then again in 2005 we invited young Palestinians to our community to stay with our families, worship with our congregation, enjoy joint activities with our young people, and visit our Jewish and Muslim neighbors in their sacred places.

We will continue this “Bridges of Hope” program in 2006 with a visit of 5 or 6 young people from the Palestinian communities of Beit Sahour, Bethlehem and Beit Jala. We have invited the local Jewish community and the Islamic Center of New London to join us in this venture by inviting Jewish and Muslim young people as well.

You might consider hosting a young person in your home, and/or helping with the coordination of activities. You might also consider offering a scholarship to make it possible for us to continue this program. The cost is approximately \$2000 per child, including airfare.

If you would like further information, please speak to one of our ministers.

## ***TREE OF LIFE JOURNEY TO ISRAEL, PALESTINE AND JORDAN***

In February (17<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>) 2006, there will be an interfaith journey to Israel, Palestine and Jordan to strengthen our friendship with the community of Beit Sahour, to seek out those who are working together for justice and for peace and to see a variety of places that historically have been associated with the sacred stories of our faith – Bethlehem, the Jordan River, and Jerusalem. Also, being in Jordan, we will visit the place where Moses saw the “land of promise” from afar. Also we will visit Petra and spend an evening in a Bedouin Tent in Wadi Rum in the Jordanian Desert, a place where T.E. Lawrence came to a deep appreciation for the Arabian culture.

In Bethlehem, we will meet the families of those who have participated in our “Bridges of Hope” program, worship in their sacred places, visit the Church of Nativity, and meet with faculty and students at Bethlehem University. In Jerusalem, we’ll have the opportunity to visit not only the historic places, but also we will meet with such prophetic organizations as the “Parents Circle” – a community of Jews, Christians and Muslims who have lost loved ones in the violence but have resolved to work together toward peace.

Would you like to be a part of this journey? Please speak with one of our ministers and watch the newsletter, bulletin and website for further information.

## ***CHEYENNE RIVER (LAKOTA) SIOUX INDIAN RESERVATION IN SOUTH DAKOTA***

In 1985, our church entered into a partnership with the Green Grass Church on the Cheyenne River Sioux Indian Reservation in South Dakota. From the outset, this has been defined as a “mutually enriching, mutually beneficial” friendship between our two communities. With this being the oldest of our partnerships, it is also the “mother” of all of our other mission partnerships and cross-cultural experiential opportunities.

Over the years of this partnership, over 300 members and friends of our church have traveled out there where we have been deeply enriched by their friendship and the opportunity to participate in their sacred rituals, including the Sweatlodge and the Vision Quest. Likewise, in these 20 years, we have been blessed by the visit of a number of their community members.

Many of our young people have said that their first real experience of God’s presence has been found on these trips. With all of our groups being intergenerational, these journeys have also strengthened our sense of community as a congregation.

Our next journey will be from Easter Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup> to April 23. Perhaps you might consider being a part of this journey. Please speak to one of our ministers if you have any questions.

***THE STOREFRONT SCHOOL  
of 125<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
IN HARLEM, NEW YORK***

Our Partnership with the Storefront School began in 1988, initially as a friendship with the children of the school who attended a summer camp located on Sterling City Road in Lyme. For many summers the children from New York and the children from our own congregation enjoyed a tradition of sharing a few evenings together over the course of the summer, sharing the diversity of their life experiences. Also, during the academic year, periodically there have been trips planned to visit the school in Harlem so that we can become better acquainted with the school and its activities and programs.

The Children's Storefront School is a private elementary/middle school, full credited, which charges no tuition. Approximately 140 students attend the school. The school, which has an outstanding reputation for excellence, has succeeded in placing many of its graduates in private high schools in the city. Our Mission Board offers monetary support to the school each year.

During the 2005-2006 academic year we are planning a visit from the children's gospel choir. An exact date has not yet been determined. If you would like to visit the school, or take part in the visit of the choir to our community, please call Emily Fisher (434-8850) or Judy Simmons (739-5042) so that they can keep you up-to-date on plans as they are formulated.

## ***SOUTH AFRICAN PARTNERSHIP***

### ***CENTRAL METHODIST CHURCH of JOHANNESBURG***

Our partnership with the Methodist Church of South Africa was founded in 1988, during the height of the tragic apartheid government of that country. We host visitors from South Africa with as much frequency as possible. During 2001 and 2002 we welcomed as visiting minister, the Rev. Derick Maragele and his family, who lived in our parsonage and served this congregation on our ministerial staff. Just last year we hosted a visiting Sunday School director, Nyameka Nkumisha who stayed here with us for a month, living in homes of our parishioners and working with Cathy Zall in our Christian Education program. Bishop Paul Verryn, currently Senior Pastor of Central Methodist Church, customarily spends a few weeks a year with us as the guest of this congregation. In the late summer of 2006 we plan to visit our partner church in Johannesburg for a two-week stay, working on a project there and spending time with our friends from that church. If you would like to be a part of that mission journey, please contact Carleen Gerber for more information.

The Central Methodist Choir visited our church in 2002.....



They danced and sang.....



And we made many new friends!

# ***THE CROSBY FUND FOR HAITIAN EDUCATION***

## **Mission Statement**

The Crosby Fund for Haitian Education (C.F.H.E.) was founded in July 2004 by Rebecca and Frederick Crosby. The creation of the Education Fund was inspired by their knowledge of the lack of educational opportunities for young adults in Haiti and their conviction that Haiti's future is dependent on educating the youth. The initial goal of the Education Fund is to provide assistance for secondary education to academically superior Haitians in the Artibonite Valley, who could not otherwise attend school, in the hopes of preparing them for post-secondary study in Haiti. The Fund provides full tuition support as well as funds for books, uniforms, exam fees, and a bicycle to travel to and from school. The Fund provides several university scholarships as well for graduates of the program.

## **Current Operations**

The Crosbys make frequent trips to Haiti to oversee the operations in their office in Deschapelles. Students selected in the program must remain in good academic standing throughout the school year in order to receive scholarship renewals for the following year. Regular report card reviews and communication with the Program Manager assures this high standard. Students must also remain in good standing in their communities in order to continue to receive aid. Students accepted for assistance by C.F.H.E. are encouraged to get involved in their community through volunteerism in much needed projects.

Currently there are one hundred and two students receiving full scholarships for secondary education (12 funded by F.C.C.O.L). These students range in age from 14 to 28 years and attend grades 7 through Philo, which is a required 13<sup>th</sup> year for those wishing to go on to post-secondary study. There are three students receiving university scholarships.

Crosby Fund (con't)

### **Giving Opportunities**

If you are interested in supporting a student there are several options to choice from:

\$ 250 supports one student for one academic year and includes their books, uniform, and bicycle.

\$125 supports the tuition only for one year for one student.

\$75 provides a student with one book and a uniform.

\$50 buys one student a bicycle to travel to and from school.

Naturally any amount is gratefully received.

Your donation may be sent to ***The Crosby Fund for Haitian Education, 19 Binney Road, Old Lyme, CT. 06371.***

If you have any questions or concerns, please address to Ted and Rebecca Crosby at **434-8054 or [rtcros@ftcrosby.com](mailto:rtcros@ftcrosby.com)**

We have a new website at **<[www.crosbyfund.org](http://www.crosbyfund.org)>**.

The Crosby Fund is a (501 c (3) non-profit organization. All contributions are fully tax deductible.

## ***MADRY TEMPLE***

The Madry Temple is a wonderfully vibrant church in downtown New London with which our church enjoys a spirited friendship. While they join us for an Easter Sunrise Service at Griswold Point; we delight in the opportunity to welcome the New Year with a New Year's Eve service held in their church. They have joined with us in a number of mission opportunities, including the building of two Habitat for Humanity houses here in Connecticut. Also, two of their members traveled with us to take part in the Jimmy Carter Work Project for Habitat for Humanity in Durban, South Africa.

With a number of their members skilled as jazz musicians, we have been delighted by several jazz concerts. Their minister – The Rev. Jack Madry -- has led worship service in our church; while ministers of our church have been asked to lead services for them. In the year ahead we will add new links between our children's choirs giving our children an opportunity to sing together and get to know each others ways of worshiping. We will also look forward to working side-by-side on the Madry Temple's new addition as appropriate projects become available. We rejoice in this ever growing friendship between our two communities.

## ***ALL AGES VOLUNTEERING***

Throughout the year we offer opportunities for people of all ages to serve their community. In particular we seek to encourage families to volunteer together so that children see the example of service provided by their parents.

For the coming year we have several events planned with more possible. In October we will volunteer at Mitchell Equine Retirement Farm a facility where aged/infirm horses can live out their lives. Families will also prepare and serve the Sunday evening meal at the New London Soup Kitchen in the fall. Near Christmas time we will participate in the work of A Sacred Place to provide gifts for the children of women incarcerated at York Correctional Center. In the spring we will support the Postal Worker's Food Drive by sorting incoming food donations here at the church. Finally in the later spring we plan to continue our gardening program at Gilead House a day program for the mentally ill in Middletown.

Watch the newsletter and bulletin for details. We also welcome suggestions for new projects that would engage volunteers of all ages.

## ***TRIP TO KOINONIA PARTNERS***

Saturday March 18 to Thursday March 23 (tentative)  
Watch for announcements of an informational meeting

We will travel to Koinonia Partners in Americus Georgia for a time of work, reflection, prayer and study. Koinonia was founded almost sixty years ago by Clarence Jordan. Today it is still an active Christian community seeking to live out the gospel of Jesus by creating a community characterized by equality, by serving their neighbors and by integrating prayer into the rhythm of their daily lives.

On our first day we will tour the farm with an emphasis on history. We will see how Koinonia was in the forefront of the struggle for racial equality. We will learn of Koinonia's many "offspring" including Habitat for Humanity and Jubilee Partners.

Sunday we will join our friend Norris Harris for worship in his African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church and then have time for fellowship with residents at Koinonia.

From Monday to Wednesday we will work as part of the team at Koinonia helping with whatever projects need attention. We will also participate in the worship life of the community. We will take time away from work for a tour of the headquarters of Habitat for Humanity.

Evenings we will gather for reflection and a discussion of Clarence Jordan's book *Sermon on the Mount*. We will seek to explore how these teachings of Jesus can help us understand what is happening at Koinonia and within our own lives.

## ***WE REFUSE TO BE ENEMIES***

Two of our ministers – David Good and Carleen Gerber – belong to an interfaith coalition called, “***We Refuse To Be Enemies.***” This group meets on a monthly basis, and it sponsors special programs aimed at mutual understanding between our respective faith traditions. Because of the volatility of the Middle East, this group has been especially focused on this conflict and the way in which our sacred traditions here in the United States might work together toward peace/shalom/salaam.

Visitors are always welcome at our meetings. Please speak with Carleen or David if you would like to attend.

### ***THE INTERFAITH PEACE COMMUNITY of The 1st Congregational Church of Old Lyme***

After the outbreak of the war in Iraq, members and friends of our church began to meet, recognizing that if we want to prevent future wars, then we need to be builders of peace, to work together in laying the foundations for peace.

The Interfaith Peace Community is a support community for those who are peacemakers. Not everyone does the same thing. We don't even always agree on the “things that make for peace”, but we do believe that we need to be together in a community of mutual support and encouragement as we work and pray for peace.

Please join us for our monthly meetings!

**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY**  
*of*  
**SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT**

Our church is a covenant congregation of the regional Habitat for Humanity. We seek to support its work both through our mission giving and with our talent and time.

Over the past few years we have sponsored two Habitat homes – one on land donated by Rachel Robinson of Salem and New York, and one on land donated by Phil and Judy Simmons of our own congregation. In both these “builds” we enjoyed a wonderful spirit of fellowship as we experienced the joy of working together to build a home for the family selected by Habitat. We have also traveled to several Habitat sites (Appalachia; Americus, Georgia; and Eagle Butte, South Dakota) to be a part of the team in a “blitz build” event – a journey never to be forgotten. In 2002, 25 members and friends of our congregation took part in the Jimmy Carter Project in Durban, South Africa, which built 100 homes in one week, with over three thousand volunteers from all over the world.

Habitat for Humanity of Southeastern Connecticut is currently building several homes in Ledyard as part of a multi-house project, and they are starting work on a site in New London. You can reach Habitat for Humanity (860-442-7890) at their office at 377 Broad Street in New London for any information about volunteering in this wonderful enterprise in faith.



Breaking ground with our new Habitat family

Building goes fast with many volunteers



And now it's moving time!

*First Congregational Church  
of Old Lyme*

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