

South Congregational Church United Church of Christ



April 2017

Words from our Minister

With the dawn of Easter morning, Lent comes to an end. The season of reflection and repentance comes to a close and we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ; light conquering the shadows and hope surpassing despair. Having just returned with our South Church group who volunteered at Back Bay Mission in Biloxi MS, we are touched by the deep faith and strength of personal character in those we met and their rising again after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. In the midst of great loss of life and personal possessions, it was both humbling and inspiring to witness the resolve of dignity and character to claim hope as the foundation of their future. Again and again we heard the words, "Thank you for coming" ... "You didn't forget us." When God is at work, lives on both sides- Maine and Mississippi- are transformed. This I believe with my whole heart. And this I witnessed once again on Mississippi's Gulf Coast. The promise of new life both within and beyond our local community. *Rev. Charles*

*Wherever you have friends that's your country,
and wherever you receive love, that's your home."*
The Book of Joy by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama

While working on a picture puzzle this winter, I've found many spiritual lessons and insights embedded in the process.

- First: Turn over all the pieces. It is good to know what is before you.
- Next: Pull out and begin putting together the border pieces. Our lives need parameters to both direct and curb our energies. Our faith gives us such a framework within which we both explore and channel our lives.
- Then: Look for colors, patterns, lines, pictures and the like. Work on making connections, pieces that fit. And when that piece fits- you just know it. Such a feeling! And when you force a fit, sooner or later it has to be undone and redone.

Just like life. Take breaks along the way. The full picture is not revealed in a single setting. Yet gradually, perseverance builds and more pieces come together and maybe - just maybe- we begin to believe. It can be accomplished.



Our Mission is to be an inclusive community of faith that preaches the word of God, teaches the love of Jesus Christ and reaches out to all through the Holy Spirit.

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Inside this issue:

Words from Rev. Whiston

Biloxi Reflections

Lent and Easter Activities

1st Quarter Financial Summary

You Should Know...

Sunday Worship 10:30 am
(Nursery Care provided)

Sunday School 10:30 am
Classes

Lent and Easter Offerings

Palm Sunday, April 9, 10:30am Worship, South Congregational Church

Maundy Thursday remembering the Last Supper - April 13, 7:00pm
Community Worship at First Congregational Church, Kennebunkport

Good Friday remembering the crucifixion of Christ - April 14, 7:00pm
Community Worship Church at Village Baptist Church, Kennebunkport

Easter Sunrise Community Service - April 16, 6:00am at Kennebunk Beach

Easter Sunday Worship 10:30am at South Congregational Church (Nursery Care Only)
With Brass

Reminder - Deadline to order an Easter Lily or Tulip is April 7
Lily - \$12.00 Tulip - \$10.00

Lenten Practice -*The Daily Examen*

Rev. Dr. Judith Blanchard's sermon on March 5th, which centered on our individual faith practice and journey through the Lenten season, inspired a great deal of positive discussion. Several people commented that they would like to have a copy of the 5-Step *Daily Examen* that Rev. Blanchard practices every evening during Lent.

This is given below. More reflections based on the daily examen can be found at www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-examen/

Daily Five- Step Examen Practiced by St. Ignatius

1. Become aware of God's presence.
2. Review the day with gratitude.
3. Pay attention to your emotions.
4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.
5. Look toward tomorrow.

Pilgrim Lodge

It is not too early to make plans for summer camp . Pilgrim Lodge is an excellent program of our Maine Conference, United Church of Christ. Located on Lake Cobbossee outside of Augusta; these age specific camps are of one week duration. Specifics are on the website (www.pilgrimlodge.org) or look at the brochures/description posted on the hallway bulletin board. Financial support is available through the church and our Women's Association. Rev. Charles has more information.

In case you wondered, the **hallway mailboxes are now located in the church office**. In addition, a new system of sign-ups is in place for ushers, Sunday flowers, etc. Instead of being on the hallway bulletin board, a series of clip-boards is in place. Let us know how this serves you and the church as 'user friendly'.

South Church Scholarship Applications -Watch for details regarding South Church academic scholarships, applications will be available May 1 and due back in the office June 1.

Music Committee 2017 Humming Along

The 2017 Music Committee is well on its way for 2017. The group reelected Gill Page as Chair, Liz Baker as Vice Chair, and CC Clapp as Secretary. (See photo.)

New members are Judy Wilcox, Rachael Barter, and King Montgomery. They join team-mates Bob Card, Susan Twombly, Keith Truesdale, and Music Director David Brandes.



Committee goals for the church year are taking shape, and so far include concerts by *VentiCordi* Chamber Music (www.venticordi.com) on July 13, 27, and August 10, 2017

at 7 pm. Further they also will play at one Sunday service, date to be determined.

On October 28 the *New England Brass Band*, a 30-piece brass and percussion ensemble (www.newenglandbrassband.org), will hold a concert at South Church at 7 pm. Again this year, in conjunction with the Church on the Cape, the *Boston Children's Chorus* (www.bostonchildrenchorus.org) will perform in the fall at a time to be determined. Mark your calendars and join us for these evenings of wonderful and diverse musical presentations.

The Music Committee will paste copies of the original commissioned hymn commemorating the 175th Anniversary of South Congregational Church UCC into our hymnals in the near future. Read the words of this stirring hymn; they are exceptional.

Our newly-formed *Chime Choir* continues to enchant us at periodic Sunday services and at the Live Nativity scene in front of the church during Christmas Prelude. David Brandes reports they will play every four or five weeks. The *Chime Choir* needs several more music-reading players, so if interested, contact David, Reverend Charles, or any member of the Music Committee.

One exciting musical idea under discussion is putting together a concert of various groups and individuals within South Church, to be performed for the congregation and the local community. Players could include David on the organ, Megan and the Grassi girls on violin, and Rachael Barter playing flute. Add the *Chime Choir* and other musicians, and this could be a very fun time. We also are considering doing South Church musical DVDs in the future.

We wanted Elvis to perform too--remember he started as a gospel music singer--but he left the building and no one can find him.

Report & Photo by King Montgomery

Biloxi Reflections

South Church can take appropriate joy in the efforts and contributions of this year's mission trip participants to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi MS. Peter, Kiara, Maryfrances, Henry, Denise, Don and Linda represented the congregation as well as the gospel with integrity and humility. I was proud to be the leader of this group and share the week together. We remain strong supporters of this United Church of Christ program on the Gulf Coast founded in 1921. Its programs include housing renovation, food pantry, Loaves and Fishes soup kitchen and the Micah Day Center for the homeless. I invite you to read excerpts below of this trip along with many pictures on the bulletin board as well as our website. For your support which was manifested in many ways, thank you!

Sunday morning found us in church at First Missionary Baptist Church of Gulfport; warmly welcome by Pastor Sonny and the congregation. Big grocery trip on the way back, and prepared to meet the other groups we would be with for the week from CT and IL. Maryfrances took the lead on a delicious chicken dinner for 23- so good!



Monday found our group at Roberts Street home, nearly done after 3-5 years of work and/or complications. I was at this house last year when a leak in the new plumbing ran for a week before discovered! We were especially blessed to meet the family, five of the seven members. We cleaned mildew off the exterior, installed all the racks in the bathrooms, fixed some door problems and began thorough cleaning in preparation for occupancy. Refrigerator and stove were delivered at noon time. Denise and Maryfrances worked in the food pantry for the morning then came out to our site.

Supper was lasagna, garlic bread and salad; made by the Newtown CT group. Again, good eating. Already witnessing the mixing of the groups - all part of the experience.

Tuesday found us again at Roberts Street, cleaning house - installing stove, patching sheetrock around a leak to further prep it for a move in. Thinking we might be done today, Benji/Mike said tomorrow we'll likely do scaffolding and remove dirt/grime/mold from under the eaves.

Wednesday-March 1 Lent begins. Five of us went to Biloxi Lumber to pick up some windows and doors they were donating. Regrettably, the company is closing, a great loss to the local community and the Mission. We also transferred some siding from a flat bed trailer to a work site in need across town. Some of our crew worked at the Loaves and Fishes soup kitchen, others at the Micah Day Center. Then all of us were hosted for dinner at the Baptist Church where we worshiped on Sunday, then stayed for Ash Wednesday Bible Study.



Thursday found many of us at Roberts Avenue once again... AND the carpets would be installed today--- and actually into tomorrow as well. Local workers, most pleasant and quite professional/expertise.

Friday took us to Roberts Ave for final work. More rugs to be laid and cleaned. Final dishwasher arrived and needs a plumber plus the leak under the sink remains.

Hearts were touched, horizons were broadened and light was spread. In some small way, I/we believe the gospel is just a bit stronger for we have witnessed God in our midst.

Below is the financial summary of the first quarter; one more way in which to keep you informed. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact, Brenda Philips, Assistant Treasurer, at the church - 967-2793.

South Congregational Church, UCC
Interim Financial Summary
January 1, 2017 - March 31, 2017

	Actual	Budget	Difference
INCOME			
Pledges - Member	\$ 60,698	\$ 70,410	\$ (9,712)
Non-Pledged	2,967	2,000	967
Offertory	2,670	5,000	(2,330)
Adams Fund Maintenance	3,750	3,750	-
Endowment	8,483	9,125	(642)
Miscellaneous Gifts	7,544	625	6,919
Other Income (Rentals, Weddings, etc.)	<u>1,804</u>	<u>2,300</u>	<u>(496)</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 87,916</u>	<u>\$ 93,210</u>	<u>\$ (5,294)</u>
EXPENSES			
Salaries & Wages	\$ 38,646	\$ 38,359	\$ 287
Benefits	22,625	19,506	3,119
Buildings	3,609	3,433	176
Building Maintenance	9,116	10,000	(884)
Central Board	96	263	(167)
Christian Education	716	1,575	(859)
Diaconate	104	763	(659)
Fellowship	19	113	(94)
Insurance	8,351	8,450	(99)
Library	-	50	(50)
Music	940	1,600	(660)
Newsletter	275	275	-
Office	6,326	7,014	(688)
Outreach	4,526	7,575	(3,049)
Utilities	<u>5,220</u>	<u>5,308</u>	<u>(88)</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$ 100,566</u>	<u>\$ 104,281</u>	<u>\$ (3,714)</u>
INCOME MINUS EXPENSES	<u>\$ (12,650)</u>	<u>\$ (11,070)</u>	<u>\$ (1,580)</u>

South Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
PO Box 414
Kennebunkport, ME 04046
Phone: 207/967-2793
Fax: 207/967-5672

Life Journeys

Death Lawrence C. Soule, Jr. March 20

Many thanks for the most generous response from so many of you to the requested needs for refugee families newly settled in the Biddeford/Saco area. Surplus items received will be held for those next in need. Stay tuned as we learn more and join with others in the effort.

As we go to press, the full **closure of the Dock Square bridge remains** in place. Depending upon the weather, it is anticipated that one lane will open again soon. Parking remains plentiful in the public lot and on the street around the church.

The deadline for submitting newsletter articles is the 15th of each month by emailing to: sarah@southchurchucc.org.

"Take more time, cover less ground" Thomas Merton



Lend A Hand ~ Build A House – Habitat for Humanity is nearing completion on a new home for the Yearwood Family, being built in West Kennebunk (37 Cole Road). **South Church is holding a work day for April 22** if you are interested, all skill levels welcome. Let Rev. Charles know of your interest or signup on the hallway bulletin board to help our planning.