

THE CARILLON

The First Congregational Church
of Vernon, UCC



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CHURCH STAFF

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Sunday Worship 10 AM
Sunday School 10 AM

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
Monday - Friday
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.



"Connect THROUGH CHRIST - Connect WITH Us"

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695 Hartford Turnpike
Vernon, CT 0606

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

“Hi there...how are you doing today?”

Most of us ask and answer that question several dozen times a day. In almost all cases, people respond positively and respond by inquiring how the other person is doing. After these preliminaries, most of us move on our way, or in this winter, spend time telling of our adventures.

Recently, I read an article by Jerry Hoffman, who leads a Center for Stewardship Leaders affiliated with Luther Seminary in Minnesota. In this article, Hoffman spoke of the difference that came into his life when he decided to answer this simple and benign question differently. Drawing inspiration from Paul’s letter to the Phillipians, and in particular, to Paul’s affirmation, “I have learned to be content with what I have and rejoice in the Lord always,” Hoffman decided to answer this simple question by saying, “I am grateful.”

Hoffman writes, *“I need to add that I am not always grateful. It is more like a prayer, “God help me in all circumstances to be grateful.” It is a simple public confession to remember that in my baptism I am called to be steward of the mysteries of God. God has entrusted me with everything I have and am. I am not entitled to the life, wife, family, church, time, talent, money and opportunities that God has entrusted me to steward.”* (Stewardship for the 21st Century newsletter, November 20, 2010)

Not a day has gone by since November when I first read this article that I have not found myself thinking of Hoffman’s words.

Soon we will enter the season of Lent. For many people of faith, Lent can be a time of spiritual renewal. In some church traditions, members choose to deny themselves something during Lent as an act of penitence and self-discipline. My wife Maggie and I have always preferred, rather than to deny ourselves something, to add something to our lives during Lent in the hopes that we can then embrace this as part of our daily living. This year during Lent, I am going to try to follow Hoffman’s example and respond “I am grateful,” when others inquire as to how my day is going. It’s my hope that this simple action will help to nurture within me a grateful heart for the blessings of God I am fortunate to glory in every day.

See you in church.
David

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ABOUT THOSE “AMEN’S”
by Rev. Cynthia Carr

Many people have asked why our new Chalice hymnal doesn’t include the “Amen” at the end of the hymns that we were used to singing when we used the Pilgrim Hymnal. The answer may surprise you.

First: Most Christian hymns were never written with an “Amen” on the end. To add an “amen” to a hymn disrupts the musical cadence/timing of the hymn, and forces each hymn to conclude in the same manner, when that may not have been the intent of the hymn writer(s).

Second: Historically, hymns, psalms, chants and other songs were sung by choirs, soloists or liturgists, not by congregations. Congregations did not sing, but responded to these sung prayers with an “amen” to show acceptance of what had just gone before. “Amen” simply means “so be it.” Only in later centuries had congregations begun singing hymns, as well. The “amens,” which had previously been the only thing sung by the congregation, came along with the hymn, mostly because it had always been there.

It was only in the early twentieth century that publishers began producing hymnals that included “amens” on the end of every hymn, and even this practice was not observed by all. In modern hymnody (late 20th century and forward), hymnal editors are trying to move away from the unnecessary “amens” at the end of hymns and are moving back toward traditional, historical and liturgical practices.

One final thought: I will probably always hear an “amen” at the end of every hymn I sing, because that’s how I grew up singing them. Yet, it seems to me that this course correction being provided by hymnologists may be a way to keep us from “dumbing down” the centuries of beautiful hymns we have inherited. I may have thought “we’ve always done it that way,” but now I’ve learned that’s not true and why. Now I have a deeper appreciation for those who wrote the hymns, what they intended to be sung, and a little more courage to try doing something familiar in a new way. And who knows, maybe what I hear now is God who’s singing “amen” to say “so be it” to what we’ve just sung?

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Prospective Members Classes to be held in March



On Sundays, March 13, 20 and 27, classes will be held with the pastors for those considering church membership. The classes will be held after Worship and Coffee Hour and will be a time for conversation about questions of faith and discipleship. There is no obligation or expectation in attending. This is a chance to talk and learn more about membership. New members will be received in April.

Those who are interested in attending are asked to contact either of the pastors or the Church Office.

Christian Education News

Minister of Christian Education

Linda Shivers, necsvga@aol.com

Sunday School Superintendents

Cindy Madden, cindymadden@msn.com

Jen Condry, jbcondry@aol.com

Victoria Madden, vickimadden@msn.com

Youth Advisors

Dave and Deb Hockenberry, davendebihock@att.net

Fred and Jayne Gunther, jayne.gunther@snet.net



Sunday School News

We are asking all our families to become involved in our Church-Wide Mission project, the Hole in the Wall Camp. For those not familiar with this organization, it provides a camping experience for children with life threatening illnesses. The Board of Missions will offer several activities in which the children can become involved. The first week (February 27) they are looking for donations that will go towards different items for the Welcome Bags the children receive the first day of camp. We are encouraging our children and youth to do chores around the house to earn money towards these purchases.

Confirmation Class Schedule

Mar 13 Class, 11:30 AM-1 PM

Mar 27 Class, 11:30 AM-1 PM

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Youth Fellowship (grades 6-12)

Check the Sunday bulletins, bulletin board and your email for updated information on March's "in house" activity.

GIV2

For those unfamiliar with GIV2, it is a chapter formed with five other churches. We invited First Congregational Church of South Windsor, the Congregational Church of Union, Center Congregational Church (Manchester), Trinity Lutheran Church and Rockville United Methodist Church to join us in this new mission-based youth program. We meet every other month as a group and then go off to one or several mission sites for the day.

Contacting different organizations, coordinating on site responsibilities, and keeping all churches informed and updated on what is going on is the responsibility of the Chapter Coordinator. Our sites so far have included Bennet Middle School in Manchester, Fox Hill Nursing Home, Pitkat, Vernon Manor, all in Vernon, and Emeritis in South Windsor, MARC, Inc. and MACC. We have been pleased with the turnout of our past three mission projects with participation ranging from 42 (Super Bowl Sunday) to 85 youth and advisors.

On February 6, our Giv2 group volunteered at MARC, Inc. and MACC, both organizations in Manchester. MARC, Inc. works with individuals who are intellectually challenged, trains them for job possibilities, social and living skills. On the MARC, Inc. site, our responsibility was to paint several rooms that are used for training, and a break room.

MACC (Manchester Area Conference of Churches) works in many areas helping the homeless, stocking a food pantry and running a soup kitchen. We cleaned and stocked shelves in the food pantry and were given a tour of the other areas where service is offered. We were surprised by the number of families (over 600 a week) who now need the food pantry to help their dollars stretch to feed their families. Also unbelievable was the fact that each family that comes to the food pantry only gets one roll of toilet paper per week. They have a lot of tuna fish but no mayo. The youth of Giv2 would appreciate any donations of mayo (small jar) ketchup and/or other condiments, toilet paper (you can donate a multi roll, it is divided up) razors, soap, dishwashing soap, etc. Please think beyond the non-perishables which are also appreciated. Items can be dropped off in the donation boxes in the breezeway (Center Road side of church) and will be distributed to MACC and Hockanum Valley Food Pantry.

Vacation Bible School

With the public school schedule constantly changing due to all the snow days we've had this winter, a date will be decided in the near future. We'll keep you posted.

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Fat Tuesday Pancake Festival

sponsored by the Ways & Means Committee

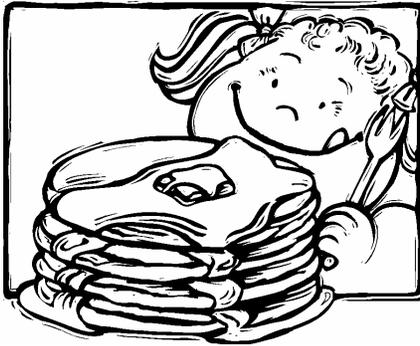
March 8
6-7:30 p.m.
Fellowship Hall

Menu

Pancakes (all-you-can-eat)
Fruit
Sausage
Milk or Juice

\$6 adults
\$3 children under 12

PANCAKE SUPPER



Please sign up on the Women's Fellowship
bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

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BOARD OF MISSIONS NEWS
Church-Wide Mission Project

This year, the Board of Missions and Outreach has chosen the Hole in the Wall Camp in Ashford, Ct as our Church-Wide Mission Project. This camp offers critically ill children the chance for a fun, safe camp experience where they can just be kids again. Last year, over 1,000 children attended during the summer.

The camp provided us with a Wish List, and we have decided to focus on one item per week.

Kick-off Sunday, February 27 - Welcome Bags

The children each find a bag of treats sitting on their cot when they arrive at camp. Visit the "Camp Store" during coffee hour and choose some items to purchase so we can fill as many bags as possible.

March 6 - Nerf Toy Collection

The camp is always in need of these soft fun toys.

March 13 - Craft Supplies

We are hoping to fill several plastic storage bins with new craft supplies.

March 20 - Hand-held/Travel Games

These items are always in big demand as these children spend so much of their time waiting in doctor's offices, etc.

Please consider donating any of these items or make a cash donation and we will do the shopping for you.

**DAYLIGHT SAVING
TIME BEGINS**

Sunday, March 13



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WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP NEWS

Mother/Child Banquet-Just Clowning Around
Wednesday, March 23, 6-8pm in Fellowship Hall
Come enjoy a pasta dinner, followed by entertainment



entertainment by Cupcake the Clown who will show us how she transforms herself into a clown. Children are encouraged to dress up as clowns to join in the fun. Sign up on the sheet posted on the Women's Fellowship bulletin board. Please bring a finger food dessert to share. This annual event is always a big hit.

Craft Group, Monday, March 14, 7 PM in the Chapel
Share ideas of fun crafts we could make for ourselves or for another church fair. Everyone is welcome. No special talents required, just enthusiasm!

**April Carillon
DEADLINE
Tuesday, March 15**

The **Men's Club Breakfast Group** meets every Tuesday at 6:30 AM at the Vernon Diner. A brief devotion and excellent conversation is served each week. We invite all men of the church to join us.

The **Care Network** is offered by the Deacons as a helping hand during difficult times. If you are in need of a ride to church, the doctor, hospital, grocery store, etc., in need of meals or a visit, would like more information or would like to join the Care Network, please contact **Margaret Klukas** (643-0710) or **Jan Muro** (872-1757 or jmoze@hotmail.com).

Sadly, the **39 Club** has decided to disband due to lack of interest. Our thanks to all who have served as officers, planned programs, set-up for meetings, baked goodies and worked in the kitchen over the past 20-some years. We decided to return to Women's Fellowship the \$100 they had given us for programs and to give the balance in our treasury of \$130.25 to the Furnishings & Memorials Committee in memory of Norman Strong, a charter member and past president.

The Executive Committee

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Parish Nurse News

Help Wanted! Anyone interested in helping members of the congregation with tasks around the house such as cleaning, etc., please contact Delythe Kracke at Delythek@yahoo.com.

YOGA...Our Parish Nurses sponsor Yoga classes on Wednesday evenings from 5:30-6:30 PM. Classes are based on practical Hatha Yoga stretches and are geared for all levels. Donation is \$5 per class. Please bring a mat.

Your Parish Nurses take **blood pressures** on the 4th Sunday of every month. We also offer supportive listening and provide information and referral resources.

ACOLYTES

If your child is interested in being an Acolyte (lighting the candles at the beginning of the worship service and extinguishing them at the end), please contact Delythe Kracke at (860) 872-3004 or Delythek@yahoo.com. This is a fun way to participate in the service and time commitment is minimal.

FROM THE BOOKWORM

Several books from the Rose Bible Basics series have been added to the library. These books are handy, full color references that are easy to read. Many include thoughtful study questions. These books include:

Christianity, Cults and Religions: This book includes tools and information to help understand our own religion better by comparing key beliefs of other religious groups.

Christian History Made Easy: The flesh and blood people of God and the life and death issues that have shaped their struggles and joys for 2000 years.

The Bible at a Glance: A solid introduction to the Bible to enhance personal and group Bible study.

Why Trust the Bible?: Help answer questions about Bible history, accuracy and reliability.

Stop in and check out these and other books. The library is self-serve and open whenever the church is open.

Reminder: In an ongoing effort to keep everyone safe, please don't "create" new parking spaces by parking beyond where the parking space lines are. It is becoming increasingly common to find multiple cars extending into the "driving" area of the parking lots, making it more dangerous for everyone to safely walk and drive. Thanks!

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MANY, MANY THANKS!!



Many thanks to all those who have helped out in recent weeks to clear snow from the roof of the education and office wings and cleared snow out of the courtyard.

On Saturday, February 5, a group of volunteers responded to the call from Al and Marilyn Newton for help. On that day, Dave Symonds, Al Newton, Greg Mias, Jon Dunlap, Maurice and Susan Moreau, Steve Morse, Jimmy Morse, Steve Westerberg, Tony Muro and Milt Doremus worked together to get the snow off the roof of the Christian Education wing.

On Sunday, February 6 and Monday, February 7, members of Boy Scout Troop 86 worked to clear the snow out of the courtyard. Many thanks to Ian Pettigrew, Thomas Rivet, Josh Chaffee, Nick Murray, Peter Melander, Max Hamlin, Cameron Schmelter and adult leaders Barbara Melander, Dave Murray, Chris Pettigrew and Bill Rivet. We truly appreciate your time, effort, and sore muscles!

On Wednesday, February 9, Dave and Michelle Bower worked in the late afternoon to clear the snow and ice off of the office wing.

We are very thankful for everyone's help in taking care of this problem which threatened the church property's integrity and safety.

Special thanks from the Teaching Parish Committee to the Congregation and those who attended the Annual Fiscal meeting who voted to return full funding to the TPC for the 2011 budget. This allows us to continue as a Teaching Parish. Our profile at Andover Newton is now updated and posted as we seek a student for Fall 2011.

CARING and SHARING GROUP

Anyone interested in attending this grief support group is invited to join us on **Fridays at 10:30 AM** in the Library. This group is open to all who have experienced the loss of a loved one and is being run by members of the congregation. Please feel free to come alone or bring a family member or friend. Any questions? Contact the Church Office, 860-875-7580.



who have recently experienced the loss of a loved one.

Shirley Bryant on the death of her husband, Richard
Christin Buxton, Kelsey and Emily Wilson on the death of Diane Kunisch, their mother and grandmother

Barb and Annie Longo on the death of their father-in-law and grandfather, John Longo

FCCV ON CABLE TV

Our Sunday morning worship services (one week delay) are available for viewing on Comcast Community Voice Channel 5 Sunday mornings at 10 AM and Monday evenings at 6 PM. Uncut DVD's (DVD's submitted for viewing on Comcast have to be edited to fit a 60 minute format) of the services from the chimes to the postlude are also available for borrowing in the Library. Check your local listings or go to CVCCCT.org for the dates and times of showings of other FCCV concerts and events.

PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY

Following is a list of people in our church family on active duty. We ask that you keep them and their families in your prayers. If you would like to add someone to this list, please contact the Church Office.

Maj. Joel Cummings, son of Hal and Ibbey Cummings, at Fort Bliss, TX
Michael Wilson, son of Nancy Beimler, serving in the U. S. Navy in San Diego
Steven Beimler, son of Nancy Beimler in the National Guard
Charlie Oster, Mary Hurst's daughter's fiancée, in Afghanistan

"FOLKS WHO WORSHIP REGULARLY WITH OTHERS TEND TO BE MORE SATISFIED WITH THEIR LIVES, FEEL CLOSER TO THEIR MATES AND REBOUND FASTER FROM DIFFICULTIES THAN THOSE WHO DON'T."

- Chaeyoon Liam, Ph. D., lead study author and Assistant Professor of Sociology at University of Wisconsin-Madison