

The GOOD News

May

The Newsletter of the First Congregational Church of Haddam

2009

WHAT'S UP?

May 3

4th Sunday of Easter

Simply Smiles
Acts 4:5-12;
Psalm 23;
1 John 3:16-24;
John 10:11-18

May 10

5th Sunday of Easter

Acts 10:44-48;
Psalm 22: 25-31;
1 John 4:7-21;
John 15:1-8

May 17

6th Sunday of Easter Baptism

Acts 10:44-48;
Psalm 98;
1 John 5:1-6;
John 15:9-17

May 24

7th Sunday of Easter

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26;
Psalm 1;
1 John 5:9-13;
John 17:6-19

May 31

Pentecost Sunday

Acts 2:1-21;
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b;
Romans 8:22-27;
John 15:26-27; 26:4b-15

June 7

Trinity Sunday

Isaiah 6:1-8;
Psalm 29;
Romans 8:12-17;
John 3:1-17

Roast Beef Dinner Saturday, May 9

Come enjoy a delicious roast beef dinner, expertly prepared by **Scottish Dave**, with the help of volunteers from the Church. This will be the second time this event has been held at the church. It was well attended last year, and all who were there really enjoyed the good food, conversation and hospitality. The dinner includes roast beef, oven roasted potatoes, mixed vegetables, dessert and soft drinks. The cost is a very reasonable \$10 per person or \$30 per family. The proceeds will be donated to local charities to feed the hungry and the church Family Assistance Program. For tickets or information, contact the church office at 345-2742

SIMPLY SMILES



On May 3, we will have a return visit from Simply Smiles director, Bryan Nurnberger. Ask anyone who was here that snowy Sunday in December when he came to speak, and they will tell you not to miss his visit. Simply Smiles works with impoverished children in Mexico.

NOTE: Be sure you have changed the church email in your address book. As of last fall, our new email address is fcc-haddam@att.net. A few folks have had emails to the church returned and this may be why.

WHAT'S NEW?

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The switch over to electronic mailing of our newsletter has caught some by surprise. If you know of someone who is not getting his/her E copy of *The Good News*, please let the church office know. Or if you know of someone who prefers hard copy and is not getting it also let the office know. [Fcc-haddam@att.net](mailto:fcc-haddam@att.net) or 345-2742.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY

June 14 is Children's Sunday and the Church Picnic. Please see the Education Section at the end of the newsletter for additional information.

The 142nd Spring Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference will take place at Asylum Hill Congregational Church in Hartford on Saturday May 9. The meeting runs from 8:00 am (registration) until 4:00 pm. The theme is health and well being and the key note speaker will be Dr. Juan Figueroa, President of the Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut. You can register on line at <http://ctucc.org/events>

BLANKETS+

Church World Service sponsors a program in which a \$25 donation can provide warm blankets for 5 refugee children. Individual blankets are \$5 each. The blankets are made of recycled material and their special design enables them to be converted into tents as well. On Mothers' Day, May 10, we will be collecting for this worthy cause in honor and celebration of mothers and all the special women in the world who care for children, especially children in need.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE VALLEY SHORE

Two seemingly little events made me re-focus Easter and Holy Week. The first occurred when I was tucking my girls into bed. Grace asked me why Santa hadn't come to pick up the note she left for him. Since it was April, I was confused by Grace's question. I pressed her to find out what she was thinking. Apparently, Grace had written Santa a note to ask what he thought about the gift she left for him on Christmas Eve and why he liked to have cookies left out for him.

My explanations that Santa had probably been busy catching up after Christmas, or that he was likely getting ready for next year or maybe even visiting with family and friends after his busy Christmas working season all fell flat. I'll be honest I didn't know what to suggest at this point as I stared at Grace's blue index card with her carefully composed message left unanswered.

I made a mental note to answer the questions on the card after she had gone to sleep. As it turns out, I'm a pretty good tooth fairy but not a great Santa, so my seven-year wonder, Grace, was up early the next morning still wondering why Santa had not answered her diligently crafted inquiry.

I mused over these questions about Santa and Christmas as I walked through Holy Week's worship services. I wanted to explain how Christmas is tied to the Easter story yet it just didn't seem to fit for Grace at this moment in time. In the end, I kept this insight to myself and returned to planning the Maundy Thursday service, simply grateful for my own moment of powerful inspiration about the connection between Christmas and Easter.

The second event that got me thinking about the meaning of Jesus' resurrection came again from Grace, this time on Easter morning. Toward the end of the 10:00 am service, Grace came up toward the pulpit which caught me off guard because she knows that she is not supposed to come forward before the end of the service because "Mom is working". Grace explained that she was confused by the flow of the two services, the Sunrise service and the 10:00 am service. So instead of putting her off immediately, I merely asked her to wait, and I thought for a few moments about Grace's surprise. She was at a moment of discovery. Later when I had the chance to talk with Grace, I realized that if I had simply reprimanded her for interrupting, I would have missed an opportunity for wisdom and insight.

When we have believed and have followed Jesus for some time, we forget what it was like at the beginning of discovery on the journey of faith. Grace's view of Santa and Christmas invited me to see the new powerful message of the Christmas story with all its wonder, hope and promise through the eyes of a child. Later the same week, Grace's confusion about Easter gave me a glimpse of an excitement that might be similar to the surprised excitement and confusion of the disciples that first Easter morning when they learned that Jesus had risen—while they may not have yet understood how the resurrection would change their lives unalterably forever, their discovery that Jesus lives must have been beyond exciting.

May we never become too comfortable with the incredible gift of that child born in the manger who grew up to rise that first Easter morning. Let us have the wisdom of children to dare to be open, to dare to listen before judging, and to dare to believe in that which defies reason—eternal life and the unbounded forgiveness of God.

Whatever our confusion and apprehension, no fear or question is off limits for God. God will help us follow Jesus faithfully if given the chance. After all, God has walked with us since our very first breath. Christ has risen to offer us abundant life in him. We must share the deepest part of our hearts with God, dare to ask Him questions, dare to be the child of God that we were called to be! The risen Christ is our guide and companion. We must reach out to those who seek God even in moments of doubt. We must share the joy that Christ has risen and the powerful hope and promise of new life which comes from that resurrection.

Peace and blessings,

Robin

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

A memorial service for **Jo Baldwin** will be held, Saturday, May 16 at 2:00 pm in the Sanctuary.

Please tell Robin or one of the deacons the names, concerns, situations which you would like prayers for (with the person's permission). In this issue, we pray for **June Lamoureux** who is recovering from ankle surgery; **Jan Berry's daughter Rhonda Gardner; Trevor Powell; Don Berry; Nate Wilkos; Andrew Purdy; Peter;** We also remember **Rev. Davida Crabtree, Rev. M. J. Hinchliff, Deb Duval's friend Rena, and Robyn Sparks** who are undergoing breast cancer treatment. And we pray for those who are struggling with issues of aging: **Margaret Widegren; Ed and Jan Ortner; Jackie Anderson; Frank Bubb, Leslie Paulonis's brother-in-law.** We also pray for members of our armed forces who presently serve throughout the world: **Leslie Paulonis's niece, Erin Eklund, and Ginny Evensen's nephew, John Groobe,** who is serving in Iraq. We remember our **Pastoral Search Committee** who continue their search, on our behalf, for a settled pastor.

Please let us know if someone in your family or within our congregation has something special to celebrate so we may include that also in our "Family News" section.



When you are hospitalized, you or your family members should notify the church as soon as possible. Upon admission to the hospital, you will be asked if you desire to have your religious affiliation as part of your medical record, and for permission to make your name available to clergy. Please state both your denomination and church name.

STARS IN OUR MIDST



H-K SENIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP GOES TO FRANCE

Imagine teenagers from Haddam and Killingworth unplugged for a week- no cell phone, no Facebook, no IM-ing and challenged to ponder life's big questions with 6,000 youth from around the globe. This June eight youth and four chaperones from the Haddam-Killingworth Senior High Youth Group will spend 12 days in France performing community service in Aubervilliers and touring Paris prior to spending a week at an [ecumenical](http://www.taize.fr) monastery in Burgundy called Taizé (<http://www.taize.fr>).

The youth will be working in Aubervilliers, a poor suburb of Paris, at the Refugee Resettlement Center, with children and adults coping with trauma from the atrocities they witnessed in their native countries in North Africa. This is the same center that Rev. Tim Rose worked at for four years and talked about when he visited our church last fall.

After participating in this community service project, the youth will embark upon a path of personal discovery as the group travels by high speed train to Taizé, joining thousands of other young people from around the world. They will participate in daily worship and spiritual reflection, as well as long periods of silence. They will also participate in small group discussions with people from other countries. This will allow them opportunities to learn about different faiths and life outside of the U.S. The youth will be challenged to reflect on their own lifestyles and values by living simply for a week and experiencing other cultures.

The Haddam Senior High Youth Group is a partnership of area churches dedicated to providing Christian fellowship and community outreach opportunities to area youth of all denominations and to youth who do not have a church home. The youth, under the guidance of Rev. Max Olmsted, planned the trip and are now in the process of organizing fundraisers.

Thank you to the Middletown Rotary Club

The Middletown Rotary Club has donated \$1,000 to the H-K Senior High Youth Group. The money will be contributed to the Refugee Resettlement Center in Aubervilliers, France to assist the Center in helping refugees resettle in the Paris suburb. Although Aubervilliers once was a middle-class textile town, today 80 percent of the people live in government-subsidized low income housing. The Center works to improve the many social problems associated with resettlement such as, poverty, drug abuse, a large percentage of high school drop-outs and a high crime rate. The check will be presented to the Center by the H-K Senior High Youth Group when they visit in June.

The Middletown Rotary Club is a member club of Rotary International. Rotary International is an organization of business and professional leaders united worldwide who provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world. In 166 countries worldwide, approximately 1.2 million Rotarians belong to more than 31,000 Rotary clubs. The main objective of the Middletown Rotary is service - in the community, in the workplace, and throughout the world. Rotarians develop community service projects that address many of today's most critical issues, such as illiteracy, children at risk, poverty and hunger, the environment, and violence. They also support programs for youth, educational opportunities and international exchanges for students, teachers, and other professionals, and vocational and career development.

How can I help with the Senior High Youth trip to France?

Several fund raising events are on the calendar. Be sure to attend and support as many as you can.

Wine Tasting Event

Sat., May 16, 2009

5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

\$25 / person.

Food provided by the Gourmet Kitchen in Berlin, CT.

Wine tasting by Teri's package store in Higganum, CT.

Raffles

Haddam Fire Station

Tickets on sale now during coffee hour or at the door.

Bowling

Sun., May 24, 2009

Saybrook Lanes, Old Saybrook

\$20.00 / person

Price includes 2 hours of bowling, shoe rental, popcorn and a pitcher of soda.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

The following children and youth will be celebrating a birthday this month:



Melissa Manley	May 1
John Abbott	May 5
Kevin Hunt	May 6
Oksona Nichols	May 6
Kimberly Buracchi	May 12
Juliette Homicki	May 13
Natalie Blodgett	May 17
Brianna Abbott	May 17
Tony LaBella	May 18
Grace Blundon	May 20

As we all know, kids are not the only ones who enjoy birthday celebrations! Please let the church office know the date of your birthday or wedding anniversary so we can put it in the newsletter and celebrate the good news together. (fcc-haddam@att.net or 345-2742)

COMMITTEE NEWS

Church Council

The Church Council met on April 15th. Since Bim Christianson has a scheduling conflict with the new Council meeting time, she resigned her member-at-large position. The Council voted to approve Art Christianson to fill the vacant position. The Council voted to donate 8 roast beef dinner tickets to families in need of help. Candy Casale will distribute these tickets confidentially. The Council voted to accept Alan Ortner's new policy and forms for disbursements and deposits, providing improved procedures and controls.

Christian Service

Thanks to your generosity, we were able to send 44 hygiene kits to the Methodist Church in Middletown to be forwarded to Church World Service. Good Job!

The tag/bake sale was a great success! We raised \$984.88 thanks to all the hard work put in by volunteers and those who contributed baked goods and tag sale items. Thanks to everyone who helped.

Diaconate

Flowers The Diaconate is looking for someone to organize the flowers for Sunday service. If you wish to help with this, please contact Kristin Battistoni (Kristin.battistoni@att.net). If you wish to just donate flowers please sign up in the vestibule.

Holy Week Thank you to all the many members of our congregation that helped with putting together our special services all week.

Large Print Bulletins Did you forget your glasses? Large print bulletins as well as large print bibles are available. If you would like large copies of hymns, please let us know. Ask a deacon for a copy if you are interested.

Caring Connection News Many members and friends of our Congregation are coping with recent loss or illness; we ask that you keep them in your prayers. Please contact Amy Purdy at 345-2146 if you are willing to make a meal, and/or if you are willing to deliver a meal on behalf of the Caring Connection. In some cases, there may be dietary restrictions for some in need of meals, so please contact Amy or Kristin Battistoni 345-3783 if you have any questions. Meals may be left in the Trinity House freezer, but should be labeled with a description, cooking instruction and the date prepared. Please let Amy or Kristin know if you have left a meal. Many thanks for all your help!

Communion We would like to extend the invitation for communion to all Sunday School teachers and students wishing to receive communion. Please return to the sanctuary after Sunday School for a short service.

Visitation If you would like to receive a visit from the pastor or know of someone who is in need, please contact the church office or sign up in the church vestibule. If you are signing up a friend, please make sure they are aware they will be receiving a visit before you sign them up.

Search Committee

We continue to receive Ministerial Profiles from the Connecticut Conference. Last Thursday (4/9/09), five new profiles arrived. Profiles average around twenty-two pages in length. After reviewing each of the profiles we determine how we wish to follow-up. Our response ranges from no further interest in the candidate to strong interest which could lead to an interview or a request for additional information. Usually that request involves past sermons in one form or another. The candidates also provide references so these are checked as well.

Once again, we as a committee appreciate being held in your prayers as we pursue this important work. Please feel free to speak with members of the committee about your concerns as we move forward. Thanks once again for your support.

Committee Members: John Anderson, Michael Battistoni, Cherylann Hunt, Diane Klare, Gene Porter, Brian Purdy, Walter Zilahy, John Edmondson, Chair.

Stewardship

“The World of the Generous Gets Larger”

This month's report will be brief. Our congregation continues to be generous and supportive of our church community and our operating expenses. As of this writing, our net income from our newest Stewardship endeavor, (the green envelope) “special Stewardship giving of the month”, is \$2,620.45. We will be holding our April “special giving of the month” Sunday, April 19th.

Our committee has tried to keep you informed in the Sunday bulletin. We also have a display, showing our progress towards our goals for each category, in the Fellowship Hall.

Stewardship is not only giving of your financial means but it is giving of yourself so again we invite new and long time members to come and join us in serving on committees, or in helping out in the preparation of an event. We would love to get to know you better while we help each other keep our church community vibrant.

Respectfully, Scott B. Thompson, Stewardship Chair

Treasurer's Report

Thru April 15, 2009

		Budget
Income		
Pledges	31,612	31,621
Loose Offerings	1,428	1,823
Endowment	20,000	22,500
Rent	3,723	1,649
Total Income	56,900	57,593
Expenses		
Operating Expenses	17,511	18,207
Salaries	31,946	36,388
Total Expenses	49,457	54,595
Net Income	7,443	2,999
Assets		
Checking	10,916	
Restricted Savings	8,513	
Petty Cash	101	
Current Assets	19,531	
Lewis House Repair	40,314	
Total Assets	59,846	
Liabilities		
Payroll Taxes	510	
Capital Repair Loan	25,000	
Capital Repair Fund	19,089	
Restricted Funds	7,238	
Total Liabilities	51,837	
Equity	8,009	
Total Liab & Equity	59,846	

Shown are the actual Income and Expenses thru April 15, 2009. There do not seem to be any significant deviations from the Budget. The Coop has prepaid the Rent due thru June. Detailed Financial statements are available upon request.

Respectfully submitted, Alan E. Ortner, Treasurer

MUSIC NOTES

Many thanks to everyone who made our Holy Week and Easter services very special and memorable. I especially want to thank all the members of the Sanctuary Choir for their dedication and musicianship throughout the services of Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Easter, making our worship particularly meaningful. Adding to this, I would also like to thank soloist Karli Spinella for joining us Maundy Thursday, and setting the evening's tone with her singing of the Rachmaninoff "Vocalise." Thank you also to Liz Anderson, our soloist for Good Friday, with her wonderful "Pie Jesu" from Gabriel Faure's *Requiem*. And many, many thanks to the members of the FCCH Festival Choir – Roy Craig, Cynthia Nicastro, Gene Porter, Emma Soneson, Nancy Soneson, Tracey Thompson, Scott Thomson, and Val Williams -- for joining our Easter celebration of Handel's "Hallelujah" from *The Messiah*, including extra rehearsal time. Let's do it again! I hope that you joined in and participated in one of our special services (including the moving Good Friday service), that your Easter was joyous, and your spring is rejuvenating.

Eric Lundin, Organist / Choir Director

Christian Education



2009 Vacation Bible School

Mark your calendars: **VBS 2009 – Crocodile Dock** is coming July 13th – July 17th from 9 a.m. to noon.

Many volunteers are needed to help organize and lead workshops in this week-long bayou adventure. The following workshops will be offered: Art, Cooking, Games, Snack, Music, and storytelling/drama. If you can help out, even for a day or two, please contact Nancy Soneson.



Children's Lenten Project

During Lent, the Sunday school students participated in a special Lenten Offering project called "Fill the Ark". Money from this collection will go to Heifer Project International. Thank you to all families and individuals who participated.

Children's Sunday

June 14, 2009

Children's Sunday is scheduled for June 14th. Rehearsal will be during regular class time on June 7th. If there are any children that would like to play an instrument or sing during the service, please let Nancy Soneson know.

Sunday Nursery Coverage

For Safe Church purposes, we need to have an additional adult or teen in the nursery room from 9:45 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. each Sunday morning. Once the Sunday school children come in for their classes, you are free to return to the sanctuary for worship. The sign-up sheet is located in Fellowship Hall.



Congratulations to Scott Halligan, the winner of March's candy jar!

A new jar coming in May!

Youth Group Meetings in May

MSYG

May 3rd – Meeting at FCCH, 4 – 5:30 p.m.

May 17 – Pizza party/ finale, FCCH, 4 – 5:30 p.m.

SHYG

May 10th – Meeting at FCCH, 7 – 8:30

May 31st – Meeting at FCCH, 7 – 8:30



Trading Places

Children's Winter Program





Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers who made this program such a success!

S	Sanctuary	N	Nursery
F H	Fellowship Hall	SS	Sunday School
TH	Trinity House	HYC	Haddam Youth Center
LH	Lewis House	MSYG	Middle School Youth Group
SHYG	Senior High Youth Group	HCC	Higganum Congregational Church

May 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Worship 10:00 Simply Smiles Brian Nurnberger MSYG mtg. KCC	4 Knitting 7:00 TH	5	6 Stewardship 4:00 TH Chris. Ed. 7:30 TH	7 Diaconate 6:00 TH	8	9 CT Conference mtg. Roast Beef Dinner 5-8, FH
10 Worship 10:00 SHYG, 7:00, LH	11	12 Chris. Service 7:00, TH	13	14 Prudential, 7:00 TH	15	16
17 Worship 10:00 Baptism MSYG party & scavenger hunt	18	19	20 Council, 7:00, TH JUNE Newsletter deadline	21	22	23
24 Worship 10:00	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 Worship 10:00						