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UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF TOLLAND

United Church of Christ

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Tolland, Connecticut

February 2012

## Worship

### SERMONS AND SCRIPTURES

February 5	COMMUNION SUNDAY	
	"The Search Goes On"	Rev. Wright
	Mark 1:29-39	
February 12	YOUTH SUNDAY	Sr. P.F.
February 19	JAZZ SUNDAY	
	"Till Daddy takes the T-bird"	Rev. Medeiros
February 22		
9:00 a.m.	Ash Wednesday Chancel Communion	
7:00 p.m.	Ash Wednesday Vespers with Communion	
February 26	FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT	
	"Driven"	Rev. Wright
	Mark 1:9-15	

### Sunday, February 19, 8:30 & 10:00 a.m.

As in previous years, February 19, the Sunday before the beginning of Lent, our choir will be joined by the *Riverboat Ramblers*, giving us a taste of that Mardi Gras spirit of celebration. Plan to come and join in on the annual pancake breakfast, also in keeping with the spirit of the day.

### Wednesday, February 22, 9:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

On Ash Wednesday, the 22<sup>nd</sup>, there are two brief worship opportunities to step into Lent, both of which offer the sacrament of communion. The morning service is at 9 a.m.; the evening service is at 7 p.m., preceded by a soup supper hosted by the Board of Deacons at 6ish. Everyone is most cordially welcome to attend these simple but meaningful ways to begin the sacred season leading up to Holy Week and Easter.

United Congregational Church of Tolland  
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 860-875-4160



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*Rev. Hannah Howe, Pastor Emeritus*

Sunday Worship 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.  
 Sunday Church School 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.  
 Office Hours Monday-Friday, 9-2:30

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# Pastors' Corner



## BOB

Sometimes I wonder if other parts of the nation talk as much about the weather as we do, here in New England. Perhaps those of you who've lived elsewhere can advise me. Last year in this timeframe, it was all about all of the snow and roof shoveling; this year, about the lack of it. In keeping tradition with our Puritan forebears, we fret about the weather being too mild and worry that "a big one" must be just around the corner. While we have all sorts of radar scans and fancy weather devices, it doesn't seem to help make prognostications more reliable. I recall some years back (the late '70s, if you can believe that) when Nat Guptill was Minister of the Ct. Conference of our United Church of Christ, he reflected on how modernization didn't necessarily mean improvement. Having grown up in rural Maine, he spoke about the town snow removal being accomplished by a horse drawn wooden plow and that the end of one's driveway would be shoveled out by the driver; some years later in West Hartford, the huge trucks and steel plows didn't do nearly as well at street clearing and almost always deposited additional snow and ice in the end of one's driveway. Don't we all sometimes long for those "good old days?"

Still, life moves on and we are the ones who need to adjust to the changes, whether they bring progress or not. As our own church now has its own facebook page (allowing you a glimpse of Sunday's sermon while it's still the same day) and youtube sites, as well as our web page, we are also adjusting to how our world communicates in 2012. While I may find much of it fairly daunting and I do not pretend to comprehend how it works, I find it all amazing, quite amazing.

More amazing, however, is the power and efficacy of a simple, sincere, whispered prayer.

Lent is soon upon us; why not take a few moments more for just that? I plan to and I hope you will, too.

Blessings, Bob.

## JUDY

What is the Christian Year? It is the circling round the story of God that we might enter into it not as observers, but participants drawn right into the heart of the mysteries, emerging changed.

Christians have celebrated liturgies that adhere to annual rhythms since the early days of the church. More than a century ago a French monk wrote that the liturgical year is "the joy of the people, the source of light to the learned, and the book of the humblest of the faithful." The year is made up of a sequence of fasts and feasts, days and seasons, woven together to tell the story of Christ and lead believers deeper into the mysteries of the Christian faith.

The Christian year begins quietly, but expectantly during the four weeks of Advent, the season whose name means "coming". We carry our yearnings in full view like a protruding belly. The prophet Isaiah declares our longing for healing and justice, righteousness and deliverance.

The fulfillment arrives in the form of an infant, wet, vulnerable, and very physical. This is what God becomes at Christmas: human flesh, beloved and radiant life. Christmas is not just one day but twelve, culminating in the feast of Epiphany, the word meaning: appearing, a manifestation, an "aha!" moment; for we are beginning to understand who this child is. Tradition holds that this is the day the magi arrived and brought the news of his arrival out into the world.

Time moves swiftly and by the next Sunday Jesus is presenting himself for baptism at the Jordan River and Lent is on our heels. We have forty days to prepare, the same forty Jesus had when he went into the wilderness after his baptism, the same forty the children of Israel lived on manna in the desert that then turned into the same in years.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Maundy Thursday when Jesus is sentenced to death. Lent 's name means "spring" and the season is one of renewal, a letting go of what does not serve us, an examination of what keeps us turned away from God, so as poet Wendell Berry says,

"We might sort through the worthy from the waste."

After forty days of digging and sorting we walk for one whole week into the passion of Christ, those devastating events that took place in the Roman Empire twenty centuries ago. We join with liturgies that were developed for pilgrims in the fourth century as they traveled to Jerusalem, the sacred and most holy of places. As if we were in Jerusalem ourselves we wave palms and shout *Hosanna!* The shouts soon turn hollow and instead of joy we are filled with sorrow.

On Maundy Thursday we join Jesus at the table at the heart of the paschal mystery. For here he transformed the Passover feast and remembrance of freedom from slavery in Egypt to Communion and the giving of a new covenant, and a new freedom. After Thursday's arrest come Friday's crucifixion, Saturday's silence, and Sunday's glory. Christ is risen, and so are we.

For fifty days it is Easter, as we try to sustain our resurrection joy and make sense, as did the first disciples, of how God moves among us. How all of this can be possible. We return to our usual routines and carry on with our lives, perhaps sharing the story and the musings of the events as we walk along together.

On the fiftieth day the disciples awaited Jesus in Jerusalem as he had instructed. And it is here that the gift of the Holy Spirit is bestowed upon us and the Easter promise is complete. We understand that the love and strength of God are not separate from us, but are within us, dwelling in our own hearts. Our lives are meant to embody these gifts to share them with the world for the common good. And the church is born.

Again, we enter into ordinary time, getting on with our ordinary lives until our hearts start to yearn once again for the advent and extraordinary movements of God. The story of the Christian year says writer Joyce Rupp, is about "God's passing over into human time and about all that God has done and is still doing within this time." Again and again, we circle the year, and God meets us here.

May Epiphany stars and insights be yours.



EPIPHANY

# Caring Ministries

## CARING MINISTRIES PRESENTS A PROGRAM FOR LENT

The Spirit of God touches our lives through the people and events we encounter on our life journey. This program is an opportunity to profoundly reflect on those life experiences and to begin to assess and capture the magnitude of God's presence in our lives and then to pass that wisdom on to our descendants....a true legacy.

This Lenten Retreat will utilize the creation of a personal statement of faith as a way to raise one's awareness of God's intervention in our lives and to share that wisdom with those we love. During this workshop, the participants will be guided through the creation of a personal "Life Map" that includes one's significant life learning, beliefs, stories, hopes and dreams. By stepping back and reflecting on the sum of their personal experiences, the participants will be able to articulate what is most important for them and what is most important to be passed on to those whom they love. There will also be many opportunities for individual reflection, prayer, the sharing of insights, group discussion and sheer inspiration.

Take this opportunity to recognize and celebrate God's power in your life as well as to create "a love letter from your heart".

This program will take place on Saturday, March 24th from 9:00 - 4:00. The cost will be \$35 which includes a workbook. Please bring a bagged lunch.

Program Leaders: Louise Colletti, M.A. is a spiritual director, author and Program Director of Mary's Place: Center for Grieving Children and Families. Joseph Colletti, M.Ed., M.Div., S.T.M., is an author, an organization development consultant and a Pathways of Spirituality leadership team member for the Spiritual Life Center of West Hartford, CT.

\*NOTE: Joe will be a guest at our Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, February 19th. If you would like to meet him and/or to learn more about the program, be sure

to stop by the Fellowship Hall after either of the services.

For further information or to sign up, please contact Kimberly Gottier (860-875-4160 or [kgottier22@comcast.net](mailto:kgottier22@comcast.net)) no later than March 16th.

## U C US WALK FOR THE CURE 2012 RELAY FOR LIFE!

It is that time of year again where our team is getting primed to lead the way in the 2012 Relay for Life which will be held Friday and Saturday, June 8th and 9th from 4:00p.m. to 4:00p.m. at the Tolland High School!

The new 2012 Relay for Life website is already up and running with several teams already signed up, including ours! Please consider joining our efforts this year as we try to reach our goal of fundraising \$15,000 towards the cure for cancer! This is our fourth year participating and each year we have raised and surpassed our goals!

You can become a member of our team or sponsor one of our members with a donation. Whatever your interest, we invite you to celebrate with us, all those who are cancer survivors and to celebrate the lives of those who, did not "die from cancer", but instead, those who were no longer able to "live with incurable cancer" (as quoted by Donna Mendenhall). Visit: [www.relayforlife.org/tollandcountyc](http://www.relayforlife.org/tollandcountyc) to register or make a donation if you are able.

I am happy to share that Melinda Stimac, Donna and Ernie Mendenhall's daughter, will be helping me co-chair the team this year with her children, Aidan and Annika. This team and our efforts meant so much to Donna and Ernie, because as we all know, cancer affects everyone in one fashion or another. Let's strive to find a cure!

## CARING MINISTRIES VOLUNTEERS: SAVE THE DATE!

In recognition of Volunteer Appreciation Week, April 15th to the 21st, the Caring Ministries Volunteer Appreciation Brunch will be held Sunday, April 15 at 11:30 a.m. I am looking forward to this special time

to honor each of you and all that you do for our church family. Although the date is a few months away, please let me know if you will plan to join us for the celebration!

Prayer Line - If you wish to add a name, a joy, a concern to the Prayer Line, please contact Kim Gottier (860-875-4160 or [kgottier22@comcast.net](mailto:kgottier22@comcast.net)).

Kim will include your request on the list of prayers offered by the eighteen members Prayer Line. All information on the Prayer Line is kept confidential.

## Church School

### CHILDREN IN CHURCH

Each week, children at the 8:30 service will start their morning in the worship service with their families, and go to Church School following the children's message. 10:00 classes will follow a rotating schedule for attending church.

Here is the 10:00 schedule for February and March:

- 12-Feb - 7<sup>th</sup> grade - for Youth Sunday
- 19-Feb - 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades
- 26-Feb - 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades
- 4-Mar - 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> grades - for Sing Praise
- 18-Mar - 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades
- 25-Mar - 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades

### CHURCH SCHOOL BAKE SALE

The Church School will be holding its 8<sup>th</sup> annual bake sale to benefit Tate Kai on Sunday, February 12! Tate is an 18 year-old girl in her last year living in the Tibetan Children's Village (TCV) in India. Ten years ago, our Christian Education Committee and Church School (in cooperation with Global Ministries) chose to sponsor Tate in her continued education at TCV. By sponsoring Tate, we commit to a pledge of \$360 each year to help with her education costs. The Church School raises this

money each year. The bake sale will be held in Fellowship Hall during coffee hour for both services. Mark the date of the sale on your calendar; you don't want to miss this! Come help us support Tate, and bring home a treat, too! If you are willing and able to help bake for this event, please sign up in the fellowship hall or outside the CE office or contact Amie Giguere (860-875-4160 x14 or [agiguere@ucctolland.org](mailto:agiguere@ucctolland.org)). Thank you!

### SILVER LAKE YOUTH

The 2011 Silver Lake conference, Sing Praise, will join us for worship on Sunday, March 4th. Last summer, 40 middle school students and a staff of committed adults came together for a week at Silver Lake to build community and explore their spirituality. They shared joys and concerns about their faith journeys, and collaborated to write a musical play about the story of Jonah and the Whale.

Tolland UCC members Lora Giguere, Serena Lotreck and Katherine Giguere, are among the youth who participated. Matt Gudernatch served as a counselor and Gigi Broderick's daughter-in-law, Whendi, was one of the Deans. Through Jonah's story, the group found comfort for times of struggle and faith in times of need. They are looking forward to sharing their gifts and ministering to our congregation.

We are looking for members of the congregation to support this wonderful opportunity. Sing Praise will arrive on Saturday March 3rd to rehearse and prepare for church the following day. The PF groups will be involved with preparing a meal for the group on Saturday night and share in a time of fellowship with them as well.

We also need host families to provide a place to sleep, breakfast for the youth, and transportation to church in the morning. Sing Praise conferees (7th, 8th & 9th graders) will stay in pairs or small groups, depending on how many people each family can accommodate. If you are willing to serve as a host family for these young people,

contact Amie Giguere (860-875-4160 x14 or [agiguere@ucctolland.org](mailto:agiguere@ucctolland.org)).

## Groups and Committees

### HALLELUJAH HIKERS

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#### Thursday, February 2, 9:00 a.m.

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Ready for something different? On February 2, 2012, (notice it is the 1st Thursday in February) the hike will be in Westerly, RI, on the Crandall Conservation property. Meet at the church at 9:00 am to carpool to Westerly. The drive is about 1 ½ hours to 16 Ricci Drive where lunch will be served. The hike is on property donated to the Westerly Land Trust and is about 2 miles long. Depending on the weather, we will then hike the beach in Weekapaug that is about another 2 miles long or as long as we want to make it.

If interested, please contact Pat Woods (860-871-0074 or [nannyw1@comcast.net](mailto:nannyw1@comcast.net)).

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#### Tuesday, February 28, 9:00 a.m.

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The easy hike will be on February 28 and we will hike the Parciak Conservation Area on Bald Hill Rd. Meet at the church at 9:00 am. As it may be too cold for a tailgate brunch, we may choose to have brunch at Track Nine Diner in Willington.

For any additional information, contact Pat Woods (860-871-0074 or [nannyw1@comcast.net](mailto:nannyw1@comcast.net)).



Hypertension (high blood pressure) affects one in four adults in the United States. Another 25 percent of adults have blood pressure readings considered to be on the high end of normal.

Your blood pressure is the force exerted on your artery walls by the blood flowing through your body. A blood pressure reading provides two measures, systolic pressure and diastolic pressure, which are expressed as millimeters of mercury (mm Hg), or how high the pressure of blood would raise a column

of mercury. Systolic pressure is measured as the heart pumps. Diastolic pressure is measured between beats, as blood flows back into the heart.

High blood pressure is often called the “silent killer” because it has no symptoms and can go undetected for years. It is important to have your blood pressure checked regularly.

Hypertension cannot be cured, but it can be controlled through lifestyle changes and prescriptive medication. While medications to treat hypertension are available, research has shown that modest lifestyle and dietary changes can help treat and often delay or prevent high blood pressure. People trying to control hypertension often are advised to decrease sodium, increase potassium, watch their calories, and maintain a reasonable weight.

Maintaining a reasonable weight is important to minimize the risk of several major diseases, including hypertension. For people who are overweight, even a small weight loss can dramatically reduce or even prevent high blood pressure.

Untreated hypertension causes damage to the blood vessels over time. This can lead to other health complications such as strokes, kidney failure, impaired vision, heart attack, and heart failure.

The Parish Nurses will be hosting a presentation on the correlation between diet and hypertension on February 25th at our Church. Please come join us for an important discussion that just may help us all improve our overall wellness. See you there!

#### SAVE THE DATE!

**What:** Hypertension and Diet Workshop

**When:** Saturday, February 25, 2012 10:00 a.m. - Noon

**Where:** Classroom

**Why:** Do you or your loved ones have high blood pressure or have you been told you are at risk for developing it? Come learn about steps you can take to control or help prevent high blood pressure by changing the foods you eat. The **DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) Diet** will be discussed along with label reading tips and alternatives to using salt in your cooking.

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**Who:** Presented by Lisa Miller, RD, CD-N This session is sponsored by the Parish Nurse Ministry.

Look for a tear-off sheet in the faith in action pages to sign up for this very informative workshop.

### PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Our Craft and Harvest Fairs in November and December were huge successes! Our profits were \$4,550, our highest total ever. Thank you to everyone who had a part in this sale. We were able to add new items to this fair this year which were very successful. If you have a craft that you do and would like to donate some items to this year's sale in November and December, please consider preparing your items in the coming months.

We may be starting a new project this year: crocheting over 200 snowflakes that can be used for our formerly-called "untrimmed tree" at Christmas. It seems we need to have a more permanent way to trim the tree without having to re-create this every year, so if you like to crochet or would like to learn and be part of this project, let us know. It should be a fun and very rewarding experience.

This past year we sent out 57 prayer shawls, bringing the total number to 580 for 9 years. In addition, we provided 11 baby baptismal shawls, bringing that total to 180. As always, there is no charge for our prayer shawls, but we are very happy to accept donations to help defray the cost of the yarn.

We continue to meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month from 10-noon and invite anyone to come join us to knit, crochet, or do other handcrafts in a social and prayerful setting.

If you know of someone who should have a prayer shawl, please let Judy, Bob or Kim know so that one can be provided.

## Men

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**Monday, February 6, 11:30 a.m.**

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The Retired Men's Luncheon will be Monday, February 6 at 11:30 at Wellington Pizza. Our guest program will be Kevin Murphy, Sr. Vice President of

ECHN and Ellen Belanger, the new administrator of Woodlake at Tolland. Let's look forward to a big turnout!

## Missions

### CORRECTION

In our January 2012 Tidings, we gave huge thanks to Dave Welch for his participation in the Rest Stop Fundraiser. In fact, a huge thanks needs to be extended to DAVE ELLIOT, also.

### ALTERNATIVE GIFT FAIR

The first Alternative Gift Fair held in Fellowship Hall on December 3 was a huge success raising \$4,718.75! Many thanks to Joan Balestrini, Linda Calabrese, Christine Thompson and Carol Tyler for their hours of enthusiasm.

### CHRISTMAS DINNER

The "Up On The Rooftop" Christmas dinner was a wonderfully fun and festive evening that included delicious food, music, and fellowship. There were 62 people in attendance. The Missions Committee would like to thank Tonja and Jeff Kelly for hosting appetizers in their home, Edith for playing the piano, Kitty and Elmer Penton for the use of their beautiful decorations and their help in decorating, Marci and Frank James (and crew) for preparing a magnificent meal and the "carolers" who sang beautiful Christmas favorites. Proceeds collected totaled \$419 and will go towards the new roof on the CE building.

### UNTRIMMED TREE

Many thanks to all! Gifts from the Untrimmed tree totaled \$2,200.00.

### ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST

In the spirit of Mardi-Gras, our annual pancake breakfast comes on Sunday February 19, the Sunday before the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday. The Riverboat Ramblers will again help us prepare for the sacred season of Lent with a rousing morning of

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gospel and jazz offerings during both Sunday services. Pancakes will be served continuously from 8:00 a.m. to noon.

### SIMPLY SMILES COFFEE

Simply Smiles is a non-profit organization that supports communities in River Sioux Tribe Reservation, South Dakota and in Oaxaca, Mexico. Their mission is to provide bright futures for impoverished children. Globalization of the coffee markets has all but destroyed coffee farming as a sustainable way of life in the mountains of southern Mexico. Sale of coffee during our weekly coffee hours helps this community in Oaxaca, Mexico to become self-sustainable. The proceeds from 1 bag of coffee feeds a child for 3 weeks. Stop by during coffee hour for more information and to buy their delicious coffee. Thank you for your support!!!

### SILVER LAKE AUCTION - THANKS

Your generosity is astounding!! Thank you, for your support of this annual event to maintain Silver Lake Conference Center as a resource for all of us to use, cherish and enjoy. Thanks to all of you who contributed, bid and helped during the event and attended the Coffee Hour on Jan 29th. I'd also like to thank the musicians and the Caring Ministry bakers who supplied the event with delicious treats. As we did last year, 25% of the proceeds will be donated towards our church budget.

### DISTRIBUTING FOOD TO THE HUNGRY

The Missions Committee recently met with a representative from Foodshare to discuss the possibility of our church becoming a Mobile Food Distribution location, a place where Foodshare distributes food, primarily fresh produce, to the hungry. Though Tolland is fairly affluent, poverty does still exist in ours and neighboring towns. In reviewing local maps and places where mobile units are represented, Kai Loudon, from Foodshare noticed that there is no distribution location in Tolland and wondered if our church might consider partnering with them in this endeavor. If an agreement is found, Foodshare would send their mobile unit to us twice a

month for two hours on an agreed upon day and time. This information would be made public through advertising. As we are so conveniently located to Rts. 195, 84, 74 and 30, we believe it would be a successful site.

To make this happen, we would need a primary and secondary coordinator and a minimum of six volunteers. We are hopeful that there may be among us a person or two who would be interested in the coordinator position. We do not think it is labor intensive, but acting more as an on-site supervisor on distribution days. The schedule of distribution would be arranged to best suit those individuals' schedules, however available times must be Monday through Friday somewhere between the hours of 9 a.m. -2 p.m.

Regarding the required six volunteers, we believe that we are a people eager to lend a helping hand and finding six people to help out twice a month would not be a burden. However, before we move forward we need to know we can accomplish this successfully. Therefore if you are interested, please call or stop by and see Rev. Medeiros. Thank you.

## Music and the Arts

### MUSIC EVENTS ALL AROUND US!

AREA MUSIC EVENTS is the name of a new page on our church website ([ucctolland.org/musicinarea](http://ucctolland.org/musicinarea)). It lists performance events—mostly music, with some drama, shows, and dance events. Most are in the Hartford area and east, although a few special events farther away might be included occasionally.

Here is a sampling:

**Saturday, February 11**, Corbin Beisner, piano concert, Emanuel Lutheran Church, Manchester

**Sunday, February 12**, An Afternoon of Love Songs and Jazz, with Joel Frahm (saxophone) and Jolie Rocke Brown (vocalist), Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Hartford

**Sunday, February 12**, Eight to the Bar, An afternoon of Jazz, First Church of Christ, Congregational, Glastonbury

If you learn of events that you would like to share on our site, please email the details to Jan Bittner (jabittner@charter.net).

### OUR CHURCH TO HOST CONCERTS!

In an effort to introduce our church to folks in our community and beyond, we will be hosting concerts to bring our neighbors in to get to know us and be entertained at the same time. Bob and Jan Bittner follow concerts all over the state and are organizing these events for us. Most concerts they attend are in churches and are reasonably priced. Bringing concerts into our church is exciting! The first concert will be in May and we hope to have two more in the fall. On May 20 our own Steve Lowry and Richard Matteson of Amherst, MA, will present a piano and organ program. Save the date and watch for more details! If you would like to be notified about upcoming concerts in our church, join our concert emailing list by sending an email to Jan (jabittner@charter.net) or Bob Bittner (rbittner@charter.net).

## Women

### Tuesday, February 7, 12:00 p.m.

The Retired Women's Luncheon will be Tuesday, February 7 at Pastori's, Route 83, Ellington. Please call Joan Ballestrini at 860-875-0043 to sign up. Let her know if you want to be picked up at church at 11:30 a.m.

## Youth

### PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP

In January, our sledding plans were foiled by the lack of snow but we quickly changed gears and assembled at Crandall Park for a winter hike. PF collected over 150 pairs of gloves, mittens, hats and scarves for Brass City Harvest/Greater Waterbury Interfaith

Ministries, a group that works with the homeless population in Waterbury, Connecticut. Thanks to the church community for donating so generously to this initiative. PF also participated in the Martin Luther King Jr. brunch. It was a great time for PF to understand the impact and message of Dr. King and assist with the event at the same time.

"That old law about 'an eye for an eye' leaves everybody blind...the time is always right to do the right thing" -Martin Luther King Jr.

### February Schedule:

- February 5: **Junior PF:** 4:00-5:30 Games and activities  
**Senior PF:** 6:00-7:30 Final prep for Youth Sunday
- February 11: **Saturday:** 1:00 - 3:00 Youth Sunday rehearsal - Sanctuary
- February 12: **Youth Sunday:** Pilgrim Youth Fellowship will be sponsoring both services this week focusing on the theme of "Peace"! Come and experience a little different service presented and led by the Senior PF and hear their thoughts on peace in their lives and the world.
- February 18: Saturday! **Ski Trip** to Blandford Ski Area, Blandford, Mass. We will be leaving in the morning for most of the day. Stay tuned for details.
- February 26: **"Faith and Life in Film"** movies and discussion. **Junior PF** 4:00-5:30, **Senior PF** 6:00-7:30

**Come join us!** ALL 6-8 graders and 9-12 graders are welcome to come anytime you can! Unless we have special events or outings planned, **Junior PF meets every Sunday from 4:00 - 5:30** and **Senior PF meets from 6:00 - 7:30 at the church.** Our events and meetings will be listed in the Faith in Action, in future Tidings editions, well as on the Youth link on the church website...and now on Facebook!!

Be sure you are on our contact list - call or email us:  
Gary Lotreck: 860-875-6501; John Frassinelli: 860-966-1985.

Please note our new email address:  
[pf@ucctolland.com](mailto:pf@ucctolland.com)



## Notes and Thanks

### LENTEN DEVOTIONAL COMING

To help set aside some additional time during Lent to focus on one's spirituality, the Board of Deacons and pastors are in the process of preparing a new Daily Devotional Brochure which will be available on Jazz Sunday and at Ash Wednesday services. Each daily reading will include a scripture verse, a brief reflection, and a prayer. Special thanks to the deacon and other volunteer contributors. Those using the brochure in past years have repeatedly said how very special it was; especially knowing our own friends had personally written it. Copies are free of charge.

### STILL MORE NOTES OF THANKS

Very special thanks to Donna Dobieski, Michelle Becz, Maxine Cole, Mary Crocker, Sue Errickson, Fran Maynard, Carol Moriarty, Lois Pabst, Kitty Penton and Linda Suess who helped transform our Fellowship Hall with a fresh coat of paint (or three) giving a new, warm feeling to the space. Thank you Linda Harrison for baking "goodies" for them as well. Watch also for the floor to be retiled, at long last, thanks to memorial gifts from Priscilla Smith (for Ken). In addition, Sue Errickson (in memory of Ed) is providing other improvements. Thank you for such thoughtfulness.

Each month, a very dedicated "crew" of volunteers gathers to collate and prepare the Tidings for mailing out. Though some people are indicating the newsletter can be emailed to them, there will be more than enough of us choosing to receive it by mail that our Tidings Team will continue to be needed and valued. Yummy snacks and coffee are provided them by a grateful office staff (Linda and Stephanie). Thanks to them, too.

Post Advent and Christmas, Pre-Lenten appreciation to the choirs and soloists for their wonderful contributions to the glory of these sacred "high, holy" seasons. How about that "Hallelujah Chorus" with the brass, organ and choir? Talk about taking your breath away! And, a special note of thanks, also, to our new Minister of Music, Steve Lowry, for his part in making it all happen so spectacularly.

### A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU

from Dot Silhavy

I would personally like to thank all of the individuals (who are too numerous to name) for the notes and cards over the holidays and throughout the entire year. The connection I have had with all of you goes back many years and I am so happy for the memories of days gone by. Please know that your support and love is greatly appreciated and I wish that I could continue to personally acknowledge each and every one of you!

God bless!

Dot Silhavy, Fox Hill Center, 1253 Hartford Tpke.  
Vernon, CT 06066

### From the Church Office



*We rejoice in this baptism:*

Margaret Destiny Olandt, daughter of Cheryl Olandt,  
January 22

*We extend our thoughts and prayers to this family:*

Family and friends of Winnie Elliott



### Our Heartfelt Appreciation

As Valentine's Day approaches, we are reminded of the love that abounds in our Church through the

leadership, work, contributions of talents, and various forms of gifts from many in our parish.

With many thanks to...

All who donated food to the Food Pantry, not only during the Christmas Season, but all year long.

All who donated to the Flower Fund of the Church during the Advent Season and Easter Season.

All who donated to the Blanket Fund on Mother's Day, and to Service Hygiene Kits on Father's Day.

Sam and Debbie Simpson for the donation of the Rose of Remembrance each week, given in loving memory of her parents, Medford and Leoda Lehr.

Yvonne Gottier who faithfully helps in the office every Friday morning and whenever asked.

Perne Maynard who continues to oversee the group that videotapes our worship service each week.

All of the volunteers who generously give of their time and talents whenever help is needed with the Annual Reports, special mailings, and other projects that arise in the Church Office.

Bev Isch, who faithfully cleans the church kitchen each week.

Bev and Fred Isch, Lyn McLeod, Jeanne Smith, Linda Suess and Bob Bittner, who keep the church grounds looking beautiful during the spring, summer and fall.

All who completed their terms on various boards and committees, to all who agreed to return for another, and to those who volunteered to begin serving.

**NewsLetter**  
**DEADLINE**

March *Tidings* articles are due by Monday, February 13. Email them to Lisa ([lisaharley@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lisaharley@sbcglobal.net)) or leave them in the *Tidings* mailbox in the church office.

## From the Financial Secretary

**Offering Envelopes** - As the cost of postage to mail offering envelope packets to Tolland residents increased by 400%, we have asked everyone to pick-up their envelopes at the church. If you haven't already done so, please be sure to stop by the church for your packet.

This year's packet of envelopes includes an "Initial Offering" envelope, to help pay the cost of this year's envelope system, and a "Building Fund" envelope (in the back of the packet). We hope that members and friends who wish to help reduce the mortgage principal will use the Building Fund envelope for that purpose. Contributions made in the Building Fund envelope will be included on your annual statement of giving.

**It's Tax Time** - 2011 Statements of Giving were mailed to everyone in January. Please check the dollar amounts against your records and bring any discrepancies to my attention as soon as possible in order to obtain a correct receipt for use when filing your income tax returns. If you are behind in your giving, it is not too late to bring your pledge up to date. Keep in mind those contributions cannot be claimed on your 2011 tax return but will show up as a contribution for next year's tax return.

**It's Not Too Late** -- Our Stewardship Campaign for 2012 was not as successful as hoped, so 2012 could be another difficult year. If you wish to make a pledge and have not yet done so, it is not too late. Pledge cards are available in the Narthex, at the side door of the Sanctuary and in the Church Office. If you wish, you may call the church and a pledge card will be mailed to you.

**Many Thanks** - We are indeed grateful for your faithful support in the ministry of our Church. If you have any questions, would like to make a pledge to our church or wish to receive offering envelopes, please contact Debbie Simpson (860-875-4160 or [dsimpson@ucctolland.org](mailto:dsimpson@ucctolland.org)).