



The Spire
Congregational Church of Somersville
United Church of Christ



2020

Finance Reminder



As a church we will vote on the 2021 budget in December, 2020 ... therefore, church boards and committees are reminded that budget requests are to be prepared and submitted to Finance so they can come up with a budget for the coming year. They will be meeting on October 20.

Nominating Looking for Candidates

The Nominating committee hopes to make the best matches possible between church members and the boards and committees of the church. Think about your talents and interests and how you might best contribute to the work of the church. You don't necessarily have to wait to be approached by a member of nominating ~ speak with a committee member (Johanna K., Gwyn H-R., Joan L., Donna P, Jack C. or Pastor Graham) if you'd like to offer your services to any position.



From the Pastor

Greetings, Friends in Christ --

For the last few months I have been preaching sermon series instead of the texts suggested by the three-year lectionary cycle. I first started with a series on the intersection of faith, money, and personality. Then I spent a month on the words we use (such as "atonement" and "salvation") to describe the effect on us of God's grace working through Christ Jesus. In the last sermon series, I looked at five poets, exploring how their poetry intersects the lessons of scripture and can help build our faith.

Sermon series seem to be working well in this time of pandemic and I have been encouraged by a number of folks to continue preaching in that vein. In light of that, I thought I would take a deeper look at the three most popular scripture verses, examining one verse per week. In order to find out what the most popular verses are, I performed an internet search, of course. The Google search results didn't all agree, but every source I looked at had these three verses somewhere around the top:



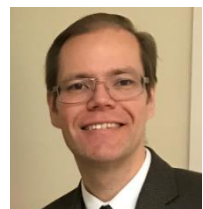
- 1) For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life. -- John 3:16
- 2) Seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all these things will be added to you as well. -- Matthew 6:33
- 3) We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. -- Romans 8:38

For the next three weeks (October 4, 11, and 18), we will look at one of these verses per week. Then, on October 25th, we'll commemorate our theological heritage with a Reformation Sunday worship celebration. On November 1 we will celebrate with thanksgiving faithful women and men who have gone before during our All Saints Day worship celebration.

If you won't be joining us Sundays in person, please join us online at live.somersvilleucc.org or on our church's Facebook page.

Autumn blessings be with you,

Graham Van Keuren



Thanks to ..

.. those who volunteered to take part in service opportunities this past month..

.. those who supported the 2nd mile missions to benefit Heifer International.

.. all who contributed to the success of roast pork supper.

.. Sam & Tracie Pinney for donating all the peaches and corn for our September fundraising supper.

.. those who continue to tend the lawns/gardens of the church.

.. the women (and men) who helped prepare the Blacksmith Shoppe for opening, and to those who give of their time and talents in helping to make each Saturday profitable.



Thanks from ...

Carlese Wood .. “Thanks to everyone for your prayers and cards during my hospital stay and recovery at home.”

Pastor Graham .. “Thank you to parents, Christian Ed board members, and all others who contributed to the generous gift I received at our Sunday school Rally Celebration at the Field Road Park. It was a wonderful surprise and a joy to be remembered.”

Christian Education (submitted by Lani Bortfeld & Pastor Graham)

The church school had a great celebration on September 9th at Connor’s Place, planned by Pastor Graham and the Board of Christian Education. Pastor Graham welcomed us and said grace over our picnic suppers. Then he presented the faith banners the children made which are now hanging in the sanctuary, made by Shirley Bracken and her grandchildren Kyle, Ava & Calin, Teddy & Sarah Flynn, Charlotte Hight, Paige McGuire, Lauren Richards and Maya Stefanik. Then he gave each child present a pair of Christian bookmarks and presented mustard-seed bracelets which Marj Butler found for Paige McGuire with the attendance award, and Maya with the award for bringing her Bible and class materials. Teachers received thank-you gifts, and helpers received certificates. The Board then presented our pastor with a thank-you gift for his steadfast commitment to teaching children, youth and adults about the love and life of Jesus Christ. Graham led us in a family devotional, Lani passed around some of the new materials in our *Shine*

curriculum this year and talked about the upcoming series of Bible stories for the fall on the patriarchs/matriarchs in Genesis. Families were especially enthusiastic about the *All of Us* Bible story book. Each family who registers their children for church school this year will receive a free copy of this updated Bible resource. It has more ethnic diversity in its illustrations, a modern translation of the Bible story first, and then a synopsis illustrated in graphic novel style on the next pages. Graham closed us with a prayer, and then it was time for ice cream on a stick and enjoying the park.

We are asking families to **please fill out a 2020-21 registration form and return to the church office or the church school teacher for that day** for each child attending, to update us on vital



**Christian
Education**

information about your child or teen. Forms have been emailed to all families. We are continuing to hold church school at the Mill Pond park when weather permits. Families are asked to bring the usual items when we meet at Mill Pond Park: your church school bag with your Bible or children's Bible, folding chair, and mask. Please speak with your child/ren about our intention to keep them safe and instruct them to follow the guidance of our Sunday school teachers and adult chaperones. Thanks to Jason Stefanik and Pam Stevenson for helping out in September. Once the weather turns cold, we will return to Zoom.

In addition to the *All of Us* book, we have new maps, family trees, crafts, activities, music, magazines, Bible posters and other supplements to reach children with a variety of learning styles. Since teachers have to bring supplies to the park, we ask that families please let us know when you're going to be absent or bring a guest. Also, let us know when you can help reading the Bible story or lead a craft. Currently, Marj and Lani are the only teachers, so we really would appreciate any kind of help. We would especially love to train some new teachers to lighten the load on these two women. Teachers should be a member of the church and enjoy working with children or youth – contact a member of the Board or the church office to let us know what age group you prefer. For the winter Zoom church school, you do not have to host the session, just present the lesson; Lani or Graham will take care of the Zoom details.

Despite the fact that we aren't teaching in the CE classrooms downstairs, **we are still using these rooms to store curriculum items. PLEASE DO NOT drop off any items without asking a member of the CE Board first.** We don't want to sort through items that clutter up the rooms. Shirley Bracken donated a de-humidifier to keep our materials from getting musty – thank you, Shirley!

The board continues to check in with families by phone after each CE meeting to update you on upcoming events and catch up with your family's joys and concerns. Each family has a CE contact person; please let us know suggestions, questions, concerns or prayer requests. Your Board of CE wants to hear from and pray for you in these challenging times. In this way, we hope that we can stay connected in Christ through these tumultuous times.

Bible Study

Two sessions are offered each week: Wednesday and Thursday mornings beginning at 9:30 AM and running until 11-11:15. The study content is the same both mornings; however, on Wednesdays we remain socially distanced in the social hall without wearing facemasks. Masks are worn during the Thursday class. The studies are open to all; you are welcome on either morning for the situation you find most comfortable for yourself – or come to both!



Readers in October

10/04 Wayne Steely
10/11 JoAnn Supernaugh
10/18
10/25



Treasurer's Update (submitted by Dave Pinney)

Budget vs. Actuals: 2020 Budget - FY20 P&L January - August, 2020

	Aug 2020		Total	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Income				
Collections			0.00	0.00
Loose	100.00	183.00	864.00	1,466.00
Pledges	10,069.00	7,833.00	61,311.05	62,666.00
Total Collections	\$ 10,169.00	\$ 8,016.00	\$ 62,175.05	\$ 64,132.00
Dividends	33.06	83.00	599.31	666.00
Donations			0.00	0.00
Facility Contributions		125.00	840.00	1,000.00
Ladies Aid		0.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
Unrestricted		125.00	3,379.10	1,000.00
Total Donations	\$ 0.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 5,719.10	\$ 3,500.00
Endowment Input		0.00	0.00	5,000.00
Facility Contributionsc			135.00	0.00
Fund Raiser	2,361.00	0.00	12,995.00	15,500.00
Interest Income		2.00	0.93	14.00
Miscellaneous		50.00	30.00	400.00
Total Income	\$ 12,563.06	\$ 8,401.00	\$ 81,654.39	\$ 89,212.00
Gross Profit	\$ 12,563.06	\$ 8,401.00	\$ 81,654.39	\$ 89,212.00
Expenses				
Bank Service Charges	101.29	16.67	452.71	133.36
Christian Education			0.00	0.00
Supplies		125.00	1,086.97	1,000.00
Youth Ministry		50.00	0.00	400.00
Total Christian Education	\$ 0.00	\$ 175.00	\$ 1,086.97	\$ 1,400.00
Committees			0.00	0.00
Deacons		37.50	670.78	300.00
Stewardship		12.50	191.52	100.00
Streaming		62.50	0.00	500.00
Total Committees	\$ 0.00	\$ 112.50	\$ 862.30	\$ 900.00
Compensation			0.00	0.00
Insurance & Pension		1,224.00	8,568.00	9,792.00
Minister	3,416.67	3,416.67	27,333.34	27,333.34
Organist/Choir Director	1,113.75	1,113.75	8,910.00	8,910.00
Professional Expenses		166.67	239.78	1,333.36
Secretary	1,258.33	1,258.33	10,066.66	10,066.66
Social Security	181.47	187.00	1,453.23	1,496.00
Total Compensation	\$ 5,970.22	\$ 7,366.42	\$ 56,571.01	\$ 58,931.36
Fees			0.00	0.00
Insurance- Property Liability		0.00	4,422.00	4,125.00
Tolland Association		0.00	0.00	63.00

UCC Assessments		0.00	0.00	1,000.00
Workers Comp. Insurance		0.00	272.00	525.00
Total Fees	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 4,694.00	\$ 5,713.00
Fund Raisers	260.00	333.33	1,939.00	2,666.64
Miscellaneous Expense		41.67	172.50	333.36
Vanco	66.30	62.50	516.75	500.00
Total Miscellaneous Expense	\$ 66.30	\$ 104.17	\$ 689.25	\$ 833.36
Mission Outreach			0.00	0.00
Elective Disbursements	870.00	208.33	937.71	1,666.64
Missions Programming	25.51	16.67	25.51	133.36
UCC Annual Meeting		20.83	0.00	166.64
UCC Basic Support		0.00	0.00	2,500.00
Total Mission Outreach	\$ 895.51	\$ 245.83	\$ 963.22	\$ 4,466.64
Office Supplies			0.00	0.00
Copier Consumables	31.89	58.33	674.60	466.64
Copier Maintenance		41.67	0.00	333.36
Finance Software		100.00	0.00	800.00
Postage	11.00	62.50	1,246.45	500.00
Printing		16.67	0.00	133.36
Supplies		41.67	403.11	333.36
Website		0.00	1,029.28	150.00
Total Office Supplies	\$ 42.89	\$ 320.84	\$ 3,353.44	\$ 2,716.72
Repairs and Maintenance			0.00	0.00
Church Building		375.00	4,186.94	3,000.00
Church Grounds	26.98	250.00	952.04	2,000.00
Parsonage		125.00	1,913.75	1,000.00
Total Repairs and Maintenance	\$ 26.98	\$ 750.00	\$ 7,052.73	\$ 6,000.00
Telephone Expense	144.73	150.00	1,170.41	1,200.00
Utilities			0.00	0.00
Church Electricity	345.14	358.33	2,487.38	2,866.64
Church Fuel		395.83	3,403.28	3,166.64
Church Sewer Assessment		0.00	0.00	0.00
Church Water	37.80	62.50	159.23	187.50
Electric account for Aux Parking/Blacksmith Shoppe	44.72	45.83	358.53	366.64
Parsonage Electricity	535.10	208.33	2,474.87	1,666.64
Parsonage Fuel		166.67	1,210.92	1,333.36
Parsonage Sewer Assessment		0.00	0.00	0.00
Parsonage Water	79.91	93.75	209.01	281.25
Total Utilities	\$ 1,042.67	\$ 1,331.24	\$ 10,303.22	\$ 9,868.67
Total Expenses	\$ 8,550.59	\$ 10,906.00	\$ 89,138.26	\$ 94,829.75
Net Operating Income	\$ 4,012.47	\$ -2,505.00	\$ -7,483.87	\$ -5,617.75

Treasurer Report



Missions (submitted by Pastor Graham)

2nd Miles Missions

Trick or Treat for UNICEF is a fundraising program started in 1949 in a Philadelphia, PA Presbyterian congregation. The first UNICEF collection gathered by kids that Halloween totaled \$17. Since then the tradition of raising money for UNICEF spread, and since that time both children and adults around the country (and now in some other countries) have participated in this October fundraiser, raising about \$200,000,000 so far.

UNICEF provides aid for children and families around the world. UNICEF's activities include immunizations and disease prevention, administering treatment for children and mothers with HIV, enhancing childhood and maternal nutrition, improving sanitation, promoting education, and providing emergency relief in response to disasters.

This month our Missions Outreach Board is sending Trick or Treat for UNICEF boxes home to all members and friends of the church. We encourage you to put some change in your box every day for the month of October. Since we probably won't be experiencing trick or treating for Halloween in the same manner we normally do, we also invite you to contribute the money you would normally spend on Halloween candy to UNICEF instead. We will dedicate the returned Trick or Treat for UNICEF in worship on November 8th.



Thank you for your generosity!

Church Without Walls

CWW is an ecumenical ministry with the homeless held each Sunday at Court Square in Springfield. This outdoor service (held in any weather) begins at noon and concludes about 30-40 minutes later with a free lunch to any who would like to partake. Our Board of Missions, with your support, provides lunch (sandwich, snack, and fruit) on the 4th Sunday of each month when Pastor Graham leads the service. If you would like to contribute to the lunch, please speak with Jean Langan, Allison Matczyk or Donna Pendleton,

Food-Share

Members of our church help distribute food every other Wednesday from 1-1:30 in the parking lot of the Somers Congregational Church. If you are willing to assist, speak with Marge Morgan. October dates are the 14th and 28th.



Kiva (submitted by Linda Longueuil)

During September, we were able to make 2 loans bringing our total loans to 169. The first loan went to Luis Antonio from El Salvador. He will use his loan to purchase fertilizers and herbicides for his crop of beans. The second loan went to Kadijatu, a refugee from Sierra Leone who lives in Arizona. She will use her loan to overcome the challenges in her business posed by the Covid-19 crisis. Their stories can be found in the KIVA notebook.

One loan was repaid in full during September. Peekapak used their loan to reach young children learn to cope and thrive after being victims of violence or bullying.



150th Anniversary - (submitted by Johanna Karbonic)

GENERATIONS OF FAITHFULNESS (Psalm 100.5)

The 150th Anniversary Committee has made great progress with our plans for 2021. Our kickoff start will be on Sunday January 3rd, 2021 with a historic communion service and a senior of the church giving us a brief talk of what they remember about the church and any church history of what they remember or were told. We will hear our Anniversary Song.

People are encouraged to dress in 1860-1880 outfits if possible. In fact, if anyone has any old outfits in their attic, please let the committee know.

We would like to at least have Graham, Jason, a few deacons, and others dress for that period. The Church was first established on January 4, 1871 as the Congregational Church of Somersville.

The above title “Generations of Faithfulness” taken from Psalm 100.5 will be our theme for the year. We will also have a new Church logo and one or both will be on our banners, Spire. bulletins, etc.

Members of the 150 Committee are: Pastor Graham, Ardie Carey, Geneva Farnham, Marj Butler, Russ Meyer, and Johanna Karbonic.

Our tentative schedule for 2021 Church Year will be:

- January 3, 2021 Historic Communion Service & Senior speaker.
Anniversary Song. Music.
- February – Speaker from the Conference
- March – Senior Speaker
- April - April 4th is Easter - Senior Speaker during the month.
- May – Potluck dinner
- June – Senior Speaker
- July – Ice Cream Social with Missions
- August – Church Barbecue
- September – 4 Town Fair Float.
- October – Former Pastors and Harvest Potluck Supper with 1871 recipes.
- November – All Saint’s Day – Music theme celebration.
- December – Members gift to the church, Time Capsule burial.

Senior Living Members include: Nick Wood - 1947, Everett Morrill – 1950, Nancy Gowdy Pease – 1955, Barbara Abbe - 1959, Carlese Wood – 1957, Mildred Morrill – 1961, Geneva Farnham – 1963, George Liberty – 1965, Jack Collins – 1966, Mavis Collins – 1969.

Of course, many of these plans depend on where we stand with the Coronavirus.

Ladies Aide Society

Because of Co-Vid concerns, a smaller group than usual went out to lunch in September – this year to Joanna’s on Main Street in Somersville. Meals and conversation were enjoyed during the alfresco dining.



All women of the church are welcome to attend our October 13 meeting that will begin at 1 PM – note the time change (because we are not supposed to share food, no luncheon or snacks will be provided; feel free to bring something for yourself if you want.)

Blacksmith Shoppe

Marilyn Hare is doing a great job as coordinator of the Blacksmith Shoppe. She especially appreciates the faithfulness of those who have helped in their cleaning and organizational efforts. Thanks to those who have donated to the Shoppe, who have bought items and to those who bake. The Shoppe will continue to be open on Saturdays through October from 9 AM – 2 PM. Help is needed all day long at the Shoppe on Saturdays. If you can show up by 8:30 to help set items out on the lawn for display, or work til 11:30 or so, or work 11-30-2:30 and to help put unsold items back into storage, that would be great!! A sign up sheet to volunteer is posted on the wall outside the church office. If you can't make it to church, but would like to assist, you can call the office at 860-749-7741 an we will post your name.

Property Upkeep

Fall tasks are on the horizon that include trimming shrubs, removing the window air conditioners, leaf removal, installing storm windows, touch up painting, etc. Any individual or group of help would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Everett Morrill with questions.



Over the summer, and with the help of many volunteers, routine chores have done. Many thanks to all for your help and patience.

Fundraising Suppers (submitted by Ruth Bruch)

Pot Roast Supper

The sign up sheet for our October 17 Pot Roast Supper has been posted and there are still a number of ways to contribute. If you can't make it to church to sign up, contact me in the office and I'll reserve your spot. Here is a partial list of what's still needed and how you can assist:



- \$50 for potatoes, \$35 for onions, and \$40 for carrots; \$ for other ingredients not listed
- 9 apple crisps 9x13 (recipe posted in social room)
- 8 loaves homemade seasonal breads
- help peeling veggies on Friday

Reservations for the curb side service are now being accepted with pick up available between 5 – 6:30 PM. Cost is \$12 per meal. Call or email the church office at 860-749-7741 or somcong@aol.com.

Looking ahead to November~ our annual Turkey supper will be held November 14. As soon as turkey breasts are on sale in any of the local stores, I'm hoping some of you will help to buy some to donate or make a monetary donation and I will pick some up to keep in the freezer until needed.

And, that may be it for 2020; I am doubtful that we will offer the December meal as it may be a bit chilly for the cashier, traffic control, and runners to perform their jobs comfortably.

Roast Pork Wrap-Up

A lot of people enjoyed the meal and special thanks this month to Nick Wood for seasoning and cooking the pork and to Sam Pinney at Irish Bend Farm for donating the peaches for our dessert. We put up a record 262 dinners (some were given free as a thanks – and believe it or not, there were 4 no shows). Income was \$3,189.00 less expenses. There were some monetary donations and tips made before and during the dinner from patrons which were gratefully accepted.



Note: It is our Mission Outreach Board's tradition to have two second mile mission fundraisers – UNICEF Trick or Treat for Children and Neighbors in Need (NIN), an offering of the United Church of Christ focusing on ministries of compassionate witness here in the United States. Because of the pandemic, we have simplified our offering schedule this year. We will collect in October for UNICEF alone (please find another article about our UNICEF collection within this newsletter.) However, our Missions Outreach Board is committed to donating to Neighbors in Need on behalf of the congregation from our elective disbursements.

Following is an example of a ministry funded by Neighbors in Need here in Connecticut.

In Hartford: Faces of Homelessness

Hands on Hartford is a long-time NIN grant recipient. The Connecticut organization, founded more than 50 years ago by City Center churches, uses your gifts to support The Faces of Homelessness Speakers' Bureau. People with former or current homelessness experience share their stories with the public to raise awareness about homelessness, hunger, and other poverty issues in a very personal way. The speakers develop leadership skills and stability in their own lives as they help inspire action toward economic justice.

"We would have struggled to develop this program without the help of Neighbors in Need," said Janet Jones Bann, grants manager, Hands on Hartford.



"The grants have really allowed us to run Faces of Homelessness. It's had a huge impact -- on thousands of people who heard their powerful stories and on dozens of formerly homeless folks who have realized stability in their own lives," said Barbara Shaw,

the organization's executive director. She referenced single mothers who have overcome challenges of being homeless with children and one individual who lived outdoors for years, now housed and participating.

The program employs a formerly homeless person as part-time project co-coordinator and currently has seven active speakers who share their stories at schools, colleges, local employers, and with faith communities.

"I think this is something churches have struggled with – how to get a balance of directly serving people in need as we make a difference in this world with social justice, with people advocating for themselves," Shaw said. "Faith-based basic support services and the compassion are important, but we can also help people find their voice in the world. And create change in this world. This program does that. It also does more for the speakers individually that we have ever imagined."

Audiences grateful for stories

In the last four years, Faces of Homelessness has racked up 131 presentations and raised awareness significantly. In follow-up surveys collected by the bureau:

- 98 percent reported that they have a better understanding of the realities of homelessness.

- 92 percent said they feel more motivated to get involved.
- 98 percent felt the presentation met expectations and raised awareness.
- 90 percent said they have a better understanding of how to get involved following an event.

While the pandemic forced HOH to initially curtail speaking engagements and stopped the recruitment of new speakers, the bureau has “started doing virtual events, which was not in their repertoire earlier,” Shaw said. “We’ve done a number them, have a couple in the planning stage and are just now letting folks know.” Annie Wendel, assistant director in the Office of Volunteer Programs and Service Learning at Connecticut’s Sacred Heart University, lauded a recent online presentation. In a thank-you to Faces of Homelessness’



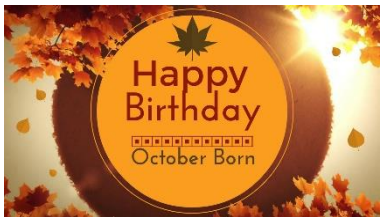
Anne Goshdigian in August, she wrote, “You should know that when the students logged back in for evening reflection, they were so grateful that you and Andrea shared your stories with them. It was a great way to help frame the important social justice work that they are engaging

in this week (and beyond). I will keep Hands On Hartford in mind for future volunteer opportunities and will *definitely* be reaching out again to schedule a speaker for next year’s program (hopefully by that time it will be in person!).”

Look for news about “members and friends” and hidden pictures on the back side of October calendar

About our Members and Friends

October Birthdays and Anniversaries



Happy birthday wishes this month are sent to: Greg Forbes, Jack Bruch (80) Angela Ceppetelli, Laura Mckiernan, Brooke Stevens, Jillian Farnham, John Kelleher, Caitlyn Stevens.

Patrick & Dotty Forbes are celebrating an anniversary this month.

Update on Graduates:

Michaella Doyon graduated from Ellington High School in June and is currently working part time with an Alzheimers patient and she assists with Maddie's online schooling but is looking for something else to fill in. . She will be starting college online in the spring.

Hidden Pictures for the Young at Heart -- Halloween Hijinks

