

*The First
Congregational Church
of Old Lyme
April 2010*



Dear Members and Friends,

On our most recent Tree of Life Journey, we visited Syria and as we entered the ancient city of Damascus, I was reminded of how a young man by the name of Saul had a powerful eye-opening experience on the road to Damascus. While he never met Jesus in person, he experienced the living Christ in a way that would powerfully transform his life, turning him from a man of hate into a man of love, turning him from being a persecutor of Christians to the one most responsible for the birth and the growth of the Christian church.

In the Christian church, we sometimes speak of the “second coming of Christ” as if it were something that will happen in the far-distant future, something metaphysical and apocalyptic. Indeed, throughout our travels in the Middle East, we saw many groups there that define themselves as being “Christian Zionists”, those who believe that a Jewish State of Israel from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea is a precondition for the Second Coming of Christ, and so from this strange theological perspective, they support the expansionist, exclusionist and racist policies of the State of Israel, policies that have had a devastating impact upon the people of that region – Christians and Muslims and even Jews as well, for ultimately these policies are an insult to Judaism.

As for me, I believe that the Second Coming of Christ takes place not in the far-distant future but whenever and wherever ordinary people have an eye-opening, life changing experience -- on the “road to Damascus”, yes, but also on the road to Old Lyme or New York City or New London, for Christ was not only in Jesus of 2000 years ago but also Christ is a beautiful and loving spirit present within each one of us. Wherever there are those who have come to see how blind they had been to injustice, wherever there are those who have turned from their xenophobia to a profound love and respect for others, wherever there are those who have found themselves in what they have given away, wherever, whenever generosity and kindness have welled up inexplicably from within, wherever a mean spirited negativity has been replaced by compassion and enthusiasm, these are wonderful indications of the Second Coming of Christ.

Because of his powerful, life-changing experience on the road to Damascus, St. Paul was able to say with authority, “Christ is all and is in all.” As we approach the celebration of Easter, while others may look exclusively to what happened 2000 years ago, and while still others may engage in strange aberrant apocalyptic visions of the future, my hope is that we will come to See ourselves and each other and indeed all Creation in a radically new and different way, such that we too will be able to say with great joy and great conviction, “Christ is All and is in All!”

Happy Easter!

David

CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. David W. Good, Senior Minister (434-5307)
The Rev. Carleen R. Gerber, Senior Associate Minister and Music Director (434-0058)
The Rev. Rebecca Crosby, Associate Minister (434-8054)
The Rev. Elaine McNally Fitzpatrick, Minister of Visitation (part time) (203-453-4532)
The Rev. Cynthia Willauer, Minister, South Lyme Chapel (434-8315)
Kendall Perkins, Church School Coordinator (434-8887)
Lisa Feltes, Director of Children's Choirs (691-2226)
Joel Spinetti, Director of The All Age Choir (434-1090)
Robert McCracken, Administrator
Joan Kelley, Church Secretary
Marla Richardson, Bookkeeper
Mark Testori, Sexton
Church Office Tel: 860-434-8686
Fax: 860-434-1135
e-mail: fccol@snet.net
Website www.fccol.org
Sunday Worship - 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.
Sunday School - 9:00 a.m.
South Lyme Chapel Worship - 9:00 a.m.
Pastoral Counseling Center Tel: 767-0802
Mark Stanberry, M.D. & Candace E. Wilson Stanberry, MSN
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF OLD LYME, Member U.C.C.
The reproduction of our Meetinghouse on the cover
is from a sketch by William Steeves.

Baptisms

January 3, 2010

Elsa Cusack Watson, daughter of Silue Beatrive and Julian Matthew Watson.

March 28, 2010

Jameson Robert and Sage Elizabeth Ford, twins of Mary Lee and Thomas James Ford

EASTER SEASON SCHEDULE

This year we continue our format for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. On Maundy Thursday we will celebrate Holy Communion and the Office of Tenebrae. On Good Friday the Meetinghouse will be open for personal meditation and prayer. There will be no service on Good Friday.

Maundy Thursday	4/1	7:30 pm Holy Communion and Office of Tenebrae.
Good Friday	4/2	Meetinghouse open for prayer and meditation.
Easter Sunrise Service	4/4	6:15 am (sunrise 6:23 am) Joint service with Madry Temple at Griswold Point (if you need directions, call the church)
Easter Sunday	4/4	9:00 am & 11:00 am Worship Services No Sunday School on Easter Sunday.

One Great Hour of Sharing

Our goal for this year's Easter collection will be \$10,000. With all the political and social turmoil we see worldwide, the need is great and the work of Church World Service more important than ever. Please give as generously as you can.



Church News



LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY LUNCHEON

ANNE AND JEFF BARNHART as "Ivory and Gold" will entertain us once again on Tuesday, April 6th, here at the First Congregational Church. Come at 11:30 am, as lunch will be served promptly at noon. Reservations can be made by calling the church office (860) 434-8686

The Barnharts each hold a master's degree in music. As a duo, they bring much variety to their performances, Jeff with his ragtime, jazz and Tin Pan Alley, while Anne's expertise lies in classical flute literature. Audiences experience a sonic treat as flute and piano weave seamlessly through the ages, trading melodic and accompaniment ideas in a unique combination.

Each Ivory and Gold concert promises variety, virtuosity, long forgotten tunes, and arrangements of familiar rags and songs that you will hear from no other group anywhere on this planet.

We are fortunate to have them, as their busy performing schedule all over the world at concert halls, festivals, ceremonies and cruises makes them very much in demand. Make your reservation early!

Dinner for Haiti Rev. Becky Crosby entertained 110 dinner guests at the church on February 2nd with her slides of Haiti prior to the earthquake and her work in education there. A catered dinner was served by the LBS. They raised \$1,850 of which half will go to the church relief fund and half to the Crosby Fund for Education. She also had art work from Haiti to sell and the \$615 received from that effort will go the individual artists. Thank you to all who attended this enjoyable evening of fellowship.

Day trip Wednesday, April 14th, to The Children's Storefront School. Anyone interested in taking the train to Harlem for the day to deliver the books we collected over Christmas? We will be reading books to the preschool children, eating lunch with the students and touring the school. Please contact Lee Carpenter at 739-6249.

Gospel Choir performing May 2nd at 9 and 11 am services!

The Children's Storefront School Gospel Choir is visiting us *Saturday May 1st through Sunday May 2nd*. There are twenty boys and girls (ages 8-13) who need housing for Saturday night. If you can help by hosting children for the evening or if you would like to host a pot luck dinner in your home on Saturday night, please call Lee Carpenter 739-6249 or Becky Crosby 434-8054.

Committee for the Environment The Committee for the Environment shares environmental news by email. If you would like to be on our email list, please let Diana and Dick Blair know at: <rtblair1221@gmail.com>.

South Lyme Union Chapel On Easter Sunday, April 4th, at 9:00 a.m., a service of remembrance and celebration will be led by chapel minister, Rev. Cynthia Willauer. The Second Sunday of Easter, April 11th, guest preacher, Rev. Allen Scott, will lead the service, including a celebration of Holy Communion. On the Third Sunday of Easter, April 18th, Susie Hermanson will lead the service, and the Fourth Sunday, again, Cynthia Willauer. On the 25th we initiate our 2010 Seed Share, which a little later in the season becomes Seedling Share, and later still, a sharing of produce, much of it issuing from the garden of chapel organist, Susan Buehler.

Blanket Drive Church World Service and our LBS ask for a donation to provide blankets and other help for victims of disasters. For years the "blanket drive" has provided blankets, tools, tents and emergency supplies in the wake of floods, fires, and earthquakes. This program now also provides education, training and small-enterprise loans as part of sustainable developments. A donation will buy a blanket. Special envelopes are available in the church pews during *February and March*. **Please make checks payable to CWS.**

FCCOL Plates We are offering our church plates at a reduced price of \$29 per plate. The proceeds will help the Children's Storefront School in Harlem, who have been having financial problems due to the loss of one of their benefactors.

TAI CHI classes available *Tuesdays*. Please call Ahlam at (860) 447-9916.

Spirit Suppers *Make new friends, but keep the old; One is silver, the other gold.* Many of us have enjoyed communing over a meal in the past and look forward to doing so again in the future with new as well as old friends. If you are interested in sharing a potluck meal in a private home, sign up at coffee hour or contact Susan Immordino (phone: 860-767-3194, email: susanimordino@yahoo.com) or Wendy Rieder (phone: 860-388-9517, email: wriederdesigns@yahoo.com). This is a wonderful way to build community in our church, and all are welcome.

Volunteer Signup for Habitat Women Build: Our Women Build volunteer days are now posted on the Habitat website, www.habitatsect.org. Instructions on how to register on the site and sign up to volunteer have been e-mailed to all participants, and are also available in Fellowship Hall. Women Build construction will be on Thursdays and Saturdays beginning Saturday, April 10. Scheduled dates are posted on the website through August and you may sign up well ahead of time if you know your schedule. Directions to the build site on Fitch Avenue in New London are also on the website. Anyone with questions or needing assistance registering or signing up to volunteer are welcome to call Janice Thaxter at 860-399-7060.

FCCOL Committee on the Environment presents an EARTHDAY FILM

Food, Inc.

Thursday, April 22nd at 7:30 pm in the Sheffield Auditorium

A trip to the grocery store will never be the same! Drawing on *Eric Schlosser's Fast Food Nation* and *Michael Pollan's The Omnivore's Dilemma*, this Oscar-nominated documentary takes a hard-hitting look at the food industry's detrimental effect on our health and the environment. It also spotlights men and women who are working for reform and change. Learn how you can make a difference. Please note there are some graphic scenes re: animal treatment.



More Church News



Are you unemployed or needing more income from your own small business?

We will be making some space available to members and friends of our church in the monthly newsletters to inform the congregation of your employment or small business needs. Please call (860-434-8686) or email <fccol@snet.net> the church office with your information, and we will determine if it is appropriate for our newsletter (limit 50 words).



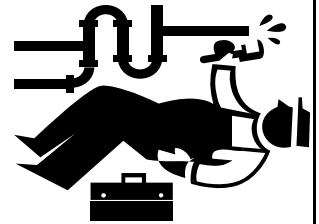
SEEKING EMPLOYMENT

Vergie Jurica I am in need of employment. I have 30+ years experience teaching Special Ed. and Art, 20+ years remodeling homes and creating faux wall techniques, 8+ years in medical records for Dr's office. I'm starting my own business to include interior finishes, stencils and murals. Animal care is a passion. Please contact Vergie at <vrg_jurica@yahoo.com>.

Do you need a live-in caregiver? I live in Old Lyme and have worked for seven years as a live-in caregiver (24/7) for a local family. My people have both passed away now and I am seeking a new **full-time, live-in position with a caring family**. I do house work, cooking and baking as well as give home care. I do not drive. I can provide references. My starting salary is \$145—\$150 per 24 hour day. Please contact **GULI** at 860-434-5112 (or 203-554-0545).

American Craftsmen need America's help. As a furniture maker of 33 years, I am offering my services to fellow church members at 50% off: \$40/ hour. My work includes restoration of antiques, work on cherished family pieces, and general furniture repair. As well, my passion is designing and building fine furniture: large and small pieces include dining and side tables, beds, benches, and chairs; religious pieces, pet coffins, etc. Please contact Dick Humphreville at 860-442-5003 or www.humphrevillefurniture.com.

Experienced master carpenter, licensed and insured, looking for work. Call Tom Kratzert at 860-271-9633.





More Church News



Connecticut's "Sustinet" Health Care Initiative - An Update

Dear members and friends,

Over a year ago, first under the guidance of Ned and Wanda Castner, our church began to formulate a committee of people within our faith community with expertise in the fields of medicine, nursing and social services to follow and study the then-proposed legislation on universal health care being brought to the legislature of the state of Connecticut. (Their names are listed below.)

I am proud of the work this committee has done over the past year, and I want to take this opportunity to share with you some of the things we have learned.

Last July, the universal health care proposal called "Sustinet" set up the Sustinet Health Partnership Board of Directors that will over-see implementation of the law. This legislation stands to make the state of Connecticut a leader, nation-wide, in the on-going quest for good, cost-saving, medically sound, affordable health insurance available to anyone in our state, regardless of pre-existing conditions and the extenuating circumstance of low income. State funded programs like "HUSKY" and "SAGA" will continue to fund those who fall within a guideline of three times the Federal Poverty Level. But, under "Sustinet", health insurance can be affordably purchased by anyone with a larger income who chooses to buy it, or needs to buy it.

From my perspective, several of its very impressive components are:

1. It places an emphasis on the establishment of "medical homes" to promote healthy behaviors and management of chronic conditions in children and adults. These "medical homes" would allow people to access their health care records and receive medical/nursing care and advice at all hours (24/7) - hopefully *before* they become critically ill.
2. It emphasizes technological upgrades that will allow doctors to communicate with us, as patients, affordably *by email* when that kind of correspondence is appropriate and mutually acceptable. It will also begin the assembly of computerized medical records, allowing doctors and hospitals to communicate more effectively with one another (very possibly reducing redundant testing).
3. The Sustinet system *incentivizes* "evidence-based quality medical care."
4. It will advocate to increase the numbers of people studying to become nurses, medical technicians and medical assistants, increasing the numbers of medical personnel who give us attention!

Without a plan like "Sustinet," the cost of paying for health care for the uninsured will continue to fall directly on the shoulders of the government, as it does now. Under "Sustinet" these costs will be, at least partially shouldered by insurance companies who "lump together" into "pools" those who are insurable with those who are more difficult to insure. Right now there is a bill before our legislature proposing public hearings for any rate hikes requested by the health insurance industry. Did you know that the health insurance industry in Connecticut had the largest profit margin of any of Connecticut's insurance industries in his past year, and some companies are proposing 34% rate hikes for 2011? Because health care costs are rising so dramatically, proponents of "Sustinet" make a very good case that, over time, "Sustinet" will save the state (and you and me) money. I believe this to be true.

But, for me, as a minister of this church, I want to say, simply, that it is our moral and ethical responsibility to take care of the marginalized in our midst. As Jesus said in Matthew 25 (paraphrased), "When you have done so for the least of mine, so have you done so for **me**."

"Sustinet" is now legislated into law – regardless of whether or not health care legislation passes on the Federal level. Over the course of the next year, the legislature will be asked to pass the funding and the support to put "Sustinet" into practice. I ask that you stay abreast of this legislation and do all you can to support it. Doctors and nurses, owners of small businesses state-wide, labor union leaders, members of AARP, coalitions of social welfare workers, and leaders of the faith communities are working hard, cooperatively, to support "Sustinet."

Please feel free to ask any of the committee members listed below to answer any questions you may have. They have attended seminars, conferences and informational gatherings on this topic. They are well-informed and have exemplified great dedication and leadership in this worthy endeavor.

More information is also available on the website healthcare4every1.org or www.ctgov/sustinet.

Sincerely,
Carleen R. Gerber

Health Care Committee of FCCOL
Dr. Mary Lu Hickman, chairperson; Dr. Peter Immordino, Dr. Christine McLean,
Marianne Baez, Melodie Peters, Mary Charlton, Carol Levy, Ken Cavanaugh, Janice Thaxter and Carleen Gerber.



More Church News



FINAL

White Elephant Sale [2010]

June

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
13	14	15	16	17	18 Pre SET-UP INSIDE [move furniture, lay rugs, etc]	19 SET-UP INSIDE [9:00 am – 12:00]
20	21	22	23	24 INTAKE 9:00 – 2:00 INTAKE 6:00 – 8:00 pm	25 INTAKE 9:00 - 2:00 Workers Lunch	26 INTAKE 9:00 - 2:00

July

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
27	28 INTAKE 9:00 - 2:00	29 INTAKE 9:00 – 2:00 INTAKE 6:00 – 8:00 pm	30 INTAKE 9:00 - 2:00	1 INTAKE 9:00 – 2:00 INTAKE 6:00 – 8:00 pm	2 INTAKE 9:00 - 2:00 Workers Lunch	3 CLOSED
4 HOLIDAY CLOSED	5 CLOSED Sort & Price	6 CLOSED Sort & Price	7 CLOSED Sort & Price	8 SET-UP OUTSIDE 7:30 AM ->> Workers Lunch	9 SALE 9:00 – 2:00	10 SALE 8:00 – 12:00 CLEANUP & Lunch 12:00 ->>



More Church News



Letting it all hang out.

There are so many things, that we can do to have a positive impact on our environment, I'd like to take a moment to talk about laundry.

Laundry is a biggie. Humans rely on food, clothing, and shelter.

The making of our clothing consumes a huge amount of energy. Cottons and linens need to be cultivated. This process requires lots of fuel, fertilizer and pesticides. Synthetics are usually made from petro-chemicals (oil). For those of us who still wear wool in the cold season, good for you! In my experience, it is the longest lasting fabric and requires the least amount of washing. Just hang it out in the cold and give it a good shake. My favorite winter pants are circa 1952 British army fatigues. In the 25 years that I've had them, they haven't been washed! The dirt of many a camp out has always brushed right out.

Consider a new approach; some garments don't need a washing after every wear. Garments and towels can be used multiple times between laundering. The point is, try to wash less laundry. Try to wash 4 loads per week instead of 5 for example. We can thus use less water, electricity, and detergent (made from oil).

Lastly, the most radical I'm sure, hang dry your laundry. We have two dryers in our home; a wooden rack and an outdoor clothesline. We have never owned an electric dryer in our 20+ years of marriage, and have been fine without one. All right, I know what many are already thinking... it takes more time. Take my advice. So often, the time we think we save is often wasted in front of a T.V. anyway. Hanging the laundry outside is a great way to observe and enjoy nature. It's a nice occasion to talk with your other half or the kids. We hang our clothes all year long and are only slightly inconvenienced during a rainy stretch. The rack works fine indoors and lines can be put up in a basement or porch for bad weather. Don't like scratchy towels? Give them a good shake before hanging and they'll dry softer. Besides saving electricity, you can make your clothes last longer. All of that heat drying wears out your clothing faster. So in the end, think of all the nature and money, you can save!

Russell Fogg, Committee for the Environment



Church Business News



WHEN SENDING A CHECK

Please be sure to note on the check where the offering is to be credited (i.e. pledge, food pantry, donation, Habitat, etc.). It is also important to note whether your contribution is for 2009 or 2010, especially vital at this time of year. Thank you for your help.

WHEN MAKING A GIFT OF STOCK

Please notify the Church of your gift, including the designated use, at the time you request your broker to make the transfer. You may also use the Church's broker, Smith Barney, to make the transfer if you wish. We occasionally receive gifts from a broker without knowing the donor, or whether the gift is intended for a 2009 or 2010 pledge, or for another purpose.

If you have any questions, or need further instructions, please feel free to call Marla Richardson, our bookkeeper, at 434-8686.

All Committee and Board heads, please email the church office, fccol@snet.net, with your meeting minutes. Thank You.



More Church Business News



YOUR INVESTMENT IN FULFILLING OUR CHURCH'S MISSION **2010 STEWARSHIP CAMPAIGN UPDATE**

As of March 19, the church has received pledges of \$559,622 from 395 members and friends. These results put us slightly ahead of last year's final results:

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Dollars Pledged	\$557,156	\$559,622
# Pledgers	389	395

While these numbers are encouraging, they remain below our goal of \$585,000. The generous pledges of the church's members and friends account for 85% of the church's operating budget – funding such essential needs as staff salaries, education, missions, and the maintenance of our 100-year-old building. When we do not meet our goal, our church leaders are faced with tough decisions affecting the programs and services so many of us regard dearly.

The 2010 Stewardship Campaign will end on March 31. However, there is still time, if you have not yet made a pledge, to send it in to the church office or advise a member of the Board of Stewardship of your intention. Even after March 31, the church will still gratefully welcome your support!

If you give in the plate, we greatly appreciate your support. However, it would be a tremendous help if you could estimate the amount you plan to give over the year and let the church know so it could be counted in the budget. You can still make your payments in the plate. Simply request envelopes, use your own envelopes, or write checks so your gifts can be identified.

Thank you all for all you do to make this church so effective in accomplishing its mission. The church continually depends on you, as members and friends, for your selfless contributions of time, talent, and energy, as well as your financial resources.

If you have not yet made your pledge, ***please join us – we need you!***

For the Board of Stewardship
Barbara Smith
Chairman

Members of the Board of Stewardship: John Braselton, Fred Behringer, Greg Hack, Barbara Kenyon, Henry May, Nancy Mesham, Dan Renn, Dave Sams

CHOIRS

Senior Choir

We will continue rehearsals through April **with the exception of the Wednesday right after Easter (April 7th)**. Enjoy the night off!! Since we only rehearse through early May, it is helpful to have as many attend as possible. It gives us a chance to look at material for our summer “Sunday-Sings” as well as the Sundays remaining in the next few months.

Our worship schedule in April:

April 4; **EASTER** We meet at 8 am to rehearse and sing both services – 9:00 and 11:00.

April 11: no senior choir – but come worship if you can!

April 18: We rehearse at 8:15 and sing the 9:00 service

April 25: We rehearse at 10:15 and sing the 11:00 service

Bus to see “Memphis” in New York City

We are exploring the possibility of organizing a bus trip from Old Lyme into New York City to see the wonderful musical “Memphis” – produced by our own Sue Frost. We are focusing on a matinee on either Wednesday, May 12, or Wednesday, May 19. May 12 looks like the better possibility. But we will need to get an estimate of how many people might want to come along. SO – if you’d like to get onto the list, please call the church office and give the office your name and phone number. We will organize the show tickets and the transportation. The price will depend on the numbers who sign up and the cost of the matinee tickets, but we will try to do this as affordably as possible. Please call right away so that we can begin our plans! Carleen

Children’s Choir

Children’s Choir meets from 4:30 pm to 5:15 pm with a snack time beginning at 4:20 pm in Sheffield Auditorium. We welcome all children ages 4 and older and aim to sing in church most every month. In addition to singing, the meetings are filled with stories, movement and laughter. Feel free to call Lisa Feltes if you have any questions at 691-2226. We look forward to a new year of music-making.

All-Age Choir

Rehearsals continue on Wednesday nights at 6:15 pm in Sheffield Auditorium. Joel is available to answer any questions at 860-554-5079.



Christian Education News



'God's Neighborhood' Sunday School "Helping Hands, Loving Hearts"

Dear Friends,

Spring is finally here, and it is time to think about gardening! We have an exciting new gardening program to share with our children, and I hope that you will be willing to help us. Berry and Holly Cox, who live next door to the church on 2 Lyme Street, have graciously offered a garden plot for our children's use. We are planning to plant vegetables, harvest them, and donate them to the food pantry. The children will help during the summer with watering, weeding, picking, etc. At the end of the year, "the garden committee" will have fun making zucchini bread and tomato sauce to bring home and share with the rest of the family. If you and your child/children would like to be part of 'God's Neighborhood Garden,' please let me know. We will have a meeting sometime late April or early May to plan.

On Easter Sunday, April 4th, there will be no Sunday School so that families may worship together.

On April 11th, we will look at the story of Pentecost, when the apostles are commissioned to go out into the world to bring the good news of God's love and relate it to the way in which the church is called to help others through our strong missions program.

On April 18th we begin our Earth Day programs, and we will share with the children our garden project and begin to plant some seeds and maybe even think about a scarecrow! **On April 25th we will have our Earth Day Diversity Sunday** in the Fellowship Hall with many different stations for the children to explore the wonders of God's creation. If you would like to help us with this Earth Day Sunday and/or if you have a good idea to share with our children, please let me or Kendall know. We would love to hear from you.

Evan Griswold will lead us once again in our **Annual Earth Day Family Hike**. We will meet at the end of Meetinghouse Lane on Sunday, April 18th at 1:30 pm and walk on one of the Old Lyme Conservation Trust's trails. All are welcome and no need sign-up, just come!

Our Confirmation class for all 9th graders will begin on April 18th at 7 pm in the library. This class meets for 6 sessions and will end with the confirmands being received in the church on May 23rd at the 9 am service. If you are interested in participating in this class, please let Becky or David know.

On May 2, the Children's Storefront School Gospel Choir will be with us and perform in both services. They will arrive in the afternoon of May 1st, and we need to find host homes for them. If you would be interesting in offering hospitality to two children, ages 9 – 14, please let Lee Carpenter know at 860-739-6249. Stay tuned for more details on this special weekend.

It is never too late to register children for God's Neighborhood. We welcome new children all through the year. If you would like to register your child, you may contact me at my email below. I regularly communicate with you through our email system. If you are not getting emails through the **"Sunday School Families" email system**, and you want to be included in that communication, please send me your email at rtcros@ftcrosby.com. This is the quickest and most cost effective way to communicate with all of you. If you do not have an email and would like to stay in touch with our activities, please let me know, and I will send the email to you by mail.

My best to all of you!

Becky

Calendar of Events

April 4th	Easter Sunday. No Sunday School.
April 11th	The story of Pentecost and how it relates to the missions of our church.
April 18th	Seed planting day and the beginning of garden projects Confirmation class begins at 7 pm in the library
April 25th	Earth Day Diversity Sunday – various stations in the Fellowship Hall – loads of fun for the children Earth Day Hike at 2 pm
May 1-2	Children's Storefront School Gospel Choir Visit

Senior Pilgrim Fellowship

El Salvador Reflection - Allison Hine

You will hear many more stories about El Salvador in the coming weeks, but I wanted to share briefly about our trip. We returned safely early Saturday morning to this much colder climate.

This church community and the mission of the church have always helped to define my being and my sense of what is right. It has always been for me an example of how I should strive to live my life and teach my children. I spent this past week in El Salvador with 27 other members and friends of our church community and found that the experience was an embodiment of the many things that I cherish about our church.

Our church is a testament to what we can accomplish when we cooperate and utilize the gifts of our diverse and talented members. I witnessed a lot of cooperation down in El Salvador, but the example that sticks with me most strongly is when we were pouring concrete into forms to make a home and we had to transport buckets filled with goopy, heavy concrete from the mixer to the top of the forms. Each bucket traveled through the hands of many group members before finally being passed up over heads and up a ladder to the top of the forms where one individual would pour it and then throw the bucket down for yet another person to retrieve it and return it to the cement shoveler to be refilled. The individuals in the bucket brigade worked together seamlessly, checking in with one another to ensure that everyone had drink breaks and was not too tired. These lines continued for hours on end and I never heard complaints. Everyone knew that their part was essential to the process.

Our church also cherishes our young people and I saw them flourish this week as they took on leadership roles and succeeded at tasks far beyond their years. Their hard work, sweat, compassion and determination offer me hope for the future of mankind. The following is one example of many that I could use to illustrate this point. On the last day at the project, when we all had muscles that no longer wanted to belong in our bodies, I watched as one of the teenagers took on a task that was outside of our duties for the day. We had begun digging a 5 foot by 5 foot by 5 foot septic tank hole days before and had never gotten to go back and finish it. Jon decided he needed to see this project through to completion and he dug with a pick axe for three hours, well into the lunch hour, until it was done. He was supported by four or five other young people who came and shoveled the loose dirt, wheeled it away, and offered words of encouragement.

Our church also strives to extend the hand of friendship to those who stand in times of discomfort, need, and challenge. This week it was clear that we were not in El Salvador simply to build a house, but also to let our new friends know that out in the world in places far away, there are people who care about them. On our last night in El Salvador, we hosted a dinner for our van drivers, Yolanda, the woman who prepared our food, and many of the men and women who toiled with us at the work site each day. We wanted to show our gratitude for their hospitality and friendship while we were there. Many of the children from the community came and as I watched them play in the pool with our teenagers, and as I witnessed many of us struggle through conversations in Spanish, I was aware of how much this simple gesture of gratitude, this sharing of a meal, meant to us all.

I couldn't be more thankful for the opportunity to spend the past week with these 27 travelers to El Salvador. Please know that they represented our church and what we stand for in a way that should make us all proud.

Upcoming Events

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Coffee House Social | April 30th or May 1st, at 6:30 pm. More information to follow. |
| Midnight Run Breakfast Run | May 16th or May 23rd, look for details in a letter coming soon. |

Mind and Spirit: Adult Programs

Bible Study. Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 am, in the Library.

Bible Study meets every Thursday morning from 10:30 am to 11:30 am in the church library. On February 24th, we began our study of *The Revelation to John*. We will look at this apocalypse in relationship to other apocalyptic works such as *I Enoch* and *Daniel*, and pay close attention to the symbolism and prophecy, and how it relates to the early Christian church. We will also look at some examples of the way that *Revelation* was expressed in the visual arts. All are welcome! No prior Bible study is needed. Led by Becky.

Who am I? What is the purpose of my life? Thursdays, 9:30-10:30 am, in the Hoag Parlor.

Led by Ruth Robins (860-434-2999) or Robinspagl@aol.com. Please contact Ruth to sign up for this group which meets weekly for meditation and open dialogue to help us choose a more spiritually centered life.

Reading Group

The Reading Group meets every other week on *Wednesdays in the Hoag parlor at 4:30 pm*. We'll be starting with Book One of "The Prelude" by William Wordsworth and will continue reading this long poem in the following weeks. All are welcome! For more information, please call Alan Bradford at 860-434-0247.

Writing in the Spirit

Writing in the Spirit meets every other week on *Wednesdays in the Hoag Parlor at 3:00 pm*. All writers are welcome. Please bring some work to share, or another writer's poem or prose you admire. For more information, call Vicky Murphy, 860-526-4426.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Over the past year a number of us have been quietly knitting shawls of comfort for those in our congregation in need. The knitting of them quiets our own minds as it centers us on healing another. Contact Joan or Carleen at the church office, 860-434-8686, if you wish to join us. Details about the shawls can be found on the website: <<http://www.shawlministry.com/instructions.html>>.

April Adult Forums

- April 11** **Dr. Al Burchsted, field biologist and former Professor of Biology. His talk will be "Charisma on the Beach: The Tale of the Piping Plover."**
- April 18** **EARTH DAY CELEBRATION in the Fellowship Room during Coffee Hours will feature a display on Global Climate Change; the Old Lyme Library with books on nature and the environment for loan; information on the organic lawn project for FCCOL by Roger McNelly of E. Haddam Horticultural Services; Fiddleheads Co-op; Waldo Solar Products and much more, including informative handouts. Evan Griswold will lead a nature walk at 1:30 pm. We will meet at the end of Meetinghouse Lane on Sunday, April 18th at 1:30 pm and walk on one of the Old Lyme Conservation Trust's trails. All are welcome and no need sign-up, just come!**
- April 25** **Dr. Herster Barres, Director of a non-profit organization that does research on programs about climate change. His talk will be "Reforest The Tropics."**

April 2010

March 2010

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May 2010

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 Easter Sunday 6:15 Sunrise 9 & 11 Services	5	6 11:30 LBS Luncheon	7 3:00 WriteGroup(H) 6p ComComm(H)	8 9:30 WhoAml (H) 10:30 BibleStudy(L) 7:30p Tenebrae(M)	9 El Salvador Dinner (Gerbers)	10 FP/SK
11 9 & 11 Services	12	13 7:30BrdTrustees(L)	14 4:30 ReadGroup(H) 6p ComComm(H) 6:15 AllAgeChoir(S) 7:30 Sr.Choir(S)	15 9:30 WhoAml (H) 10:30 BibleStudy(L)	16 May NL Deadline	17 FP/SK
18 9 & 11 Services Earth Day (F) 1:30 Hike 7p Confirmation (L)	19 7p Brd Stewardship (Becky's)	20	21 3:00 WriteGroup(H) 6p ComComm(H) 6:15 AllAgeChoir(S) 7:30 Sr.Choir(S):3:00	22 9:30 WhoAml (H) 10:30 BibleStudy(L) 7:30 Film(S)	23	24 FP/SK
25 9 & 11 Services Earth Day Celebration (F) 7p Confirmation (L)	26	27 10a LBS Brd(L) 7:30 BrdDeacons(L)	28 4:30 ReadGroup(H) 6p ComComm(H) 6:15 AllAgeChoir(S) 7:30 Sr.Choir(S)	29 9:30 WhoAml (H) 10:30 BibleStudy(L)	30 6p Coffee House w/Maxwells (F)	

*The First Congregational Church
2 Ferry Road
Old Lyme, Connecticut 06371*

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Old Lyme, CT
Non-Profit Organiza-
tion

The deadline for our



*May Newsletter
Friday, April 16th.*

*If possible, please send articles
by e-mail as a Word document.*

THE FOOD PANTRY NEEDS HELP FROM ALL OF US

*Whenever you come to church....worship, church events, meetings, or just to visit....
PLEASE bring some non-perishable food items each time to restock the pantry. **THANKS!***

Please e-mail the church office at <fcol@snet.net> if you want to be removed from the newsletter mailing list and read it on the website. Each household that can read the newsletter on (and print from) the website rather than receive it by mail will save the church \$5.17 each and every year. We will ask for your e-mail address so we can alert you when the new issue is available on our web site. Thanks for your help!