

# Cross Ways

The Newsletter of  
The Congregational Church of Brookfield  
160 Whisconier Road,  
Brookfield, CT 06804  
(203) 775-1259

**MAY 2008**

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**Coming soon to CCB. . . mark these dates on your calendar.**

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| <b>Sunday May 4<sup>th</sup></b>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• C.I.S. Baby Kit Creation at 9:45am in Fellowship Hall</li><li>• New Members join at 10:45am</li></ul>  |
| <b>Saturday May 17<sup>th</sup></b>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relay for Life Tag Sale at Sue Slater's house (12 White Pine Dr.)</li></ul>  |
| <b>Sunday May 18<sup>th</sup></b>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Church House Work Day—9am to 1pm</li><li>• Deacon Commissioning at both 8:45 &amp; 10:45am services</li><li>• Race Relations discussion at the In-Between time at 9:45am in Fellowship Hall</li><li>• Handbell Concert at 7:00pm in the Meetinghouse</li></ul> |
| <b>Sunday May 25<sup>th</sup></b>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SINGLE 10:00am Worship with Book of Remembrance</li></ul>  |
| <b>Sunday June 1<sup>st</sup></b><br><b>Confirmation at 10:00am</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>**NOTE worship times change **</b><br/>8:00am Worship in the Outdoor Chapel<br/>10:00am Worship in the Meetinghouse</li></ul>   |
| <b>Sunday June 15<sup>th</sup></b>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All-Church Picnic immediately after the 10:00am service.</li></ul>   |
| <b>Sun. June 29—Sat. July 5</b>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SYF Mission Team Commissioning and trip to Slidell, LA. Please keep the team in your thoughts &amp; prayers</li></ul>  |
| <b>Wednesday evenings in July</b>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Campfire Vespers Services &amp; Dinner</li></ul>   |
| <b>Mon. July 14<sup>th</sup> - Fri. July 18<sup>th</sup></b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Brookfield Ecumenical Vacation Church School at CCB</li></ul>  |
| <b>Saturday July 19<sup>th</sup></b>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CCB Habitat for Humanity Workday</li></ul>   |

## **CHURCH COUNCIL NOTES – April 8, 2008**

*In an effort to keep the congregation better informed as to actions taken or being considered by the Church Council, we will be including a summary of significant actions in the monthly CrossWays.*

**Refugee Resettlement Update:** Jen Wurst shared the progress of the Abtans self sufficiency plan. They are working on transportation, babysitters for Mutaz while his parents attend classes, keeping a calendar, clarifying medical benefits and future housing.

**Vision Task Force:** the Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia updated Church Council on the group's accomplishments to date. They will share their ideas at the annual meeting.

**Fair Funds Requests:** \$375 request from Fellowship for coffee carafes, \$650 from CE for a computer for the "Heavenly Web" computer lab, \$100 for the children's library, \$500 for the Reach Booth to allow the completion of the upgrade project. These Council recommendations will be presented at the annual meeting.

**Anniversary Campaign – Projects Implementation update:** Dave Goral reported that we have \$220,000 on hand; of which \$120,000 is non-committed and \$13,000 is held in reserve, for a sum of \$110,000 in available funds. Note: the Parsonage Committee met with the Historic District Commission and is working on seven issues as they try to maintain an authentic, historic home while working with modern materials.

### **Committee Communications:**

**Church House** – planning a work day for May 17<sup>th</sup>. Also, they reported that they have received another quote for the front of the Meetinghouse walk and steps. More details will be presented at the annual meeting.

**Stephen Ministry** – are presenting a continuing education opportunity – please join them on April 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm as guest speaker, Arthur Weinschank from Cramer & Anderson speaks about wills, legacies, etc.

**Fellowship** – is looking for guidance on how to build up the Serendippers program. The committee will place an article in CrossWays explaining who they are and that everyone is invited to join their gatherings!

**2008 Yankee Fair** – please see Jeanine Hanewicz if you would consider becoming a Fair Chair. Jeanine has already accomplished many to-do items!

**Church in Society** – please join them on May 4<sup>th</sup> as they put together baby kit items for Church World Services in honor of Jen and Ryan Whipple.

**Spring Fling** – to be held May 9<sup>th</sup> at the Fox Hill Inn. Please see members of the Fellowship Committee for tickets.

**Worship** – The Rev. Davida Foy Crabtree, our Connecticut Conference Minister will preach at the 8:45 and 10:45 services on April 20th, and also meet members at the in-between time.

**Church Growth** – May 4<sup>th</sup> reception of new members

**Historians** – BIG THANK YOU to the Morrison 9 group for the wonderful makeover of the vault! Their hard work resulted in perfectly ordered shelving and 25% more space.

**You are always welcome to attend and observe the Council meetings. To be added to the agenda of the monthly meeting, please contact Tom Eaker or Audrey Himebaugh.**

## Worship Time Change Discussion

Church Council has been discussing the possibility of keeping our usual summer worship times — which change to 8:00am and 10:00am on June 1 through September 7 (Labor Day weekend) — all year-round. We want to know what you think. We would love for you to join us at one or both of the following “in between” opportunities to discuss the “pros” and “concerns” of this possible change, as well as to share your thoughts.

### ***In-Between Opportunities:***

***Sunday, May 11<sup>th</sup> at 9:45am***

***Sunday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am***

Some of the “pros” & “cons” already identified have been:

- Eliminate the confusion, especially of visitors, about WHEN worship is, when congregational meetings or special events after 11:45am keep requiring us to move worship earlier — so we’re out of the building for Danbury Chinese Alliance Church’s program (12:30-4:30pm).
- Allow not only for “In-Between” adult Ed forums but “after church” classes and children & youth programs.
- Have fellowship end before the noon hour, and before people need to get to other Sunday events, such as sports events and lunches.
- The most obvious “con” is for 8:45am worship folks to have to be at church 45 minutes earlier all year round.

If you cannot make it to one of these opportunities in Fellowship Hall, but would share your thoughts, please speak with either Pastor Bryn or Pastor Jen.

A full congregational meeting will be held to make a final decision in late summer.

## Baccalaureate Sunday June 15<sup>th</sup>



We are planning to celebrate graduating high school and college seniors **at the 10:00am service on June 15<sup>th</sup>**. If you are (or if you have in your family) a graduating senior please let us know so we can be sure to send out personal invitations to this celebration of your accomplishments. ***We don’t want to miss anyone!*** Please call or e-mail the church office ([office@uccb.org](mailto:office@uccb.org)) with appropriate mailing address information.

### Care to Help?

Are you willing to visit someone in need to provide companionship, run errands, do shopping, bring a meal, or help with light housekeeping or home repairs?

Our Deacons would love to have more “caring angels” who are willing to be called on as needs arise among our folks like: homebound seniors, someone recuperating from illness or new mom just home from the hospital, a pregnant mom on bed rest, a working parent whose stay-home spouse falls ill or is called away in an emergency, someone unable to drive to a church function, or someone just needing a friend to talk to.

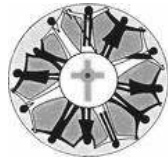
Our Coordinator of Membership Care and Involvement, Harry Gerowe, is collecting names of folks who might be called in from time to time to provide extra help. If you are willing to have your name and number on this “back up list,” please call and submit your name, at 775-1259.

Thank you!



**Bell Concert!!  
Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>  
at 7:00pm  
In the sanctuary**

Mark your calendars now for this exciting concert featuring all of our Bell Choirs. Other instruments will be added to several of the anthems, and our choirs will be playing from the FRONT of the church, so you can see first-hand, all that is involved in making those wonderful sounds!



**You're Invited....  
Sunday June 1<sup>st</sup>  
5:30-7:00pm at CCB**

Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia; Pete Lane; Glenn Adone, Methodist Deacon; Rev. Sue Latourette; and youth from each of our churches will gather to share fellowship, talents, techniques for using creative arts in worship, and philosophies. We'll explore the question of what it means to minister to one another, and ways in which we might do that using our God-given gifts. Come join us for some clowning, some skits, some songs, some improvisation and maybe even some balloon animals. Any questions? Please call Pete Lane.

**DAWS Aid**



Hi, I'm Jonathan Gianazza, and this is my Confirmation Project. Throughout the month of May (1-31) there will be a collection for Danbury Animal Welfare Services. A list of items needed is shown below. It is very much appreciated that you donate to this cause. There will be a collection box outside the Church office.

(\* These items can be gently used.)

FOR OUR DOGS	FOR OUR CATS	GENERAL SUPPLIES
Science Diet Canned Dog Food	Friskies Dry Cat Food - for Animals	Paper Towels
Science Diet Dog Food	Dry Cat Food - any brand - for Shelter	Bleach (no perfume)
Plastic Dog Crates/Carriers*	Canned Cat Food - any brand	Laundry Detergent (low suds)
Large Rawhide Chews	Special Diet Foods - CD,KD,ID, etc.	30 gallon garbage bags
Nylabone Chews	Kitty Litter (non-clumping)	Tall Kitchen garbage bags
Soft Frisbees	Towels - bath-size or larger*	Dish Washing Liquid
Dog Toys - kongs, soft toys, chew toys	Small/Baby Blankets*	Kitchen Sponges
Non-Polyfill Comforters/Blankets	Scratching Posts*	Rubber Gloves
Leashes	Condos*	Spray Bottles
Dog Collars - Small 8-10",10-14"	Cat Toys	6" Paper Plates
Dog Collars - Large 18-24"	.	Pet Food Can Covers



## Stephen Ministers: The After People



*Frequently friends will ask, "I know you're involved in Stephen Ministry. Can you tell me exactly what a Stephen Minister is?" I like to explain that Stephen Ministers are "After People."*

### **Stephen Ministers are there:**

- \* After you've washed and returned the last casserole dish.
- \* After the divorce papers have been served and the bottom falls out of your life.
- \* After the last child honks the horn, waves and drives away—and the house suddenly seems incredibly empty.
- \* After you arrive home following the funeral service and the emotions you've held at bay come crashing in on you.
- \* After the relationship has ended, but the wounds are still bleeding and painful.
- \* After the doctors have said, "There's nothing more we can do."
- \* After the door has slammed shut—for the very last time.
- \* After the phone call you'd always hoped you'd never get.
- \* After you realize the hands on the gold watch you received at your retirement party move more slowly than you ever imagined.
- \* After the nursing home director shakes your hand and says, "Welcome to your new home."
- \* After the gavel goes down, the handcuffs go on and your loved one is led away.
- \* After the baby has arrived, putting more demands on you than you ever dreamed possible.
- \* After you find the pink slip inserted with what is now your final paycheck.
- \* After your family and friends have heard your story one too many times, but you still need to talk it out.

Stephen Ministers are the "After People." We are ready to come alongside you—or your friends, neighbors, co-workers, or relatives—and provide comfort and support for as long "after" as we are needed.

(Adapted from a presentation made during a worship service by Ernie Bourland, a lay Stephen Leader at Houston's First Baptist Church in Houston, Texas. ©by Stephen Ministers in St. Louis, MO.)

*Any questions, please call Marion Miller at 775-3010.*



## **Adult Education Updates**

### **Wednesday AM Women's Group:**

The group will meet on Wednesdays, May 7<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> and June 4<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> from 9:30-11:00am in the Youth Room to continue their study of Jon Ortberg's "If You Want to Walk on Water You Have to Get Out of the Boat." Childcare is provided for these meetings.

### **Thursday AM Prayers:**

This group will meet from 8:45-9:15am on Thursdays, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup> before taking a hiatus for summer. EVERYONE IS WELCOME to join us in the Church Library for this time of rejuvenation, scripture, and prayer.

### **Thursday PM Women's Group:**

This group will meet to continue conversation about "The DaVinci Code" from 6:00 to 7:30pm on Thursday evenings in the Upstairs Kitchen. A light supper is shared as well.

### **Men's Fellowship:**

Men's Fellowship meets on Saturdays from 8:00 to 9:00am in Fellowship Hall. Men of all ages are welcome to share in breakfast, conversation, and study together.

### **Book Discussion Group:**

CE will host its 3<sup>rd</sup> official book discussion group in June about Mitch Albom's book "The Five People You Meet in Heaven." **Everyone is welcome.** Please see the separate insert in this edition of "CrossWays" to sign up, and for more information. After the book discussion there will also be an opportunity for dinner & a movie as we gather for fellowship and view the movie version of this touching book.

*Congratulations to our two classes of folks who are completing the Faith Journey Group curriculum with Pastor Bryn! We hope that you will share your stories and experiences in the group with us as we look forward to the possibility of hosting a similar program in the future.*

*Carol Eagan, Christian Education Committee chair  
Lori Peck, Adult Education Subcommittee chair  
Jennifer Whipple, Associate Pastor*



## Baby Kits

The Church In Society Committee invites members of the congregation to attend a "Great Expectations" event

on Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup> in Fellowship Hall at 9:45am "between" services. We are assembling the kits in honor of Pastor Jen's new baby. Please join us for a fun morning.

The C.I.S. committee will be checking the current donations and will let everyone know what items we still need either as an announcement in church or in the Sunday bulletin. We are currently accepting cloth diapers, t-shirts, washcloths, gowns or sleepers, diaper pins, receiving blankets and sweaters.

## Christian Faith Retreats for Youth

Chrysalis is a 3-day Christian Retreat for youth between the ages of 15-18 years of age. Traditionally the girl's weekend takes place the Saturday, Sunday and Monday of the Martin Luther King Holiday in January and the Boy's weekend takes place on the President's Day weekend in February.

*Something you may not have heard is that as of June 1, 2008, Pete Lane will be the Chrysalis Community Lay Director.* He is organizing one additional boy's weekend and one additional girl's weekend to be held this summer.

As the Community Lay Director Pete is responsible for getting teams of qualified youth and adults together to run these weekends under the guidelines of the Upper Room Organization. The same Upper Room that publishes the devotional booklets. The weekends consist of Fun, Food, Song and considerable discussion about Christian Faith. Brochures are available through Pete Lane.



## Refugee Resettlement Cook-Out at 4:00pm Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup> Jennifer Wurst's Home

We hope you can come to a family cook-out for the Abtans and friends on Saturday, May 17, at 4:00pm. Join Nafie, Suhair and Mutaz for outdoor fun (indoor fun if it rains!) as well as burgers, chicken, watermelon, ice-cream cones and all that other good stuff. Summer is almost here, and what better way to celebrate than with a family who has come to mean so much to all of us. We will also celebrate a wonderfully caring group of our church volunteers.

Please RSVP by email or phone to Patty Buchan.

***We're looking forward to a good time on Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>!***



## A note from our recent past.

Just recently I repaired one of the two lecterns in the meetinghouse.

While it was apart I found a note written on the inside of it, and thought *CrossWays* readers would like to know what it said.

*"Made by Albertson S. Beers, Brookfield, CT 1963. Repaired and signed by Francis H. Northrop "Fran", Longmeadow Hill Road, Brookfield CT on Jan. 8, 1966. Butsey couldn't repair this because he had a stroke last year."*

Pete Lane

## **Refugee Resettlement Update**

It has been almost 6 months since we received the blessings of the Abtans arrival. The goal of the Refugee Resettle ministry was to get the Abtans to become self-sufficient within their first 6 months. This goal has been set by the sponsorship organization Intergrated Refugee and Immigrant Services, IRIS. The Abtans also signed an agreement with the government (an early self-sufficiency grant program) stating that they would take the appropriate measures to reach this goal and which they received a stipend to help assist in the successful accomplishment of this goal.

Self-sufficiency means that they are financially able to provide for their family and they know and understand how to arrange and get to/from their daily activities that includes work, food shopping, banking, ESL classes, literacy volunteers, laundry, babysitting etc..

The biggest step towards this is obviously being able to provide their own transportation. Nafie did receive his driver's license but he needed a job in order to afford a car. He got a job mid-March - so now it was time to go car shopping. And just when we were about to do that, we received a donation of a car from the parents of Monica McIlnery. As of this Friday, April 25, the Abtans now own their first car here in the US – a 1998 Oldsmobile.

So let's review each committee's goals and progress:

**Clothing/household furnishings** – goal: determine refugees sizes and clothing needs, circulate a “needs list” for clothing and household goods, arrange to recycle unwanted donated items. Goal accomplished by mid-December.

**Acculturation/hospitality** – goal: research refugee's areas of interest and help to fulfill those needs, research churches of refugee affiliation, help the refugee in becoming oriented in the community, show how to shop, use public transportation, use emergency telephone numbers, understand local customs and laws. Goal accomplished by December.

**Health** – goal: apply for Medicaid, food stamps, Women/Infant/Child program for Mutaz, schedule and accompany refugees for health screening, arrange to have medical and dental needs of family met. Goal accomplished by January

**Education** – goal: arrange ESL classes through adult education or church volunteers, tutor the refugee in the English language. Goal accomplished by January – ESL classes continue through Mid-May then again in September. Help refugee be able to take driver's license test. Goal accomplished by March 1. The committee felt that Nafie needed to improve his computer skills. We were fortunate to have a volunteer from the Senior Center, Jack Scully, donate his time to work with Nafie one-on-one with teaching him about the basics of Microsoft Office (a 6 week course). Jack started working with Nafie on April 4, they meet every Friday from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon until May 16th. Suhair is also interested in learning the computer so Nafie shares with her what Jack has taught him.

**Employment** - goal: research employment opportunities prior to refugees' arrival, help refugee find a job, enroll refugee in training programs or on-the-job training. Goal accomplished by March 19th. Nafie is working at Stew Leonards in the meat department. However, given his medical background, several committee members continue to help Nafie apply for entry level healthcare jobs.

Continued. . .



## **Refugee Resettlement Update continued**

**Transportation** – goal: drive the refugee to doctor appointments., ESL classes, literacy volunteers, food shopping, laundromat, place of employment. Goal accomplished by May 13. During the 6 months, there wasn't any transportation request that hasn't been filled.

**Finance** – goal: teach refugees about budgeting - debit vs. credit, how to write a check and manage their own bank accounts, develop a budget plan that includes re-paying the travel loan extended to provide transportation to this country. Goal accomplished by April. Provide ongoing oversight of church expenditures. Robin Murphy, finance chair, has developed a financial plan for the Abtans. They need to pay 100% of the utility bills that will get paid directly to the providers. They will also start paying "rent" beginning – which will be saved for 1<sup>st</sup>/last months rent + security deposit towards their future home.

Nafie is working at Stew Leonards in the meat department but given how costly it is to live in this area, it will be difficult for the Abtans to meet the financial objectives without a second job. Given his medical background, we are hoping for a second job within a healthcare setting.

### **Other**

On April 18<sup>th</sup>, Nafie and Suhair were reunited with friends that they had met while staying in a refugee facility in Jordan. The Alkabasis family (mother, father and 3 children ages 7, 5 and 1) are working through the International Institute in Bridgeport, for their resettlement. They are currently residing in a lovely 2 bedroom condo in Danbury.

Suhair is volunteering at the Mosque in Danbury. She teaches Arabic to children every Sunday from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. She is very excited about this opportunity.

Wow, looking at all that has been accomplished over the past 6 months it's pretty amazing that we were able to do so much in such a short period of time. Kudos to all the committee members ....these goals could not have been accomplished without your generosity and care that you have given to the Abtan family!



### **Special Chorus Concert—Monday, May 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm**

The Brookfield High School Special Chorus will perform on Monday, May 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm in our sanctuary. The Fellowship Committee will provide a small dessert and punch reception in Brooks Hall after the concert. Please join us for this wonderful annual event.

# Silver Lake Summer Programs

- Do you have a child, grandchild, niece, nephew, or friend who is between the ages of 9-18?
- Do you want them to have an opportunity to grow in their faith, experience God's creation, and explore their talents and gifts this summer?
- Do you want an affordable opportunity to have someone special in your life spend a week at camp?



If you answered "yes" to any or all of these questions then Silver Lake Conference Center's weeklong Summer Camp Programs are the perfect opportunity for a young person in your life! Silver Lake is the CT Conference Summer Camp & Retreat Center in Sharon, CT. Each summer they host hundreds of children and youth who are entering fourth grade in the fall through high school for weeklong overnight camp & fellowship opportunities. The weeklong camps focus on learning about and growing closer to God through exploration of nature, sports, songs, games, ropes/challenge courses, swimming, worship, arts & crafts, etc. in a variety of different conferences led by trusted adults from throughout the state.

Young people from CCB have been attending summer conferences at Silver Lake for years. We hope that you will consider sending a special young person in your life to Silver Lake this summer. If you would like more information about the conferences that still have available space please go to <http://silverlake.ctucc.org> or see the listing of conferences offered which is posted outside our Youth Room door.

*Scholarships are available for campers through both the Fairfield East Association and through our own Christian Growth & Enrichment Fund here at CCB. Please speak with Pastor Jen if you would like applications, have any questions or would like any further information.*

## JUST FOR THE FUN OF IT....

Don't you ever wish you had a group of friends to gather with, to go to the Yale football games with, to try out those new wines from Chile, to venture into New York City to see a show, to attend cooking classes, maybe take a Saturday morning hike??

Well, believe it or not, there are others who share that wish. We would love to have you share ideas for supporting a social group that gives us opportunities to get together every once in a while for whatever moves us. Our Group, **BUCCANEERS** (Brooks United Church of Christ Association Networking in an Effort to Enthusiastically Rejoice Socially).

For more Info or to share ideas, please call Jeanine Hanewicz.

# JUNIOR & SENIOR YOUTH FELLOWSHIP IN MAY

(For youth in Grades 6-12)

## Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup> = Exploring Creation Afternoon—3:00 to 5:00pm

We will spend some time hiking, playing Ultimate Frisbee, and even sharing some refreshments at Happy Landings Farm here in Brookfield. Mr. Murphy will lead us on a hike to explore some of our local creation, and then we will have some time to play and relax! Please let Pastor Jen know if you plan to attend so we can plan rides & chaperones.

## Sunday, May 11<sup>th</sup> = NO MEETING



## Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup> = Ecumenical Ultimate Frisbee at PTAK – 1 to 3pm

Come play and share that competitive spirit with the other youth from around town. Bring along friends and family who might want to play or simply root you on. Please bring a bottle of water or something to drink. Some light refreshments will be served as well. Drop off and Pick up will be at the PTAK field behind Town Hall.

## Sunday, May 25<sup>th</sup> = Come Join the Parade!

If you are not in the Parade come spend time at one of the BEST seats in town...the front church lawn. Bring a lawn chair, a beach ball, and perhaps some money for some of the great munchies that will be available, and cheer on the folks marching in the Memorial Day Parade.



## CONFIRMATION CLASS

### Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup> = Danbury Chinese Alliance Church Service at 1:00pm

We will meet in the Youth Room at 12:40 pm to head to church with our brothers & sisters in the DCAC if you plan to come. They are very excited to have us and are looking forward to our visit!

### Tuesday, May 20<sup>th</sup> = Mandatory Meeting & “Meet the Deacons” – 6:30-8:30pm

The Class will meet in the Youth Room from 6:30-7:30 pm to make final decisions regarding Confirmation & Church Membership, as well as to wrap up any class discussion. Then the Confirmands will travel upstairs to “Meet the Deacons” from 7:30-8:30 pm.

### Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup> = CONFIRMATION SUNDAY!!!

There will be a breakfast for Confirmands, their mentors, and families from 8:45-9:45 am in Fellowship Hall. The Confirmation Service will take place in the sanctuary at 10:00 am.



## ***Lenten Health & Wellness Challenge Success!!***

Thanks to all of you who decided to participate in the Lenten Health & Wellness Challenge! Hopefully it helped to focus hearts, minds, and bodies on God throughout the 40 days of Lent and beyond--creating good and healthy habits for our **future** spiritual, physical, and emotional lives as well.

Good news and reflections came in to the office as the challenge officially wrapped up. There were reports of folks who have begun to read the Bible or pray every day – connecting more with God. There were reports of people who became more physically active or realized how much they were already doing for their physical health. There were even some reports of people losing weight on the challenge. Some people said that they made a conscious effort to spend more time with their family and friends, which can be so difficult in this world and at the hectic pace that many run constantly. It was wonderful to hear about these successes!

If you were not able to stick with the program or if you did not try it this year, not to worry...it looks like it might be making a comeback in Lent 2009!



### ***SYF THANKS YOU!!!***

The participants in this summer's Senior Youth Fellowship Mission Trip to Slidell, LA would like to thank all of you who purchased shares of Uncommon Stock to help us with our fundraising efforts.

Thanks to you we raised over \$1,400 toward our trip to the New Orleans Area. Your shares of stock will go a long way in helping us bring some light into the lives of those who have felt little hope in the last few years since the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

We will be sure to send along some greetings from the road and will look forward to hosting you at our Stockholders' Dinner Night in September!



The Deadline for the next issue of *CrossWays* is **May 15<sup>th</sup>**. Please keep in mind that the May newsletter should include any summer events.

***August 1<sup>st</sup>*** will be the deadline for the *September CrossWays*.

You can leave your articles in the *CrossWays* mailbox outside the church office.

Thanks, *Val Jackson*, editor

## BOOK DISCUSSION



The Christian Ed. Committee will be hosting their 3<sup>rd</sup> book discussion group. This time we're going to read *"The Five People You Meet In Heaven"* by Mitch Albom. You read this book on your own and then once you're finished, you will receive the supplement *"Wisdom From The Five People You Meet In Heaven"* by Brandon Gilvin & Heather Godsey to also read. Then we will meet to discuss the books and watch the movie *"The Five People You Meet In Heaven"*.

Here's a brief synopsis: *"Using the Wisdom Traditions of the Bible as their backdrop, Gilvin and Godsey bring us into a discussion of what, as Albom suggests in his novel, might truly be important in life. Wisdom Literature, says Gilvin and Godsey, expresses the way individuals experience life."*

The cost of the supplement will be \$11.50. Fill out the form below, and return it to Lori Peck, the church office, or place in the CE mailbox if you are interested in participating. We'll meet to discuss both books on one night, and then view the movie along with some good snacks on another night in June.

We'll plan the dates once we have an idea of who will be participating and when the group will be available. Anyone (men, women & youth) are welcome to read, discuss, and watch along with us!

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\_\_\_\_\_ **YES**, I would like to be a part of the book discussion group on *"The Five People You Meet In Heaven"* and would like to purchase the supplement for \$11.50.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address and/or Phone Number:

## **SYF MISSION TRIP FUNDRAISING:**

The Senior Youth Fellowship Mission Team would like to invite you to join us for our next Fundraiser!



**What:** **Restaurant Night**

**Where:** ***Rizzuto's*** in Bethel (6 Stony Hill Road)

**When:** Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 9:30pm

**Who:** Our SYF Mission Team will be bussing tables, and the friendly folks at Rizzuto's will be cooking and serving some wonderful food!

**How:** Rizzuto's has offered to donate a percentage of all dinner sales!

So come on by, eat some GREAT food, and help support SYF in their efforts to make it to Slidell, LA at the end of June! (If you would like to check out a menu before our big night please visit Rizzuto's website at [www.rizzutos.com](http://www.rizzutos.com))

## **BOOK CLUB**

On Wednesday, May 21, 2008 we will meet at Melissa Timmerman's home to discuss *Pillars of the Earth* by Ken Follett

AND

On Wednesday, June 18, 2008, we will meet at Jeanine Hanewicz' home to discuss *The Friday Night Knitting Club* by Kate Jacobs

Up-coming book discussions: *Three Cups of Tea* and *Circe's Song*

We meet on the 3rd Wednesday each month from 7:30 to 9:00pm to discuss our chosen book, and would love to have you join us. **Anyone** is welcome to join the Book Group – if you like to read and discuss your readings, or just share your thoughts with others, give us a try! If you have any questions about our monthly Book Club, or if you'd like to be added to our email list, please call Jeanine Hanewicz.

***Happy Reading!***



### **Spring Fling - May 9th**

The Spring Fling will be held on Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup> at the Fox Hill Inn from 7:00 to 11:00pm. Tickets are \$75 each and include hot & cold hors d'oeuvres, three-course dinner, dessert, all beverages, and dancing to the music of "Big Daddy" Sean McKee (yes, Dan's brother). Tickets are on sale following the 10:45am service. *Join us for a fun filled evening of fellowship and fun!!!*

## Faith Journey Group: Epistles to the Congregational Church of Brookfield

One of our homework assignments in our Faith Journey Group this winter was to read a biblical letter (epistle). Some of us read letters by the apostle Paul, and others read those by another New Testament letter-writer – John, or James, or Peter. Then each of us, in turn, wrote our OWN letter back to our congregation here in Brookfield in a biblical style – letters either of correction, instruction, or blessing, or carrying some other theological reflection related to the life of our church today.

Hearing them read in class, many of us felt they needed to be shared more widely, as we believed they each had something to say to encourage (*or goad!*) us along. In the spirit of the love shown to us in Jesus Christ, the one who calls us to do his ministry in this place and time, we offer to you our “epistles.” These two are by Gordon Markiewicz and Olivia Quinsland. We will feature more in *CrossWays* over the next few months.

*Blessings, Bryn*

\* \* \* \* \*

Olivia, servant of Christ, to the brothers and sisters in Brookfield.

The grace of God and the peace of Jesus Christ be with you.

I hear of your good works in Christ Jesus' name. He said that insomuch as you do it to the least of my brethren, you do it to me. Keep it up. Never stop reaching out to the poor and those who feel outcast. Never stop welcoming refugees from war and poverty. Never stop giving money to those who can alleviate suffering far from your church. Never stop pounding nails for Habitat. Never stop working at the soup kitchen. Hold fast to being open and welcoming, genuinely welcoming, to all who wish to worship among you, even if they are reviled elsewhere. Remember, it is not your table to offer or deny, but Christ's table that beckons any and all who want to be in relationship with Him. Stay strong in the faith that what you do matters and is pleasing in God's sight.

May the spirit of Christ be with you all.

*Olivia Quinsland*

## Faith Journey Group: Epistle 2

1 Gordon

As a servant of God, I send my greetings to other servants of God, my brothers and sisters at the Brookfield Congregational Church. May God continue to bless you with His grace, and bring peace to your lives!

You live in a time of great turmoil and distress. The world in its arrogance seems to have left God by the wayside, and has forged its own path, seeking to fulfill its own desires, for its own ends. As followers of Christ you will be pressured to conform to the ideas of others, most insidiously from those who proclaim that they too are "Christians." Take heart and comfort, for the Lord Jesus Christ has already given you gifts to show you the way.

Remember the importance of community! Jesus taught his disciples to gather in His name to worship. Here they would raise their voices in praise of the Father. Community is also essential to provide each other support and comfort. Life's trials are difficult to endure alone; will you not be much stronger in the company of others?

The Apostle Paul has already taught you that your community is like a body, all parts equal in importance compared to the others, and all essential to the healthful functioning of the organism. Do not lose sight of the power of community. Be it through prayer or action, the community can perform miracles!

Do not also forget your intimate, personal relationship with the Father! He is a friend, a guide, a comforter, a champion. He is a shield against the iniquities of the world. He is there to provide solace against life's trials. Micah reminds us to walk humbly with the Father, and Jesus promises that the Father will provide whatever is asked of Him. Remember though, that God is Almighty, and His ways are beyond human understanding. Do not be troubled if you must walk lonely paths that seem devoid of God's presence. Do not worry if He seems not to bend His ear to your importuning. Who among you has the experience of a parent, listening to the cries of a child? Who among you, with love in your heart, does not try to fulfill the child's wishes? Who among you does not realize that the child can be short-sighted, and as a parent, you provided something not quite what the child desired, but was much more beneficial? So it is with your imperfect understanding of the Father and His designs.

Did not our brother Peter have faith, and walk on the sea? And did he not sink when he lost that faith? Jesus constantly exhorts us to believe, to have faith, to recognize the blessings available to us, should we only sustain our faith. Do this then: sustain each other in community, lift each other up so that all may realize God's promises. Keep the fire of faith burning through all storms and travails, that you one day will rejoice in God's presence forever. I, your humble brother Gordon, send these prayers and blessings to you.

*Gordon Markiewicz*



## **FELLOWSHIP OF CONCERN**

### **CONTINUING CONCERNS**

Donna Geck, 28 Topfield Road, Danbury 06811

Charles Freeman, 6825 Davis Blvd - Apt. #305, Naples, FL 34104

Barbara Harris, 18 Merwin Brook Road, Brookfield CT 06804

### **BAPTISMS**

- On April 27, Molly Elizabeth (born 4/20/2003), Hayden Ashbrook (born 3/1/2005), and twins, Harper Andrew and Henry Michael (born 5/31/2007), all children of Melissa (Freed) and David Vonk.

### **IN MEMORIAM**

Our sympathy is extended to Sue Slater & family on the death of her father John "Jack" Davies on April 21, 2008.

*Our prayers are with them and with all those who mourn the loss of loved ones.*

### **THANK YOU**

*Dear Friends, Many thanks for the encouraging notes and lovely flowers. They brighten many days. Since we moved here nearly 40 years ago, this church has been the hub of our family life. I do miss being there and seeing each and everyone of you.*

*Love to you all, Barbara Harris*

*"We have an opportunity to make America a better nation."*

*~ The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., April 3, 1968*

## **Let's talk about race. . .**

On Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, I will join many pastors across our 1.2 million member church, The United Church of Christ, in accepting the call from our national offices to offer sermons and open up congregational discussion on the volatile subject of race. This call was issued, largely in response to the media's repeated airings of sermon excerpts from UCC pastor The Rev. Jeremiah Wright, which have so offended many of us who deeply love our country.

The UCC ad that ran April 11<sup>th</sup> in USA Today, stated that this invitation comes "in hopes of beginning a sacred conversation, a dialogue that our church leaders believe is needed in our pews, our homes, and the hallways of power across our country. Sacred conversations are never easy, especially when honest talk confronts our nation's painful past and speaks directly to the injustices of the present day. Yet sacred conversations can, and often do, honor the value of diverse life experiences, requiring an openness to hear each others' viewpoints."

My sermon, titled "GETTING IT TOGETHER," will view the topic of race through our lectionary texts for May 18<sup>th</sup>, Genesis 1:1-2:4a and Matthew 28:16-20. I will also guide an "In-Between" time – in Fellowship Hall, 9:45-10:35am – where we can honestly and prayerfully share our own experiences and listen respectfully to the opinions of our brothers and sisters in Christ. In advance of May 18<sup>th</sup>, I invite you to call me (775-1259) or e-mail me ([bryn@ucsb.org](mailto:bryn@ucsb.org)) to share your own thoughts on the subject, in preparation for us joining this "sacred conversation."

*Thank you, Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia*

***God Is Still Speaking,***

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace and peace to you from a very messy office preparing for a period of vacancy as the new Whipple addition arrives. I give thanks to God for you each day as I make my way into Brookfield and realize how blessed I am to have literally “landed” in this community among all of you. (Even growing up in CT, I had no idea where Brookfield was until I had my first interview with the Acting Associate Search Committee.) It has been almost three years since that landing and what an amazing, exciting, crazy, and spirit-filled three years it has been both personally, professionally, and as a community here at CCB.

For the past month we have been sharing sermons based on the letters of the New Testament, many of which start out much like what I have written above (save the messy office piece!). The challenge, as I mentioned in my sermon about Ephesians, is how to apply these things to real life. I think the lessons the early Christian folks were taught through these letters are ones that stick with us even today. We have decisions to make each day about how we will act and respond to the situations around us. We have an identity to preserve as a community. We have opportunities for service all around us. We have the chance to share with others each and every day. The challenge is whether or not we will choose to make these choices, preserve our identity, serve this community and others, and share with those we encounter out of our faith...out of the knowledge that we are loved and forgiven by a blessed creator, that we are empowered by the Holy Spirit, that we have the example of our Brother Jesus. My hope is that whether we are all together or whether we are out on our own in the world somewhere that we will remember the lessons we have learned together from those who have gone before, from our time in this community, and that we will **be** the Body of Christ in the world.

I write to you as a little person kicks around inside of me. I often wonder whether he/she knows what it is that I am writing or thinking and gives a kick to either agree or disagree. My hope is that it is the former. The Whippet (as we have affectionately taken to calling our new addition) will be just as blessed as I am to get to know all of you in this community, to see the way that you put your faith into action and care for one another. I thank all of you for your support as Ryan and I have prepared to bring this little person into our lives.

Many of you have asked whether or not I will come back after the Whippet arrives. My answer is “yes” for a variety of reasons, the main one being that being a pastor in this place is my calling at this time. God has blessed me with this community...how could I say “No”? That being said, I will be gone on maternity leave for a while this summer, coming back for some special occasions along the way. I know that I will come back in August as a changed person, and I hope that you will be willing to navigate through this new terrain along with me. But I couldn't think of not returning to this place, which really means that I couldn't think of not returning to the people of this place.

Before I do head out, which will be whenever this little one decides to arrive, I want to remind you that as a community we have many good and exciting things coming down the pike as well. I ask that you look at the list of some of those things on the front page of this newsletter, and hopefully choose to join with one another for them.

Finally, brothers and sisters, as our brother Paul would say, live in peace, greet one another with love, and be kind and gentle to Pastor Bryn while I am away (okay, so I added that part on my own). The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

Blessings,

*Jennifer*

**Committee Chairmen and Council Reps**

Please call these elected representatives with any questions or comments regarding any matter of interest or concern to you:

**Committee Chairman**

Christian Ed  
Church Growth  
Church House  
Church-In-Society  
Deacons  
Fellowship  
Nominating  
Stewardship  
Worship

Carol Eagan  
Kim Downey  
Les Slater  
Sally Markiewicz  
Linae Wutzl  
Kristin Jordan  
Robin Murphy



Pete Lane

**Church Council Representatives**

Christian Ed  
Church Growth  
Church House  
Church In Society  
Deacons  
Fellowship  
Nominating  
Stewardship  
Worship  
Historian  
Anniversary Campaign

Heidi Riddle  
Mike Anastas  
Dave Goral  
Marianne Gaffey  
Leslie Sands  
Patty Moran  
Jean Dorrell  
Bob Lambert  
Walt Fisher  
Bob Brown  
Nancy Vodra

**Moderator:**

Tom Eaker

**Vice Moderator:**

Audrey Himebaugh

**Clerk:**

Sue Slater

**Treasurer:**

Laurie Matson

**Investment Treasurer:**

Alan Peck

**Senior Pastor**

Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia  
Work: 203-775-1259  
e-mail: [bryn@uccb.org](mailto:bryn@uccb.org)

**Associate Pastor**

Rev. Jennifer Whipple  
Work: 203-775-1259  
e-mail: [jennifer@uccb.org](mailto:jennifer@uccb.org)



## **Serendippers Lunch Group**

*Not just for seniors, all ages are invited!!!*

On Tuesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, we will gather in Fellowship Hall for our monthly Serendippers luncheon at 11:30am. We are welcoming our own Marianne Gaffey, who will tell us about her experiences with the American Red Cross and talk about some of her recent deployments.

Lunch will include a Spring Punch, Caesar Salad, Broccoli Cheddar Penne and a Philadelphia-style Cheesecake for dessert.

If you would like to be added to our call list or have any questions, call Lisa Brown or Jeanine Hanewicz or the church office at 203-775-1259.

### **CrossWays – the newsletter of**

The Congregational Church of Brookfield  
160 Whisconier Road, Brookfield, CT 06804  
203-775-1259 Fax 203-775-3466

### **Sunday Worship at 8:45 a.m. and 10:45am**

The Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia, Senior Pastor  
The Rev. Jennifer Whipple, Associate Pastor  
The Rev. M. S. Desmond, Pastor Emeritus

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