

The Spire

Congregational Church of Somersville
United Church of Christ

January 2014

Annual Meeting and Pot Luck Supper

The annual meeting of the Congregational Church of Somersville will be held Saturday, January 25. A pot luck supper will begin at 6 PM followed by the meeting at 7. ALL members and friends of the church

are invited to attend. Reports from officers and Boards will be reviewed; officers and new board members will be elected; and we'll hear and consider other business that may come up. Remember, we are all ministers of this church and all opinions and voices matter; however, only church members are allowed to vote. Be sure to bring a dish to share and place setting(s).

Transportation can be arranged for those unable to get to the church on their own; please call the church office to make a request (860-749-7741).

Officers and Board chairmen are to submit written reports to Ruth by Sunday, January 12.

Also, as we have done for several years, a roll call will be taken at the start of the meeting: members should be prepared to respond with a verse of scripture. Anyone unable to attend the meeting is encouraged to return a verse of scripture to be read in his/her absence.

.....
I/we are unable to attend the meeting on the 25th. Please read this/these verse(s) in my/our absence.

Member(s) _____

Return to: Clerk, Cong'l Church of Somersville, PO Box I, Somersville, CT 06072

From the Pastor



Dear Friends in Christ,

I pray that you will enjoy a happy new year filled with many blessings. Here's a church trivia question for you: did you know that we actually started our new church year a little while back, with the first Sunday of Advent, December 1st, 2013? So, in an ecclesiastic sense, we're already heading into our second month of the year. On the one hand, it would be simpler if the church and state used one calendar. Then New Year's Day would be New Year's Day for everyone and Easter would fall on the same Sunday each year, etc. But I think there's something great about the fact that we, the church, are our own distinct culture with our own customs and expectations for our manner of living.

We're not merely a subculture, we are a counterculture in many ways. With that said, I want to share some worship info with you regarding the remainder of the *church year*. Each church year has certain books of scripture that are assigned to it by a widely used schedule of readings called the Revised Common Lectionary. One year might heavily feature Paul's letter to the Romans in the preaching cycle, while another will emphasize the Corinthian correspondence, for example. Each year also features one of the four gospels as the main source for gospel texts, and so on. The main gospel book appointed for this church year is Matthew.

Here's where we'll do something different. This year I will focus my preaching intently on the Gospel of Matthew, practicing a type of preaching called *lectio continua* in the Latin, which simply means "continuous reading." Beginning January 12th (the week after the children's pageant) we'll start at the very beginning and I will preach from Matthew section by section, only jumping around within Matthew in response to Lent and Easter. Each gospel, Matthew included, is a work of great intelligence, spirit and faith. My hope is that an intensive, continuous reading can help bring that out for you and give you a new and deeper appreciation of the scriptures.



God's word is a gift to us and I pray that more light and truth may break forth from it. Give it some time and then let me know how the *lectio continua* method of preaching is working for you.

Yours faithfully,
Graham Van Keuren

Thanks to ..

.. all who served as greeters, ushers, readers and fellowship hosts in December.

.. everyone who supported the 2nd Mile Mission collection to benefit the Christmas Fund.

.. all who helped decorate the sanctuary for the Christmas season.

.. the carolers who brightened the season with song.

.. everyone who gave so generously of themselves with time, talent and treasure during 2013

.. our pastor, for his leadership, love, support and care of all of us.



Christian Education (submitted by Pastor Graham)

Wednesday Bible Study

This group resumes on Wednesday, January 8 in the social room from 9:30-11:15 AM. All are welcome to attend.

Opportunities in January

	<u>Greeters</u>	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Acolyte</u>	<u>Fellowship Hosts</u>
1/05		Donna P. Patrick F.	Ardie C.		Donna P., Marge N. & Genny F.
1/12	Ginny M. Carol. W.	Donna P. Patrick F.	Syd C.		Sharon M. & family
1/19		Donna P. Patrick F.	Elaine H.		Ed & Lois S.
1/26	Sue A. Edgardo A.	Donna P.	Dave P.		

Financial Statements (submitted by Deb Robidoux)

This month I will prepare and distribute financial giving statements to members and friends acknowledging receipt of their total giving amount received in 2013. If you don't get a statement or have a discrepancy, please speak with me.

Report of the Treasurer (submitted by Sydney Cohen)

	<u>November 2013</u>	<u>Monthly Budget</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>
Pledges	\$5,219.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$73,615.00	\$90,000.00
Income	\$7,964.05	\$10,485.00	\$104,908.68	\$125,820.00
Expenses	\$10,532.54	\$11,256.00	\$121,907.16	\$135,550.00

Pledges were well under the budgeted amount for the year. We still need \$16,385 to make our budgeted goal. Expenses reflect fuel costs and repairs to the church building.



Collections for November

Fundraiser- Net for the November turkey supper was \$2,358.00

Flow through Missions Collections- Solar Cooker project-\$204.00

Unicef- \$50.30- Total was \$454.30.

Flow through Disbursals for October

Heifer International- \$415.00.

The Endowment Fund input for the 2013 church year will be \$6,450.00

Missions (submitted by Geneva Farnham)

2nd Mile Mission

... for January is Fisher House: Helping Heroes Helping Families
Fisher House Foundation builds and maintains long term residential facilities near military hospitals nationwide where families of seriously injured soldiers need a place to stay during their loved ones long rehabilitation process.

Currently there are 54 Fisher Houses nationwide. These facilities are supported by contributions and openings are granted in reverse order of rank – so that the lower enlisted soldiers have first chance at housing.



Attorney Kevin E. Creed, US Army (Ret.) is chairman of Friends of Fisher House CT. This organization, underwritten by the Creed Law Firm, LLC has promised to raise \$3 million for the construction of a Fisher House on the campus of the VA Healthcare System in West Haven, CT. Once this goal is reached, Fisher House Foundation Inc. will match these funds for a total of \$6 million and construction can begin.

Our support is so very important.



Food-Share

Food-share's distribution of perishable food happens every other week in the parking lot of Somers Congregational

Church from 1:15-1:45. Distribution dates this month are January 15 and 29. Individuals or families needing food are welcome to come; there are no qualifications. A number of volunteers from our church staff this distribution site.

Kiva Update (submitted by Linda Longueuil)

In December, we made our 21st KIVA loan. This loan went to Jepheth from Zambia. Jepheth sells Coca-Cola products and most of his stock was destroyed in a fire. This loan was handled a little differently than most since funds were not pre-disbursed to Jepheth. He has to wait until all the money has been raised before he receives his loan. Within 2 days, 58% of the money needed has been raised for him. By lending to Jepheth, we are putting him one step closer to being able to rebuild his business. Read his story on the Missions bulletin board or in the KIVA notebook.

Another success story! Boushra from Iraq has successfully repaid her loan. Being a business woman in Iraq is challenging and we were able to help her grow her hairdressing business.

Prayer Shawl Ministry (submitted by Lois Sharpless)

The group will not formally meet in January; however knitters are encouraged to continue knitting and crocheting the shawls.

JFS ~ Jewish Family Service

of western Massachusetts (submitted by Laura Elwood)

Since its inception in 1898, JFS has been a nationally recognized leader in refugee resettlement. JFS enhances the quality of life for the Western Massachusetts Jewish Community, the community-at-large, including people that are Refugees Immigrants. JFS continues to focus on and provide services such as: Community Programs; Elder Care; Counseling; and Healing the World.

Ways we can support others together! Help them find bicycles for new American families. Donate gently used household items such as flatware, house ware (dishes, pots, pans, glassware, etc) towel, linens, bedding and small kitchen appliances.



What a great time to share our tools of life with others by giving our gently used tools to assist their transition to their new home. Perhaps, we received gifts that are newer versions of what we now have. It has even been told by an extremely reliable source that they were able to provide a new family through the JFS that just arrived here with a beautiful crib that they could not GIVE away! And, JFS came and picked-up the crib, what a win-win situation.

JFS can use people who desire to get involved with assisting JFS in resettling newly arriving refugees. Your support of their efforts assures that they become self-supporting and contributing members of our communities.

I encourage you to visit the JFS website at www.jfswm.org to learn more of how we may be able to support each other.

Ladies Aide Society

All Women Invited to Attend

The Ladies Aide Society has had a busy and very productive year! We met on December 10th for our annual pot luck lunch and thoroughly enjoyed many delicious dishes prepared by our ladies. We also had a cookie exchange this year which was a great addition to our luncheon. Thanks to all (men and women) who attended and added to our Christmas merriment!

On December 23rd the Ladies Aide bought two complete Christmas dinners (ham and all the fixings) that were delivered to the Somers Senior Center to be given to two families in need in the area. These dinners are always greatly appreciated by the families and a wonderful way to make Christmas more meaningful for them.

Our next meeting will be held Tuesday, January 14, 2014 at 1:00 p.m. in the church social room. All ladies of the church are welcome, so please come, join us, and help us plan our year ahead! We look forward to another exciting and productive year! God bless our group and all the



committees that work so hard throughout the year to benefit our Congregational Church of Somersville. We also give special thanks to our wonderful Pastor, Graham Van Keuren for his dedication and for always being there for all of us year round. Happy New Year and abundant good health to ALL!

Fundraising Suppers (submitted by Ruth Bruch)

On January 11 we will hold our first fundraising supper of the new year; menu includes baked ham, potato casserole, peas, salad, rolls and breads, beverage and apple crisp. Reservations are now being accepted through the church office; cost is \$12 for adults and \$5 for children ages 5-10.

A sign up sheet for help and donations has been posted in the social room; remember the more donations we get, the less we need to deduct from the income. Proceeds from the suppers (attended primarily by non-members of this church) help defray our operating expenses. Some of the ingredients still needed for the January 11 supper include:

- 4 loaves homemade bread
- 2 gallons vanilla ice cream
- 2 9x13 pans apple crisp
- \$40 for potatoes
- 30 lbs. frozen peas



Help on Friday and Saturday mornings (with the potatoes and making apple crisps, salad fixings, etc)

We can always use help setting up the dining room on Saturday morning; help washing dishes, help in the kitchen or dining room during the dinner ~ and clean up assistance after 7:30 PM

Washington National Cathedral to charge visitors

December 9, 2013 Religion News Service Kevin Eckstrom

Facing a \$26 million earthquake repair bill and years of financial woes, the iconic Washington National Cathedral will start charging visitors in 2014, an abrupt change that cathedral officials had long resisted.

Adults will be charged \$10, and seniors, students, children, veterans and members of the military will be charged \$6, according to cathedral officials. Regular worship services and Sundays will remain free of charge; the ticket plan is scheduled for a six-month trial run starting in January.

“We are called to preserve and restore a building that is more than a century old and to offer programs that have a distinctive impact on

our city, our nation, and the world,” said David J. Kautter, chairman of the Cathedral Chapter, the building’s governing board, in a statement.

“To support that work, we must implement this carefully developed fixed-admission policy.”

The rare 5.8-magnitude earthquake in August 2011 damaged the cathedral’s central tower, flying buttresses, decorative finials and intricate stonework. To date, the cathedral has raised \$10 million toward its \$26 million repair bill.

The cathedral has hosted three presidential state funerals (Eisenhower, Reagan and Ford) and six presidential inaugural prayer services, as well as other services to mark important milestones. It is the mother church of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington and the unofficial national home of the Episcopal Church.

In 2012, the cathedral attracted 400,000 visitors beyond regular worship services, including scores of tour buses of children who are led beneath the cathedral’s soaring arches by teams of volunteer docents.

For years, the cathedral has operated in a deficit and experienced several rounds of layoffs and program cuts. The cathedral expects to break even in 2014 after a \$1.6 million deficit in 2013, according to The Associated Press.

The cathedral has insisted that it remain a house of worship open to all faiths, not a museum of sacred artifacts. But, borrowing a page from the storied cathedrals of Europe that charge admission to tourists, the cathedral hopes an estimated \$300,000 in annual ticket sales can help shore up finances and the building itself.

“The Cathedral does not receive any direct operating support from the federal government. Nor is it subsidized through the budget of any Christian denomination,” Kautter said. “While this financial independence increases the Cathedral’s freedom to speak freely in the public square and to convene people of all faiths, it also requires us to seek other means of ensuring our sustainability.”

This and That

- Board chairmen ending terms are reminded (per our Key Policy) to **turn in their church key** to Ruth in the office so that keys can be reassigned.
- Our Sunday school will be presenting their **annual pageant** during worship on January 5.

About our Members and Friends

January Celebrations

Happy birthday wishes this month go to Mae Chillson, Miriam Cohen, Erin Tishon, Karen Peck, Judy Peck and Deb Robidoux. If there are others who are celebrating this month of whom we are not aware, we wish you a wonderful day as well.



Updated Directory to be Released

An updated directory of members and friends of the church will be printed this month. Anyone having updates of an address, phone number or email address is asked to notify Ruth in the church office (somcong@aol.com 860-749-7741) by January 12.

Vision Statement

We will be a faith-based church welcoming diversity, empowering the individual, growing in faith and doing God's work in the global community in unity and love.

Behavioral Covenant

- We will follow a process that includes unconditional listening and time to collect thought, enabling all individuals to comfortably express their opinions.
- Our actions and demeanor will support and empower all participants
- All opinions will be welcomed, reflectively considered and respected.
- Opinions will be expressed with humility, self-control, gentleness, and kindness.
- We will look for common ground as we search for consensus, and we will respect that consensus.
- We will affirm by our works and actions our common goal to serve God.

Christmas, 2013

The plants in the sanctuary were ..

given in loving memory of ..

Gertrude & J. Francis Wood
Gladys & Cecil Whitaker
his father, Sydney Hancock
her parents, George & Ellen Hammond
her mother & father, Evelyn & Warren Simpson
her mother & father-in-law, Dorothy & David Cohen
her sister, Merle Simpson
her sister-in-law, Caroline
her parents, Stanley & Phyllis Livall
Raymond & Maud Hastings
Ned & Genevra Collins
Philippe Favre
Ethlyn Campbell
her parents, Elsie & William Hoffman
her brother, William Hoffman, Jr.
cousin-in-law, Gerald Clark
his father, Ores Karbonic
Enneking & Evelyn Long
Keed & Annie Cleaver
Bruce & Evelyn Notman
Mildred Anner
the Magill family
the Vanace family
the Sobel family
the Vanauker family
Gin & Don Longueuil
Uncle Bill
my son, Kevin Scott Webb
Doc & June Prach
Mike & Helen Carey
Ralph & Kevin Eastwood
Theodore & Alan Morin
Mario Orduz, father
William E. Moran, Sr., father
Steven Sanville
Ellsworth Wood
Dale & Denise Hannan

given by ...

Nick & Carlese Wood
Nick & Carlese Wood
Tom & Elaine Hancock
Tom & Elaine Hancock
the Cohen family
the Cohen family
the Cohen family
the Cohen family
Jack & Mavis Collins & family
Don & Johanna Karbonic
Don & Johanna Karbonic
Don & Johanna Karbonic
Don & Johanna Karbonic
the Cleaver family
the Cleaver family
the Cleaver family
the Cleaver family
Cathy Magill
Cathy Magill
Cathy Magill
Cathy Magill
their family
the Longueuil family
Carol Webb
Rich & Ardie Carey
Rich & Ardie Carey
Donna Pendleton
Donna Pendleton
Ulysses Orduz
Bill Moran
Yvonne Wood
Yvonne Wood
Pat Forbes

our dads, Ray Fortuna & Ted Miller
my mom, Marjorie Harmon
my dear husband, David Butler

Sharon & Doug Miller
Marj Butler
Marj Butler

given in honor of ...

our moms, Edith Fortuna & Bette Miller
William & Nancy Van Keuren
the Ladies Aide Society
our staff
our moderator, Yvonne Wood

given by ...

Sharon & Doug Miller
Graham
their church family
their church family
her church family

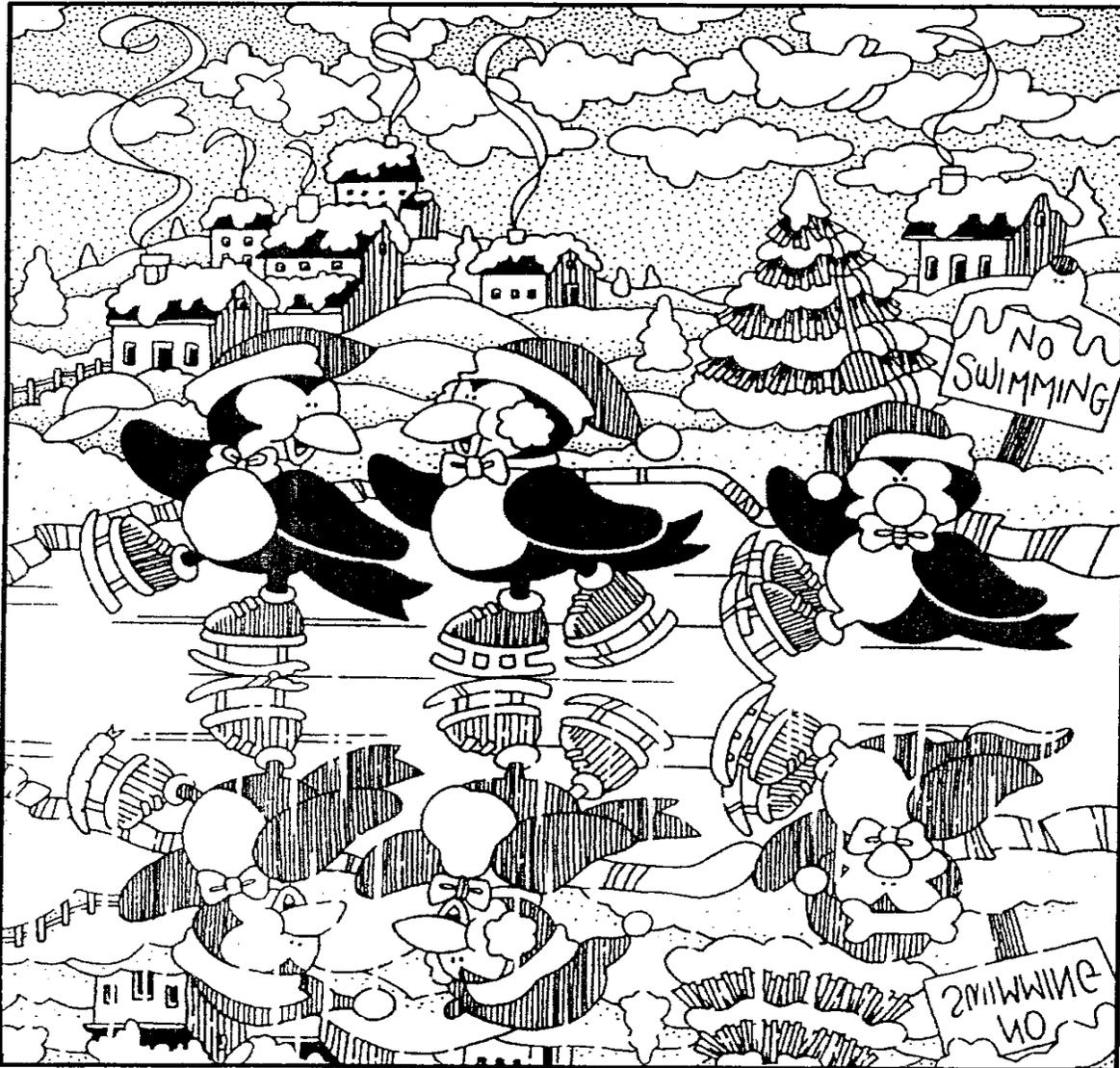


January 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Congregational Church of Somersville 22 Maple St., PO Box 1, Somersville, CT 06072 860-749-7741 860-749-5132 (fax) somcong@aol.com (email) www.somersvilleucc.org (web site) Worship 10 AM Graham Van Keuren, Pastor			1 New Year's Day	2 AA 7	3	4
5 Pageant during worship Boars Head 5	6	7 Evergreen worship 11 Deacons 7 AA 7	8 Bible Study 9:30-11:15 Missions 7	9 AA 7	10 Supper prep 9	11 Fundraising Supper 5 & 6:15
12 Written annual reports due Communion	13	14 Ladies Aide 1 AA 7	15 Bible Study 9:30-11:15 Food-share 1:15-1:45	16 AA 7	17	18
19 Cabinet meeting	20	21 AA 7	22 Bible Study 9:30-11:15	23 AA 7	24	25 Choir Practice 10-12:30 ?? Pot Luck Supper 6 Annual Meeting 7
26 Spire deadline	27	28 Blair worship 10:30 AA 7	29 Bible Study 9:30-11:15 Food-share 1:15-1:45	30 AA 7	31	

Ice-Skating Party

By R. Michael Palan



moose's head



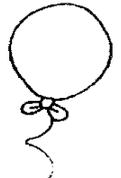
broom



hockey stick



seal



balloon

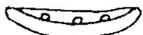


baseball cap



fish

In the big picture, find these objects.



canoe



dog biscuit



sock



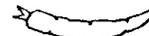
rabbit



light bulb



pear



carrot



pliers

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