

CHURCH LIFE

FEBRUARY 2011



Middlebury Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
The Green
1242 Whittemore Rd.
Middlebury CT 06762
203-758-2671
www.middleburyucc.org

IT'S OFFICIAL!!!

A mission trip to Little Farm, LA is planned for April 17 to April 23. (This week is the Region 15 school vacation, but it also happens to be Holy Week.) Our mission will be to continue rebuilding homes that were damaged by Hurricane Katrina which hit five years ago on August 29, 2005.

If you are interested in learning more or signing up for this trip, please contact Debra Balletto at (203) 598-0665, dballetto@sbcglobal.net, or at church.

**NEEDED:
A DESK AND BOOKCASES**
For Mary Brown's Office

(Please let the church office or Mary Brown know if you have a donation – It's Tax Deductable!)

CHURCH RECORDS

DEATHS

Jeanne Crosby Anderson LaPorta on January 13th.

The Deadline for March Church Life:

February 15th, 2011 @ 9:00 a.m.

ken's korner

Some time ago, sitting in a hospital cafeteria, a fellow chaplain shared with me that she was dealing with her grief and loss issues. I asked who had passed away. She listed a few names and their relationships to her and it was obvious that these were not recent occurrences. Frankly, I did not understand. With the passage of time and many different losses in my own life I now understand.

I recall certain people in my life that are no longer here and I smile and relive an occasion or a time when I shared life with them. In the past I dismissed the past as just that, the past. Now I visit the past to bring some meaning to the present.

Today, I am writing a remembrance for Jeanne LaPorta's memorial service. She and I have been through a short but interesting journey together. We had become friends and colleagues serving the Middlebury church in different ways. I have been meditating on what I will say garnering my thoughts from personal experiences. I do know that she is gone.

I am dealing with a grief and loss. I will not hear her voice rise from the parking lot welcoming the children. I will not pass her in the hall. What has happened in the living of these days is that we take advantage of life. We do not take time to stop and be.

I will miss Jeanne. I wish I had had more time to know her better. To hear her philosophy of life that I now hear from her family and friends. A part of my Middlebury life has changed forever. In sharing this reflection with you this month I would like you to consider a few words I have used.

- Forever
- Gone
- Journey
- Friends
- Loss

Read over these words and consider how we can take the time to appreciate the art of living. When you contemplate that meaning for you; then apply each word and consider how that changes your understanding.

You are all special to me.

Let's journey together.

Living life

Ken

SCRIPTURES
&
SERMONS by Rev. Dr. Ken Hoyt

FEBRUARY 6
Guest Preacher
Rev. Dr. Henry Millan

FEBRUARY 13
Youth Leading Worship

FEBRUARY 20
 Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18
 Matthew 5:38-48
 Sermon: *Striving for Perfection*

FEBRUARY 27
 1 Corinthians 4:1-5
 Matthew 6:24-34
 Sermon: *What am I Going to Do?*

**Worship
 Attendance**

January 2nd
 72

January 9th
 98

January 16th
 115

January 23rd
 95



The Sunday School Scoop

Throughout the month of January, Kristine Zold, Lori Giannini, ShawnaLee Kwashnak, and Brenda Romaniello taught the story of The Good Samaritan. In their classes, the children learned what it means to love their neighbors as their selves. They also learned about identifying who they are when no one, except God, is looking, and if that is who God wants them to be.

In January, we worked with the children on creating a list of rules for our Sunday School classes, similar to rules the children have in school. The CE committee condensed the children's list into six rules that we will be following in Sunday School. The rules will be posted in each of our classrooms. Since our curriculum theme this year is "The Covenant", we asked each child to make a covenant with God that they will try their best to follow the rules in Sunday School. Parents will also get copies of the rules for home. Our new rules are: Show kindness at all times, Respect the personal space of others, Follow directions the first time they are given, Look and listen to the speaker, Raise your hand and wait your turn, and Move quietly and courteously through the church. We hope that these will allow all of our classes to run more smoothly.

During February, our children will be learning the story of The Prodigal Son. We will be staying in church on February 13th when our youth are leading the church service. The Cherub Choir will also be singing on February 13th. We look forward to sharing in this special worship experience!

CE will be hosting our 2nd Annual Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 17th after church. We are now accepting any and all donations of Easter Eggs! This event was a great success last year and we look forward to holding it again!

Valerie Beard

Youth News!

The youth group had a great time “ringing in the new year”. We enjoyed our new year’s eve lock in on December 31st, and at midnight we rang our church bell eleven times to ring in 2011.

We held a Pasta Dinner in January in order to replenish the youth group fund. It was a lot of fun and good fellowship. We raised \$1,021.00 towards our missions. A special thank you to Ellen Aronheim, Kathryn Gallager, Ann Marie and Mark Nicola, and Pastor Ken for helping us run the kitchen. As well as Jeanine Bonaventure for all the behind the scenes work she helped us with. And thank you to all who came out and supported the Dinner. I am very proud of the work the kids did to make the evening special.

The youth group currently has 26 active members, and is growing. We range in ages from 6th grade to 12th. There is always room for more, so if you know somebody who would enjoy our group, please contact Mary Brown so we can invite them in.






On February 4th – 6th we will be going on our Silver Lake retreat. This is a spiritual retreat for our youth as well as a fun and bonding time. Look for our banner reflecting our weekend in the Sanctuary.

Please come to church on Sunday February 13th. Not only is it scout Sunday, but the youth group will be writing and running the church service. Come support our youth and hear what they have to say.

February 25th – 26th is this year’s 30 Hour Famine which we will once again participate in. The youth raise money in the form of pledges and we fast together in the church for 30 hours straight while we learn about world hunger and realistic facts from around the world. We do experientials which bring home the message to the participating youth, of what it is really like to be less fortunate. This is a juice fast, so we have plenty to drink and the kids have traditionally done very well with this. The money we raise goes to World Vision to help feed the children of the world. www.30Hourfamine.org for more information. We have a meal together at the end of our 30 Hour fast, and we need volunteers to make that meal for us, which will be at 5:30pm on Saturday Feb. 26th. Please let Mary know if you are interested in helping.

Mary Brown
Youth Group Coordinator

Sunday School Grade Schedule February 2011

	Feb. 6 The Prodigal Son Week 1	Feb. 13	Feb. 20 The Prodigal Son Week 2	Feb. 27 The Prodigal Son Week 3
Noah’s Ark 		All In Church For Youth Led Sunday 	4 th /5 th	2 nd /3 rd
Storytelling Tent 	K/1 st		2 nd /3 rd	4 th /5 th
Bibleland Theatre 	2 nd /3 rd		K/1 st	
Mary & Martha’s Kitchen 	4 th /5 th		6 th /7 th	K/1 st
Youth Room	(6 th - 12 th on Youth Retreat to Silver Lake)			6 th -12 th

JANUARY YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULE:

MEETING DATES

MEETING IN YOUTH ROOM - 7:00 - 8:30 P.M.

February 11 & 18

SILVER LAKE RETREAT

February 4 - 6

3- HOUR FAMINE

February 25 - 26

SUNDAYS

Youth Leading Worship – February 13

In the Youth Room During Church – February 27

The Deacons' Bench

One of the most powerful and moving moments we have in weekly worship is our time of Joys and Concerns, when we share prayer requests for friends, loved ones, and the community and world at large. This is our time together as a Christian community to focus our thoughts on others, and to bring out needs for pastoral visits, prayers and personal ministries throughout the week.

Depending on the circumstances, Pastor Ken may echo some of the names and concerns during the prayer time that follows, or the prayer may be broader and more general. But he and a deacon will usually be taking notes and making a list to help him and our prayer groups to remember your requests. If you're uncomfortable speaking up, feel free to mention your requests to the minister or a deacon in private. We're also looking into prayer request cards that can be collected at each service for meditations during the week.

Eventually, we'd like to provide some sort of "prayer chapel" on the church website to help us all share prayer requests during the week, but we would need to address privacy concerns first in putting that together. Meanwhile, please continue to share your joys and concerns within our church community, and to pray during the week for those whose names are raised on Sunday.

- Howard Fielding for the Board of Deacons

SAVE THE DATE

The Mission Committee is pleased to announce its first American Red Cross Blood Drive! We will need your help (as well as your blood!) on Friday, February 25. The drive is from 11:30 A.M. until 5:15 P.M.

If you can help register donors, bake something for the canteen, assist in giving snacks to donors, or can donate a pint of blood, please call the office or email dballetto@sbcglobal.net.

SUPER SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

Super Bowl Sunday is February 6th this year. Please consider donating as many cans of soup as possible to fill the Communion Table as well as the shelves of GWIM. Since January is "can-can" month at most of the local supermarkets, now is the time to stock up. Let's make this Souper Bowl Sunday SUPER!

FEBRUARY DONATIONS NEEDED

The mission committee is sponsoring an "Item of the Month" drive for the Middlebury Food Bank. We have been informed that they are in need of toiletries, such as soap, toothpaste, shampoo, etc. There will be a box next to the Multiplication Table which Pastor Ken will deliver monthly. No sizes were mentioned so all donations will be gratefully accepted.

FAT SUNDAY???

You've heard of Fat Tuesday, also called Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday which begins Lent. On March 6, the Sunday before Lent, the mission committee will be sponsoring Fat Sunday, where we will be serving pancakes, sausages, fruit cup, and coffee/tea. This will be a fundraiser to help support the mission trip to Little Farm, LA which is from April 17 to April 23. (We still have room for anyone who wants to come!)

Please support this event as you enjoy the fellowship and food!

Stewardship

February – the month that celebrates love. And I LOVED Barbara Hampton's comments in church on January 16th. She is, by the way, not (yet?) a member of the Stewardship Committee, but she was moved to speak. She had been inspired during the awesome Pasta Supper by our youth group, and how a few of them wandered around, offering the opportunity to "buy a rose for your lady?" This brought her back to an earlier romantic encounter that also involved roses. And how we can all of a sudden realize..."Wait! This is something that costs money...this is not free!" and how sometimes we may miss that here in our church.



Operating a church is NOT free. There are the expenses of heat, light, insurance. Upkeep on paint and windows. The salaries of the staff who are there for our Sunday worship, pastoral care, music, support of the Sunday School, keeping our church clean (and cleared of snow – a herculean task this winter!). It is true that so much of what happens relies on us all, as volunteers. But without the paid staff, and the infrastructure, none of this would be here for us. We are an independent church – we support ourselves. We rely on each other for friendship and fellowship AND financial support of our church.

So far, members have been pledging well – most have increased their pledged support over last year. That is great, and to each and every person/family who has done so: thank you!!! For those of you who are waiting, wait no more. We need you. We need to be able to count on you, just like we count on each other in good times and bad. The committee will soon be calling the members we have not heard from yet. Please send in your pledge today and help make that a very short calling list!

~~We can do it~~ - We are doing it – and thanks to those who HAVE helped!

Janine Sullivan-Wiley
Chairman, Stewardship Committee

Auction 2011

Hear ye! Hear ye! It is time to start thinking about the auction and Flea market of 2011. This event raises funds for our Mission Committee so they can do great work in our local community and beyond. This year's event is scheduled for Saturday May 14th with set up on Friday May 13th. Please mark your calendars and plan to take some time off from work on one or both days. We need your help in any capacity you are able to provide.

This year we hope to find some donated storage space so we can start collecting treasures early. If you have some unused storage space such as: an empty garage bay, barn, or basement space, please contact the church office.

Soon I will be contacting previous chair people and looking for some new chair people for positions that are vacant. We especially need a person or people to chair the live auction. Someone who has knowledge of antiques and other collectibles would be ideal. The other vacancy is the advertising chair to help make our patron book more profitable. A person who has contacts in the local businesses would be perfect. This year is my last year chairing the event so I am also looking for a special person to be co chair of the event this year in preparation for chair next year.

Please keep this event in mind when you hear about estate sales or people who are "downsizing". We want donations of all kinds.

Please contact me with any feedback regarding last year's event or new ideas for this year. Only with your help can we have a successful fundraising event. Remember, If we all do a little no one has to do a lot.

On behalf of the Auction Committee,

Andrea Douyard
Adouyard@ aol.com
Hm 203-758-2135
Cell 203-725-5092