

THE CHIMES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAR HARBOR CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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From the Senior Pastor:

February 2008

Beginning on April 1, 2008 I will embark upon an adventure: my first-ever sabbatical. The sabbatical will end on June 30, 2008. In all my years of ministry I have never been able to take advantage of an opportunity like this. Our church is very wise in this matter. A pastor is encouraged to take a three-month sabbatical every five years. A special fund is in place to address the added expenses that may be incurred during such a time. Because of this fund, a full-time minister can, for three months, take sabbatical leave and still receive his or her salary and benefits. And the congregation has the opportunity to hear some new voices from the pulpit.

When I was eligible for my first sabbatical, we were just about to begin our Capital Campaign and I felt that I needed to be a part of that. Now, as I enter the tenth year of my ministry with you, there is no reason why I cannot take a sabbatical.

A sabbatical is defined as, “a break or change from normal routine.” The root of the word comes from the same source as the word, “Sabbath.” People define their sabbaticals in different ways. For some people it is a time of research and further education. For others it is more of a vacation. For me, it will be a combination of things. I believe strongly that when one is supported in a sabbatical, that person needs to come back to work with something that will benefit the workplace. I hope to do just that.

My plan during my sabbatical time is to do research and begin a book that has been in my mind for a long time. This book will deal

with the areas in which ministers need to be better prepared by seminaries and continuing education. My research will involve both clergy and lay people as well as seminary professors. What I hope to accomplish is a look at the real needs of ministry and how well ministers are prepared to meet them. And who knows what I will learn along the way?

What I am planning to do at this moment (it may change somewhat) is to be in the pulpit on the first Sunday of each month I am on sabbatical. This is an important part of my plans, as it will afford me the opportunity to check with you to see how my research is going. If a member of our congregation experiences a serious illness or a death in their family, I will be in the area and available on a limited basis if needed. Other pastoral care needs will be handled by Dusty Warner or another pastor.

I think my plan is somewhat unusual, but I think it will work. Wally and I are planning on spending most of our time at our new camp in Dedham, but for part of the time we will be in California attending the college graduation of our daughter, Melissa. I will be asking you to participate in my research and I hope you will say yes. It is important to what I am trying to accomplish that I hear the voices of those who are served by clergy. Your participation can be done anonymously or you can give permission to be quoted in whatever form my research is published. That is up to you.

Obviously, I will not accomplish my entire mission in three months. I do, however, hope to get a great deal of work done. I will

keep you up to date along the way. I thank you, in advance, for your support and your help in this project.

I am a bit nervous about all of this. I guess that is normal anytime someone tries a new thing. I ask that you remember me in prayer during this time, as I will remember you. I cannot think of a better place from which to set out on this new adventure. Stay tuned . . .

Sandra M. Reed



Pledge Envelopes

Some Pragmatic Words From the Church Office About Offerings

Bringing an offering to the Lord in a Worship Service is an act of devotion, and as such, can be as spiritual an act as praying, Bible reading, or serving others in Christ's name. There is, however, a much more mundane aspect to giving, having to do with the mechanics of handling money. Auditing procedures are in place, which insure the accountability of those responsible for handling the money, and those procedures need to be followed. In addition, there are income tax implications related to our donations, as most of us know. These are the realities of financial matters in earthly society, even when they're for a heavenly purpose!

Our pledge envelope system is designed to satisfy both the spiritual and mechanical aspects of our offerings, and it works efficiently and transparently. When the system runs smoothly, the majority of the money given is used to carry out the mission of the church rather than on administrative efforts, and the confidentiality of the donor is maintained.

Most often, our system works very well. But as with most things, there's some room for improvement, and I'd like to make a few suggestions which will help insure the efficiency of the church's money handling.

The pledge system that our church has decided to use helps us a great deal to budget and plan for the coming year. We keep records of gifts which are part of a pledge separately from gifts which are not. It helps us if we know at the beginning of the year who intends to pledge, which is why we distribute pledge cards and receive them back from you. *If you intend to pledge, please turn your card in to the office soon, if you haven't already.* We have more blank ones if you need one.

If you pledge, and if you give on a weekly basis during church, it helps if you *use your pledge envelopes rather than blank store-bought ones.* Having to handle a variety of different size envelopes makes counting more difficult. More importantly, the information printed on the outside of the envelopes maintains both the confidentiality of the donor, and the accountability of those doing the counting. Generally, the boxes of envelopes for the coming year are available to be picked up in the Narthex during the last week of December. Those not picked up by the end of February will need to be mailed (unless arrangements have been made to get them to you some other way). Unnecessary mailing adds to administrative overhead!

Please be sure to write the amount of the donation legibly on the outside of your pledge envelope. Otherwise, the confidentiality of the donor can not be guaranteed. Our offering is counted twice, once on Sunday morning right after the service by the Trustees, and again on Monday morning by the Administrative Assistant. (It is necessary to do that in order to insure the accountability of both the Sunday morning counters and the Administrative Assistant.) As long as the envelope remains sealed during the Sunday morning count, the donor's name remains hidden and need only be known to the Administrative Assistant. But if the amount isn't written on the outside, the Sunday morning counters must open the envelope, revealing the donor's name to them also.

If you pledge, **please complete your year's pledge by the end of the year.** Legally, we are not able to backdate donations to a prior year. We make exceptions if they are received the first few days of January, but our records need to reflect when the money was actually given, and should be in agreement with our bank statements.

Thanks for helping to make things run smoothly!

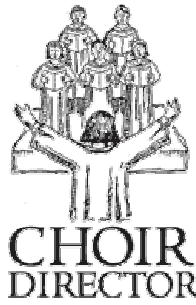
Paul Dickson



Remedy for the Winter Blaahhs....

Do you have cabin fever? Or are you overwhelmed with committee meetings, work schedules, kid's schedules, or all of the above? Did you know that all work and no play make Jack and Jill pretty dull and stressed out? The Outreach Board offers a remedy. Small group dinners are being scheduled in people's homes which will provide a nice relaxing evening of food and fellowship with members of our church family. Get to know the people you see on Sunday and work with serving each other and our neighbors. Do you know where the person sitting next to you on Sunday mornings was born? Do you know anything about his/her family, etc.?

Sign up sheets will be on either bulletin board in the Parlor. The dates are February 22 and February 29. Hosts will provide a main dish, and guests will bring everything else. If you would like to be a host, place a check mark by your name on the list. Children are welcome. If you have questions, call Alice Hobbs 244-7830.



CHOIR NOTES

We welcome two new choir members, Dylan Stillman to our Alleluia choir and Kendra Duley to our Adult choir. You may have heard Dylan's lovely voice at our Christmas Festival and other times with the Alleluia choir since then. If you've noticed an attractive lady sitting with the men in the Adult choir, you have seen Kendra. She sings tenor and we couldn't be more pleased that she is sharing her talent with us. Welcome, Dylan and Kendra!

I'm still soaring from the Christmas Eve services and know that we are so blessed to have many accomplished musicians in our community that participated in the services. I was particularly happy that Karl's parents, Minerva and Glenn Haller, were visiting and attended both services. They commented on the loving spirit that permeated the church and were impressed with the calibre of musicianship during the services. Karl and I thank everyone for welcoming them and helping to create a very special memory for our family.

Two of these very accomplished musicians, Eric and Carrie Beals, are to be congratulated. I recently learned that Eric has been accepted and will attend the Maine Maritime Academy next year -- outstanding!! (I'm also secretly pleased that he will still be in the area so we can hear more of his trombone playing!) Carrie Beals recently passed the exam for her Occupational Therapy license; she works at the Maine Medical Center in Portland. There were very few dry eyes after her cello performance with Sarah St. Denis singing "O Holy Night" on Christmas Eve. She and her brother Eric also played a beautiful cello-trombone duet during that same service. Congratulations to both Eric and Carrie. We are very proud of you and your accomplishments!

Easter comes early this year (March 23) and the Adult choir will begin rehearsing the Palm Sunday and Easter anthems in the latter part of February. Please join us for a few rehearsals if you'd like to sing these special pieces with the choir. Watch for the specific rehearsal details in the bulletins; I will also make announcements on Sundays prior to these rehearsals.

Faithfully yours,
Kimberly Haller

Easter Flowers

Please contact Roxie Brechlin (288-4859) or Billie Mitchell (288-3691) to order your Easter Flowers. We ask that everyone have their order in by March 5th. There will be lilies or tulips. The cost is \$15.00, payment can be given to Roxie, Billie or the church office. Please make checks payable to Bar Harbor Congregational Church, UCC.

Thank You!
The Flower Committee

Christian Education

"How could such a beautiful piece of work come out of such chaos?" runs through my mind as I step back from my pottery work and look at the mess around me. The piece began as earth, was thrown on canvas board, rolled into long coils, then shaped and sculpted into the form it has become.

When I am working on a piece I listen to what the clay is saying: too dry, too wet, moves outward--I wanted it to go inward and on and on. If I listen and follow the mood of the clay the piece seems to have a life of it's own. If I work to make the clay do what I think it should, the piece comes out feeling stiff and lifeless. I am part of the creation, yet I am not the creator. I am the vessel, the one who guides the clay into fulfilling a useful purpose.

As I look around at children in our church, I realize that we are here, not to mold

them but to guide them. We are God's instruments, and with our loving guidance, they will fulfill their role in His kingdom.



Our youngsters are having a fundraiser! A Souper Bowl on Super Bowl Sunday!

This will be their annual fundraiser for the year. On Super Bowl Sunday, the children and youth will be collecting money and canned goods for the Bar Harbor Food Pantry. The Souper Bowl of Caring is happening all over the nation to raise money for those who are hungry. Each group chooses a local food pantry to donate to. They will be donating the money that they raise to the Bar Harbor Food Pantry. Please help us reach our goal of \$1000 by putting a \$1 into the soup pots on February 3rd, Super Bowl Sunday! The children will be standing at the doors as church lets out. Thank you all for your help and support.

**Hey kids, we are having a Leap-a-thon,
once every four years...Friday, February
29th, from 5:30 p.m. until 9:00 a.m.
Saturday, March 1st.**

A night of games, movies, crafts and some good old fashion fun! Of course we have a few surprises for you, so come and join the fun!

Valentine Day Chocolate Sale

The Youth Groups will be holding a Valentine's Day Chocolate Sale, Sunday February 10, after church in the parlor. Treat yourself or your special sweetheart to some delicious homemade candy!

Mary Swift

Bar Harbor Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
29 Mount Desert Street
Bar Harbor, Maine 04609

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Special dates

- African-American History Month
- Transfiguration of the Lord, February 3, 2008
- Boy Scout Sunday, February 3, 2008
- Ash Wednesday, February 6, 2008
- First Sunday in Lent, February 10, 2008
- Valentine's Day, February 14, 2008
- Presidents' Day, February 18, 2008

Lent begins

On Ash Wednesday, February 6, Lent begins. During this 40-day period, Christians reevaluate their spiritual lives. It's a time for us to have a spiritual check-up and to strive to live the Christian life more faithfully and more intentionally.

One might go on a spiritual retreat, for example, spending time with a prayer warrior, Bible expert or theologian. During Lent, attending the various church services and study opportunities can help people grow spiritually and become more informed about the Christian faith.

Our pilgrimage through Lent should inspire us to serve God more faithfully in our daily lives.

The Newsletter



Why Ash Wednesday?

Traditionally, the Christian church has observed the seven weeks before Easter as a time of penitence and spiritual self-examination.

Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of Lent, derives its name from the ancient practice of marking the foreheads of worshipers with ashes from the unused palm branches of the previous year. Ashes historically have had a dual significance.

First, they are Old Testament symbols of sadness and humility. Job, in the midst of all his troubles, cried out to God from the ash heap.

The second symbolic meaning of ashes is as a reminder of our mortality. Each of us faces the inevitability of physical death. Our bodies and material possessions eventually will turn to dust and ashes. This is a reminder that we dare not trust in things that crumble. But Lent does not leave us on the ash heap. It begins with Ash Wednesday, but ends with Easter. And Easter proclaims that, through Christ, God resurrects us from our dust and ashes, makes us new creatures and brings life out of death!

The Newsletter

February



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Beverly McNeal
- 2 Terry Savage
- 4 Norma Spurling
- 5 Sarah Skiff Dunbar
- 5 Tom Schanck
- 7 Anne Warner
- 9 Eric St. Denis
- 9 Yvonne Tabb
- 10 Joy Kelly
- 11 Roxie Brechlin
- 12 Clare Bingham
- 13 Mary Skiff Renault
- 13 Ben Reed
- 14 Pauline Wright
- 16 Dick Crawford
- 20 Heidi MacQuinn
- 21 Lenny DeMuro
- 22 Carolyn Miller
- 23 Heather Dority
- 23 Jacob Megquier
- 25 Joyce Pilling
- 26 Aidan O'Connor
- 27 Kristin McKee

On Wednesday, February 6, we will gather for our traditional start to Lent: an Ash Wednesday service, which will be held at 7:00 PM at the church.

This meaningful beginning to the Lenten season is an important yearly event in the life of our church. We hope that many of you will plan to be a part of this powerful service.

Sunday Worship Contributors

Head Deacon – John Kelly
Assistant Deacon – Karl Haller

Liturgists-

- 3: Mary Drury
- 10: Debbie Dyer
- 17: Estelle Megquier
- 24: Betty Bryer

Flowers –

- 3: Mary Reed
- 10: Ann and Doug Lee / Ken Hormell
- 17: Rob and Connie Shea /
Don and Martha Hobbs
- 24: Jim and Kathy MacLeod

Coffee Hosts -

- 3: Ray Vonder Haar
- 10: Joanne Robbins
- 17:
- 24: Kathy Woodside

Home Bible Readings -

- 3 Exodus 24:12-18
Psalm 2
2 Peter 1:16-21
Matthew 17:1-9
- 10 Genesis 2:15-17
Psalm 32
Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11
- 17 Genesis 12:1-4a
Psalm 121
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17
John 3:1-17
- 24 Exodus 17:1-7
Psalm 95
Romans 5:1-11
Matthew 4:12-23