

SUMMER 2008

Congregation,
Ministers to all
Rev. Donald Remick,
Pastor
Meg Clapp,
Associate Pastor
Rev. W. Roscoe Riley,
Pastor Emeritus
Chad Weirick,
Minister of Music
Deborah Bowen, Director
of Christian Education
Ed Melchin, Sextant
Stacey Stahl,
Office Administrator

The Mission of the First Congregational Church of Hanover, United Church of Christ, is to make the love of God and the God of love known as both continue to be revealed to us. We welcome all people into the full life and ministry of our church regardless of their age, gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, class or economic standing, because we believe that no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. We gather people together in God's love that grounds us in a caring community and transforms our lives of faith. We send people out to make a difference in the world through compassion and justice.

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A monthly publication of First Congregational Church of Hanover, UCC

HOW IS THE PURPLE WAY GOING?

IS IT OK TO COMPLAIN YET?

HOW LONG, OH LORD?

ONCE I'VE DONE MY 21 DAYS...OR TRIED AT IT LONG ENOUGH, CAN I GO BACK?

Human beings, by changing the inner attitudes of their minds, can change the outer aspects of their lives. William James (1842 - 1910)

I've found that the longer I work on it (and I am still changing the bracelet) the more I am becoming conscious of how much useless whining I do. There is a healthy way to complain and criticize. When the world around, the people around, the government around, the corporation around, the institutions around you... are not following God's way of justice and compassion, something must be said. But it has to lead to healthy change; faithful change. It's not talking at or about, its talking with, while keeping the focus on God. That is the very heart of the crucial prophetic side of our heritage.

But most complaining isn't about God's way or healthy change. It is about making me feel better. It is about me trying to make the things around me work so my life is happier and easier. It's about

making the people around me feel bad or ashamed enough so that they will change to suit my tastes. It is about trying to make things fit my definition of what they should be.

But interestingly, as I have worked on letting go of unhealthy whining, complaining, criticizing and gossiping, I have suddenly discovered moments of profound gratitude. And I do mean in-the-present

moments. Now I know that focusing on the things I am grateful for is one way to counteract the habit of my self-focused complaining, criticizing and gossip. But that is not what I am experiencing. Suddenly, I am aware of just how grateful I am in that moment for the people, events, life, and beauty around me. It's profound. That didn't happen so much before the bracelet. And I don't want to go back. I suspect the people around me don't want me to go back either. I am sure God doesn't. "So God, keep me

walking in the purple way so I can bring more of Your Spirit into the world. I'd be grateful."

~ Rev. Don

COMPLAINT-FREE WORLD

"It's not about bracelets," said Complaint-Free World founder Will Bowen, "It's about people; their lives and their ability to improve things for themselves and others. Most people know that complaining is negative and destructive but some are not comfortable jumping in and trying to go 21 consecutive days without griping. The opposite of complaining is gratitude."

FOCUS ON COMMUNITY

Local, National & International Outreach

HABITAT HOUSE

We have the property. (Thanks to a kind, thoughtful and generous gift from the Itz family to our town) The committee is forming. Final approval is pending. We should start constructions, perhaps as early as this summer. Check out our church website for updates. The next meeting of the Hanover Habitat committee is currently scheduled at our church on July 10th at 7 pm.

HEIFER PROJECT

It was a wonderful warm summer day on Saturday for "Hanover Days" and we were able to collect a little more than 300 cans/bottles for Heifer. Water was the drink of the day and used quite a bit at the Slip and Slide and Dunk Tank--a fun day for all who attended.

This additional funding brings us to \$3,860.00. With pool parties and cookouts now on the weekly agenda please remember to bring your redeemable empties to Riley Hall - leave inside the front doors for pickup. For those who would like to help us reach our goal of \$5,000.00 there is a bucket for your contributions located in the Vestry along with a chart showing our progress. Once again thanks to all for your continued support of this very worthy program.

CWS TOOLS OF HOPE

What a generous response to Church World Service Tools of Hope card sales!

Our congregation's combined gifts for Mother's and Father's Day totaled \$300.

This gift of hope will help many disaster victims. Thank you for assisting others in need!

ADD ONE

On the last Faith Conversation on June 9, Rev. Shuma Chakravarty, a new participant to our study and a new member of our church, added an insight. She told about a practice at the UCC church in Hopkington that was mentioned in the local news. It's called "Add One." Everyone in the congregation is encouraged EACH TIME they go to the store to add one item to their shopping list for the local food pantry. They add something (the essential non-perishables) to their shopping cart that everyone uses; things like tuna fish, peanut butter, coffee, canned soup, etc. It's caught on in the hearts of everyone in the church, and each week their offering to the local food pantry is overflowing. This summer, lets have it catch

on here as well. EVERYONE ADD ONE. And bring it with you to church.

But they also took it another step. They've invited folks to add one portion to the meals and desserts they prepare. Then freeze it and look for an opportunity to share a gift of caring with a friend or neighbor, someone from the church or community, who could use the taste of love. Think about it. Imagine who you know could use a loaf of bread or a bag of cookies or even a meal for the family during a time of stress, loss, or crisis.

So ADD ONE and share the light of God's love.

HANOVER DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

This past winter a number of people from the town of Hanover were inspired and troubled by a presentation at a Martin Luther King, Jr. breakfast held at St. Andrews church. Kay Doherty of Sharing Inc. shared about their work to end racism within our region of the Commonwealth. That was the inspirational part. During the discussion and questions that followed her presentation we heard several stories of people's experiences of racism within the borders of our community. That was the troubling part. The group did not want this conversation to end with the breakfast and determined to form a committee to explore ways to enlarge the conversation to include the whole community.

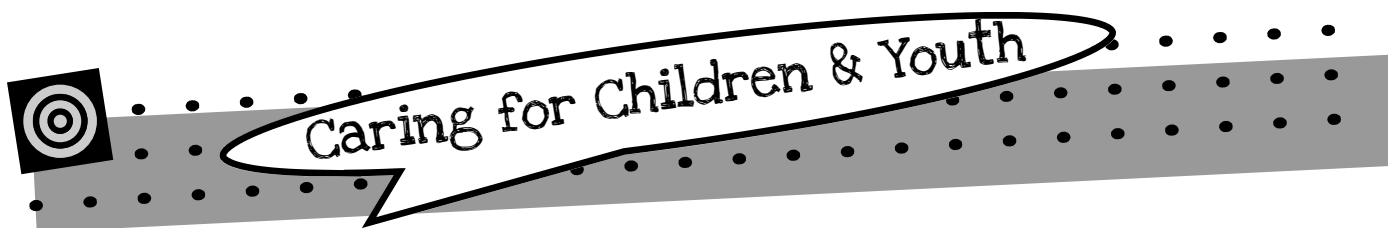
To that end the Hanover Diversity Committee was given birth. This committee met this spring and had a table at Hanover Days. Our purpose is captured in our mission statement: *The mission of the Hanover Diversity Committee is to help our community celebrate and cherish the diversity in this town and world so that all people will feel safe and comfortable here being who they are.*

The next meeting of the Hanover Diversity Committee will be on Tuesday, July 8 at 7:30 pm at the First Congregational Church of Hanover, UCC. For more information call the church office at 781-826-4762 or email the committee at hanoverdiversity@gmail.com.

MAINSRING HOUSE

While many of us are on summer vacation, the homeless at MainSpring House in Brockton still need our monthly culinary sustenance. If you would like to offer a hand preparing food, baking at home, or serving at the shelter, please give a call to our summer volunteers!

Call Cynthia Ness (781 826-2967) to offer your help for the August 3rd meal, or call Vicki Gorder (781 826-4581) to offer your help for September 6th. Thank you for caring for those less fortunate!



CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

We had such a perfect day for our Children's Day this year. The service went so well, all the children did such a great job in leading us in worship. I want to thank them all for their hard work and dedication to Sunday School this year. I also want to thank all the teachers that donated their time to us during this year. There are too many to mention each by name, but you all know who you are! Without the people who give their time and talents to us, we would not be able to use our rotation model Sunday School, and we know we all love it. My sincere and heartfelt thanks go to all of you.

My thanks also to the CE Committee that works so hard all year. Without them we would not have had our wonderful Carnival. What a great hot, sunny day we had for hot dogs, cotton candy and

slush! I think everyone had a wonderful afternoon in the sun. As usual, we had our egg toss and pudding contests! I wish I could tell you who won the pudding eating contest but it was hard to tell since so much pudding landed on their faces!

Don't forget we are having a group Sunday School during the month of July. It will be Fun at the Beach all four weeks. Bring your kids at 9:30 a.m. and pick them up when church is done. I hope to see lots of kids there!

Enjoy your summer and see you in September.

~ Deborah J. Bowen

Empowering Leadership

SAVE THE DATE

Members of the Diaconate would like to invite you to a celebration of the 25th Anniversary of Rev. Don's Ordination into the Ministry. September 21st has been set aside as a day to celebrate both in church at our regular services and at a reception immediately following the 10:00 service at Riley Hall.

Linda Gilardi has been gracious enough to volunteer to coordinate the meal to be served. Anyone willing to cook/bake, please contact Linda at 781-871-0409.

We will be having a number of guest ministers and speakers but if you know of someone that would like to speak either in church or at the reception, please contact Al Alexander at 781-826-6773.

A gift will be presented to Don. At the moment only two suggestions have been made: a new black robe and a weekend away. If you have any suggestions and/or would like to donate to the gift, please contact Ruth Hall at 781-858-1869.

If you have any other suggestions for this celebration please talk to any member of the Diaconate.

Thanking you all in advance, the Diaconate: Lynn White, Amy Kelly, Jean Hardy, Priscilla Cedrone, Mark Consiglio, Betsey Josselyn, Evajane Bumbalo, Ruth Hall, Paul Lowe, Ann Fraser, Ken Cheo, Al Alexander, Dick Bancroft, Mike Crosby, Dennis Falcione, Glenda Larson and Gary Potter

GENTLE REMINDER

In the midst of your summer fun and travels, we ask that you remember to keep your pledges current. Our mission and outreach continues throughout the summer months. We need your consistent financial support to fulfill our mission of Caring for Children, providing Meaningful Worship, Empowering Leadership and Focusing on Community.

You may mail your pledges to the church if you are out of town:

First Congregational Church, UCC
515 Hanover Street
Hanover MA 02339

MOONLIGHTERS

Please join us on Monday evenings in Riley Hall to work on crafts for the upcoming Church Fair in November. Our first meeting will be Monday, June 30, 2008 at 7 pm.

DIACONATE

Next meeting is July 1 at 7:30 pm

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Meaningful Worship

BOOK CONVERSATIONS

This coming fall we will be offering a number of opportunities for our church. They will be an opportunity to gather and get to know more of the folks in our community of faith. They will also be a chance to deepen our understanding and experience of God, faith, our world and our selves. One of those opportunities will be a monthly book conversation. We will meet after church on a Sunday morning each month to reflect on a book we have read. We're aiming for the first Sunday, but may have to adjust occasionally. Here's the list so you can start your reading this summer. I would also welcome suggestions for next winter and spring. **OCTOBER** *The Great Awakening* by Jim Wallis. **NOVEMBER** *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson. **DECEMBER** *A New Earth* by Eckhard Tolle. **JANUARY** *The World is Flat* by Thomas Friedman. We'll also have a special discussion (to be scheduled sometime this fall) of another great book, *UnBinding the Gospel* by Martha Grace Reese.

SUMMER COMMUNION

The first Sunday of July and August will be Communion Sundays. The Lord's Supper will be offered in church. It will also be offered (weather permitting) at the outdoor labyrinth before church (at 8:30 am).

LABYRINTH WORSHIP

The outdoor labyrinth is lit with firelight each Wednesday evening. Summer is a great time to walk the outdoor labyrinth at any hour of the day. It is particularly beautiful when lit up with torches and fire. Each Wednesday night you can come and enjoy the shades and hues of sunset, fireflies sparking out their secret code, swallows looping through the sky and a sky full of stars.

CONGREGATIONAL CONNECTIONS

THANK YOU NOTE

Thank you for your thoughts, messages and prayers for me since I moved into my new quarters.

I send you my love and hugs to you all.

Harriet S. Olmsted
Sea View Retreat
50 Mansion Drive
Rowley MA 01969

CONGRATULATIONS!

We had five graduating high school seniors that qualified for the Christie Educational Scholarship in 2008. The students are: Eleanor Botelho, Brianna Crowley, Adam Cook, Brienne Greland and Mary Rafferty.

They have all been active in all aspects of church, have been on many mission trips, Youth Diaconate, fellowship and have been true role models for the younger kids in church and in the community. I wish we could keep them here with us awhile longer!

~ Denise Schell

2008 Deaths to Date

Bradley, Janet 1/3/2008	Kittredge, William 2/10/2008
Grahn, Frank 1/8/2008	Packard, Eileen 2/25/2008
Ward Murray 1/18/2008	Brasier, Ed 3/17/2008
Nicmanus, Erik 1/22/2008	Nancy Stewart 1/2008
Leach, Walter 1/31/2008	Shirley Blanchard 5/13/2008

THANK YOU NOTE

Dear Members of the First Congregational Church of Hanover,

I hope this note finds you well and that you are having a lovely spring. I have been busy finishing my final semester of undergraduate school and working at a local independent elementary school. I even, as you know, had an opportunity to serve for 10 days in the Yucatan, Mexico. Thank you so much for thinking of me and my team and sending a donation. Looking back on the past four years, the times I have served on mission trips have been some of my memorable and rewarding experiences. It really means so much to have support from my family and friends.

One of the most rewarding parts of the trip was seeing the results of the work that we had begun last year. Last year we worked with the people of a church in the small community of Muna. We painted and donated towards the 20 year construction project of the church. This year when we arrived, we were greeted by old friends and saw two new columns in the church and the finished building that we had started painting last year.

This year our team continued to work on the church building project, digging the foundation each morning.

Last year we met a man named Daniel, a member of the church, the owner of the best pizza shop in all of Muna (the only pizza shop) and our tour guide to the Mayan ruins. Daniel mentioned to Dave, the missionary with whom we were working, how much he liked our group's presentation and that he would love to develop the church's outreach. So this year, Dave and Daniel set up opportunities for us to go to five different communities around the Yucatan to work alongside trained church member sharing the Gospel.

Thank you again for your generous donation.

Blessings, Ashley Wall

SUMMER CALENDAR

SUNDAYS EVENTS

Worship:

9:30 am Worship from June 15 - August

Communion:

- July 6 and August 3 at 8:30 at the outdoor labyrinth, weather permitting
- July 6 and August 3 at 9:30 am worship

Summer Sunday School

July 6, 13, 28 and 25. Bring your kids at 9:30 am and pick them up when church is done.

MONDAY EVENTS

Moonlighters Craft Nights:

7 pm at Riley Hall

WEDNESDAY EVENTS

Labyrinth Firewalks

7:30 pm, weather permitting

DIACONATE MEETING

July 1 at 7:30

MAINSRING

August 3 - Call Cynthia Ness to help serve

September 6 - Call Vicki Gorder to help serve

THANK YOU FOR A PRODUCTIVE YEAR

As summer breezes in, our church calendar slows down and we can take a moment to reflect on the many, many hours of service this year at the hands of our church members.

Thank you to everyone who serves in on a board or committee or elected position. Many thanks to everyone who coordinates volunteers to serve as lay readers, greeters, acolytes and flower donations. Many hands make light work and your leadership and teamwork are a reminder of our strength as a congregation to EMPOWER LEADERSHIP.

Thanks to those who say "YES" when called upon to serve as communion assistants, lay readers, greeters, acolytes and who give donations to purchase flowers to beautify the sanctuary each Sunday. Your service reminds us that we are church that provides MEANINGFUL WORSHIP.

Thank you to those who serve as our Director of Christian Education, members of the CE Committee, Church School teachers, Youth Fellowship leaders. Your service is the tangible reminder that as a church we value CARING FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH.

Thank you to everyone who donates time and financial support to the outreach ministries to serve people in our church and community and world. Our strength to FOCUS ON COMMUNITY shines through you.

First Congregational Church United Church of Christ

Where God is still speaking

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Laura's Country Church Fair

The Moonlighters are making themed Gift Baskets for our 2008 Laura's Country Church Fair. In addition to the filler items listed below we are in need of baskets (all shapes and sizes), wired ribbon for decorating the baskets, and large handled shopping bags for transporting. Here are some suggestions for filler items (donation box in the coat room):

Address books
All occasion cards
Aprons
Baby layette items
Baby toys
Barrettes/hair clips
Bath sponges or scrubbers
Bird books
Bird feeders
Bird seed/suet/suet holders
Birthday party items
Body glitter/Body lotion/Body wash
Books on tape

Boxed cookies
Boxed note cards
Boxed tea bags
Brush/comb sets
Bubble bath
Candle holders
Children's books
Children's games
Clay flower pots
Cocoa mix packets
Coffee mugs
Cook books
Crossword books
Day planner calendars
Eye shadow compacts
Facial masques
Fancy crackers
Fancy paper napkins
Gardening gloves
Hair care items
Head bands
Kitchen towels
Lip gloss
Microwave popcorn/Microwave soups
Nail care items
Nail polish
Napkins/placemats
Packaged candy

Paperback novels
Photo albums
Plant food
Playing cards
Pot holders
Potpourri/Potpourri holders
Potting soil
Pretty pens/pencils
Puzzles
Quick bread mixes
Scented candles
Scented soap
Seed packets
Shower gel
Small bird houses
Small garden tools
Small gourmet coffee packages
Small picture frames
Small stuffed animals/Small toys
Stationery
Tea towels
Wooden spoons, spatulas, etc.

Any food items should have "Best Used By" dates no earlier than 12/31/08.

~ Judy Blodgett