



THE CHIMES

THE NEWS LETTER OF THE BAR HARBOR CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

29 Mount Desert Street, Bar Harbor, Maine 04609

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From the Senior Pastor

May 2009

I'm stumped. After having written 126 *Chimes* articles, I cannot think of something to say this month. My brain has shut down and I am already past the deadline when articles for the May *Chimes* should have been turned in. What is a pastor to do? Perhaps I have nothing left to say . . .

So, what does one do when one is in the midst of a slump? I suppose I can just tell Paul and Charlie that I am not going to submit an article this month. But that won't work – I have an obligation to produce a newsletter article every month. Perhaps I can dig up an old article and submit it. No one would notice, would they? No, I can't do that. I probably wouldn't agree with myself after looking back in the archives and finding an article from a past issue. Well, I guess I could write about what happens when we go through a "dry" phase. Yes, that's it! Here goes . . .

What a sneaky way to get into the subject matter, you say. What is she up to? I am not up to anything, but I think it is important to realize that even our faith goes through so-called "dry" spells and we should be prepared to deal with them. I believe this is something that happens to everyone from time to time and I liken it to a well that needs to be replenished with fresh water. We have to make a pathway for the water to again flow into the empty well. All we have to do is read the Psalms to know that this is a situation that has occurred since the beginning of our faith history. Let me quote from Psalm 22:

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but thou dost not answer; and by night, but find no rest. (vv 1 - 2)

Or, perhaps the words of Psalm 42 may offer another insight:

As a hart longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for thee, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God? My tears have been my food day and night, while men say to me continually, "Where is your God?" (vv 1 - 3)

Words like these remind us that even the 'super-heroes' of our faith had times when they felt far removed from God. Sometimes this happens because of circumstances that overwhelm us and we feel cut off, without comfort. Sometimes this happens when we are so involved in the details of our lives and everything is going so well that we forget our need for God. Whatever the cause of our feelings of separateness from the love of God, it is up to us to do what we need to do to get re-connected.

In a modern theology book I once read, the question was asked, "If you feel far from God, who moved?" That is what I remember when I am feeling lost or abandoned. I know the answer: I moved. God is always present, always longing to be a part of our lives, always standing at the door and knocking, waiting to be let into our lives. Sometimes we get too busy, too involved in our problems and the problems of others, too independent to need God. When this happens, it might take the words of someone who cares deeply to help us understand that it is time for us to become reacquainted with the Creator, the Redeemer, the Comforter. It is time for us to come out of the wilderness and into the land of milk and honey, where God is our food, our comfort and our hope.

When things are at their worst in our lives, it is easy to fool ourselves into thinking that God doesn't care for us, doesn't love us. Sometimes when things go badly for us, we might even question God's very existence. While these processes are certainly understandable, they are not rooted in our faith experience, but rather in our fears and our weakness. Only love can reach into the darkness and pull us beyond our own limitations into the limitless love of God. We have to choose to make the transition from abandonment to hope. Our God desires our love and longs to be the foundation of our lives. God can be our rock as the sea roils around us and threatens to engulf us. All we have to do is say yes, even if we are

not sure why we are saying it. Our yes is God's way of claiming us and saving us.

Life is not easy and faith is not something we can take for granted. Faith is the path we choose on a daily basis. Look at these words, continuing from the ones earlier quoted from Psalm 42:

These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I went with the throng, and led them in procession to the house of God, with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving, a multitude keeping festival. Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God. (vv 4 - 6)

Going through a time when one cannot think of what to write for a newsletter is one thing. Going through a time when one cannot connect with one's faith is quite another thing. As we live together as a family of God, a community of Christ, let us remember to help one another along the way. Help us to remember to reach out when life is coming at us too fast or too hard. May God bless us with the right words, the comforting actions, and the vision of hope that will inspire all of us to keep God at the center of our lives. We are not alone. We are loved by God.

Sandra M Reed

A NOTE OF APOLOGY

There was some confusion regarding the time of this year's Easter Sunrise Service. In last month's newsletter, the time was listed correctly in the calendar, but was listed incorrectly in the body of an article within the newsletter. I apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused those who thought the Sunrise Service was at 6:15 AM and arrived, hoping to participate, only to find that the service was over.

From now on, I would suggest that we all check with Paul in the church office regarding the time of a special service. That way, each person will have the most up to date information and can proceed accordingly. And we will work hard to see that such errors do not occur in the future.

Again, please accept my apologies for the glitch in reporting the time of this year's service.

Sandra M. Reed

JULIE ANDREWS SINGS OF HER FAVORITE THINGS

To commemorate her 69th birthday, Julie Andrews, actress/vocalist, made a special appearance at Radio City Music Hall for the benefit of AARP. During her performance she sang the following words to the tune of *My Favorite Things*, from *The Sound of Music*:

*Maalox and nose drops and needles for knitting,
Walkers and handrails and new dental fittings,
Bundles of magazines tied up in string,
These are a few of my favorite things.*

*Cadillacs and cataracts and hearing aids and
glasses,
Polident and Fixodent and false teeth in glasses,
Pacemakers, golf carts and porches with swings,
These are few of my favorite things.*

*When the pipes leak, when the bones creak,
When the knees go bad,
I simply remember my favorite things,
And then I don't feel so bad!*

*Hot tea and crumpets and corn pads for bunions,
No spicy hot food or food cooked with onions,
Bathrobes and heating pads and hot meals they
bring, These are a few of my favorite things.*

*Back pain, confused brains and no need for
sinnin',
Thin bones and fractures and hair that is
thinnin',
And we won't mention our short shrunken
frames,
When we remember our favorite things.*

*When the joints ache, when the hips break,
When the eyes grow dim,
Then I remember the great life I've had,
And then I don't feel so bad!*

Ms. Andrews received a standing ovation from that crowd that lasted over four minutes and repeated encores.



Gala silent auction is set

The church is looking for donations of items for its first annual Silent Auction, which is set for Friday, June 5, at the Maine Sea Coast Mission.

The event is part of the parish's ongoing effort to diversify and supplement the annual revenue stream through fund raising events.

At the silent auction, participants will have a chance to bid early and often on a wide variety of items. Possibilities include blocks of time in vacation homes, art work and antiques as well as gift certificates to area businesses, a favorite restaurant, and donated services such as computer consulting, guided kayak or sailing trips.

Got an antique lamp, quilt, classic car, sailboat, canoe, or kayak or place in the Caribbean? Can you donate some of your time and expertise in some area to help others? Do you have a business that might be able to donate some merchandise or a service? Do you have spare tickets to a major sporting event? Are you a teenager that can give a day's yard work? Let your imaginations soar.

One note, however, heavily worn items or goods that might be better suited for a yard sale may not be appropriate for this function.

The evening at the Mission will include catered refreshments. Tickets, which include an entry for a fabulous door prize (ticket holders need not be present to win) as well as access to the auction's steals and deals, will cost \$10 each. All donors will receive a note of their gift for income tax purposes.

Contact any member of the board of trustees for more information. The co-chairmen of the event include: Earl Brechlin at 288-4859, Ruth Rossi, at 667-3567 or Anne Warner, at 244-9288 or contact Paul in the church office at 288-3280. Pickup of items can be arranged.

Volunteers will also be needed to help with the auction and with selling tickets in advance. Please contact the co-chairmen above if you can help.

Although an item does not need to be in-hand on that day, please let the folks above know your intentions no later than Sunday, May 17.



Do you wonder where the money goes?

How is the money we contribute to the Church spent? This is the second of several articles that will provide answers to those questions.

Where does the money go? #2 ... Most organizations have a payroll that is a significant portion of their operating cost. The Church is no exception. Our 2009 budget reflects salaries for a staff of Pastor, Administrative Assistant, Music Director, Sunday School/Youth Coordinator, Nursery and Custodians totaling \$109,040. The sobering fact is our total good faith pledges for this year totaled just \$99,057, almost \$10,000 short of making payroll. How do we do it?

Tune in next month for another answer to the Question, Where Does The Money Go?

Easter Basket Mix-up

Due to a mix-up in communications with St. Savior's church, our donated cake mixes were not included in the Easter baskets. We have given them instead to the Food Pantry for distribution. The Outreach Board deeply regrets this error; we will do better next year. We greatly appreciate your continual support of our church's ministries to our neighbors on MDI.



...to the family and friends of Martha Fuller, Mother of Bill and Fran, daughter-in-laws Judith Fuller and Carolyn Drugge, and her beloved grandchildren

Winners Having Fun at the Recent Family Game Night



Christian Education Corner

He is Risen! A special thank you to the children and youth who helped to tell the Easter story during worship on Easter Sunday. The cross, decorated with fresh flowers, was a stirring reminder of the power of Christ's resurrection. Thank you for making the Easter story so alive for us.

A special thanks to Mary Swift for her service to BHUCC! We will miss you. As our CE Board begins a long-term visioning process, we are especially grateful to those who shepherd our children and youth in our Christian Education and music programs. Thank you all for blessing our church with your dedication.

No Spring Rotation to be held in Sunday School at this time – Despite the hard work of our subcommittee, we were unable to adequately staff a Rotation Model for this spring. Thanks to our Sunday School teachers who will continue to meet with their students this spring.

Sr. Youth Group – The plans for a spring dance and movie night have been put on hold for now. Stay tuned.

Congratulations to Katelyn Mitchell who recently received her very own Bible during worship. Thanks to Kathy MacCullough who led Katelyn through an introductory Bible course. May God bless you, Katelyn, as you read His Word.

Upcoming Events

Board Retreat - CEB members will retreat on the morning of May 2 at the home of board chair, Kathe Simons. We look forward to ongoing collaboration with our talented Sunday School staff. Thanks for all you do.

Spring Fling Potluck – On Sunday, May 3rd, 11:30 AM, join us for our “Spring Fling Potluck Dinner!” Musical entertainment this year will feature our own children and youth. You can expect a few special musical surprises. Bring a dish to share. See you there!

Youth Sunday – Our incredibly talented children and youth will lead us in worship on Sunday, May 17th. Join us for this most special service of Word and Music.

Important Teacher Meeting – On Sunday, May 17, Sunday School teachers will meet in Fellowship Hall with members of the CEB from 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM.

Sunday School Teacher and Volunteer Appreciation Dinner – Monday, May 18, at 5:30 (for appetizers) and 6:00 dinner. You should have received your invitation by now. Please RSVP to Kathe Simons, kathe@simons.mv.com OR 244-3207 by May 11th.

High School Graduates will be recognized on Sunday, June 7th during worship.

Our Last Day of Sunday School Picnic will be held on Sunday, June 7th.

God's Garden Club will begin on Sunday, June 14th with our annual geranium planting. We would love to have additional youth/adult volunteers to help with God's Garden Club during the summer. Please speak to any member of the CEB if you'd like to help (Kathe Simons, Ray Vonder Haar, Kathy Woodside, Kim Craighead, Kathy MacCulloch, Laurie Riddell, Sandy Boyce).

Kathe Simons



May 10, 2009



1 Alexandra Heiges
4 Myrtle MacLeod
4 George Mitchell
11 Elise Craighead
12 Joyce Stanley
14 Alisha Rechholtz
14 Scott Riddell
15 Patty Benore
15 Tim Smith
15 Sheridan Steele
16 Andrea Horner Semels
17 Alice Hobbs
17 Mary Reed
18 Richard Collier
18 Sandra Reed
19 Leslie Spurling
20 Paul Dickson
20 Coady Modeen
20 Olivia Modeen
21 Faith Reece
21 Dean DiMauro
21 Lou Ingrisano
21 Ezekiel Valleau
24 Llewellyn Cooper
24 Christopher Booher
25 Crystal Hobbs
28 Heidi Turner O'Connor



Sunday Worship Contributors

Head Deacon – Rita Johnston
Assistant Deacon – Betty Bryer

Liturgists-

3:
10: Betty Bryer
17: Youth Sunday
24:
31:

Flowers –

3: Dottie Robins and Florence Ames
10: Dorothy White
17: Marianne DiMauro
24: Jane and Gerard Haraden
31: Betty Bryer

Coffee Hosts -

3: Charlotte and Bill Skiff
10: Rita Johnston and Lenny DeMuro
17: Wally and Sandra Reed
24: Jane and Gerard Haraden
31:

Home Bible Readings -

3 Acts 4:5-12
Psalm 23
1st John 3:16-24
John 10:11-18
10 Acts 8:26-40
Psalm 22:25-31
1st John 4:7-21
John 15:1-8
17 Act 10:44-48
Psalm 98
1st John 5:1-6
John 15:9-17
24 Acts 1:15-17, 21-26
Psalm 1
1st John 5:9-13
John 17:6-19
31 Acts 2:1-21
Psalm 104:24-34, 25b
Romans 8:22-27
John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

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United Church of Christ
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Special dates

- Christian Family Week, May 4-10, 2009
- National Day of Prayer, May 7, 2009
- Mother's Day, May 10, 2009
- Armed Forces Day, May 16, 2009
- Victoria Day (Canada), May 18, 2009
- Ascension of the Lord, May 21, 2009
- Memorial Day, May 25, 2009
- Pentecost, May 31, 2009



Memorial Day

Over the years, Memorial Day has become a big holiday weekend. It's now the unofficial start of summer, rather than a day of tribute to the departed it was originally meant to be.

Even if we plan fun events for Memorial Day weekend, it's important to stop long enough to bow our heads and pay respect to our departed loved ones – especially those who fell in battle while helping preserve America's liberties.

Let us take time to make the pilgrimage to various cemeteries and pause long enough to say, "Thank you, Father, for these special lives, for sacrifices made and for friendships we have shared."



The Ascension

Many Christian churches will celebrate Ascension Day on (or near) May 21, which is 40 days after Easter. Theologian Friedemann Hebart explained Christ's Ascension this way:

"When Jesus' work on Earth was done, he took leave of his disciples and went to be with his Father. A time for sad farewells, one might think. Yet the church celebrates the Ascension with special joy. What is the reason for joy when Jesus leaves his people?"

"The Ascension is not the end of Jesus' work, but a new beginning! How could Jesus ever leave us alone? Because he has gone to be Lord of the universe, he can continue his work of life and love – among us, too. His work was not just a short episode in Galilee. In the person of the Holy Spirit, the same Lord is present among us, still revealing the Father's loving heart, so that we, too, can believe – and sing songs of joy."

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