

CHURCH LIFE

NOVEMBER 2011



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

November Reflection

It's hard to believe that it's November. Its only yesterday that gardens were flourishing and the warm breezes were blowing. Each season gives us gifts and time to reflect on life. I find November a time of in-between. It is not yet winter completely and there are days when the temperatures rise and we it is unseasonably warm.

As we journey together we are in an in-between time. Sometimes we can see the cold of winter in our lives and other times we can remember warm feelings of fellowship. As we slowly journey apart I hope we can share the good memories and the hard memories.

Let's keep in mind that what we do is for God and God's realm. When we forget that God is our purpose we forget the meaning of Christianity.

Shalom and happy November.

Pastor Hoyt

The Sunday School Scoop

This Halloween, our children are once again participating in Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF. Last year was our first year taking part in this program, which has been active for over 60 years. Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF is a program of "Kids Helping Kids". All donations are used to help children who are less fortunate or in underdeveloped countries. UNICEF provides nutrition, clean drinking water, medical care, and school supplies to children all across the world. Please look for an update in the December issue of Church Life to find out about what we raised!

In Sunday School in November and December, the children will be studying the unit "Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Prophecies", meaning that Jesus is the one who is the Messiah. Our teachers for this lesson are Pam Albon, Jeanine Bonaventure, Alberta Weller, and Lisa Crick. Our lessons in the spring will teach the children how Jesus fulfilled the prophecies throughout his life.

December will be a busy month for our children, as always! Please watch for information on the Christmas Pageant and Advent Workshop!

Valerie Beard






Music Notes



All are invited to sing with the Ecumenical Choir at our special Thanksgiving service on November 22. We'll go over the anthem an hour before the service.

During Advent, we'll be holding weekly rehearsals for special Christmas season music. If you'd like to sing at the Pageant and/or Christmas Eve, please let Amelia know what rehearsal time you would be most easily able to attend: Friday nights, Sundays after church, or Sunday evenings.

Sunday School Grade Schedule November 2011

	<u>Nov. 6</u> Isaiah Week 4	<u>Nov. 13</u> Jesus as the Fulfillment Week 1	<u>Nov. 20</u> Jesus as the Fulfillment Week 2	<u>Nov. 27</u>
Noah's Ark 	K/1 st	5 th /6 th /7 th	2 nd /3 rd /4 th	All in Church for  Hanging of the Greens
Storytelling Tent 	6 th /7 th			
Bibleland Theatre 	4 th /5 th	K/1 st	5 th /6 th /7 th	
Mary & Martha's Kitchen 	2 nd /3 rd	2 nd /3 rd /4 th	K/1 st	

Youth News!

Well, the youth groups are off to a great start. We have 30 signed up total. Sarah DiCorpo and Jacob Brown are doing a fantastic job with junior youth group – 6th – 8th grades.

Both youth groups meet every Friday night from 7:00pm to 8:30pm. We had our first lock-in on October 1st with 22 youth attending. We accomplished our goal-setting for the year, and the youth have decided that the fundraising events we do this year will go towards benefitting both the Church's general fund in addition to retreats and mission trips.

Several youth helped the mission committee make ham and cheese sandwiches and deliver them to the less fortunate during the Columbus Day holiday when the Waterbury soup kitchen was closed. We hope to do more local mission projects like this one, in November.

October 29th will be our first attempt at a Halloween Haunted House and Social event at the church. Hopefully this will be a good first fundraiser for us. It certainly has been fun planning this event.

We plan on going on retreat at Silver Lake Conference Center the first weekend in February. Plans are not finalized for this event at this time.

As always, all youth grades 6 – 12th are welcome to join youth group, and bringing a friend is fine too.

Yours is Christ,

Mary Brown

Join us for a
POT LUCK LUNCHEON
Following Hanging of the Greens Service on
Nov. 27th

Let's kick off Advent
With Lunch together!

Pot Luck Assignments
If your name begins with:
A-H: Salad
I-P: Casserole/Main Dish
Q-Z: Dessert

The Deacons' Bench

Fall is upon us, and once again our church is in a time of change, too.

With Wayne retiring and Pastor Ken seeking a new call, we as a congregation will again be starting the long and introspective process of matching the right people with not only the positions, but the congregation as a whole.

To make that work, we first have to understand ourselves as a church – not only where we want to go in the future, but where we have been and where we stand now. The Board of Deacons started some of that work with a morning retreat back in the spring, which set some of our board's priorities for the year and identified some issues – communication, for instance – that we need to address to fulfill the church's mission more effectively.

This fall, the deacons have begun joint meetings with the Church Council and the Board of Trustees to develop consensus and strategies for going forward. This combined group has never met before, and the results have been exciting. In two meetings so far, we've already discovered many things that one group knew and the others didn't, and things that all groups agreed on but hadn't brought out beyond their own committees.

This group will continue to meet regularly, and soon will begin tackling some of the tough questions we need to answer as we make decisions for the future. As we do, part of our commitment to communication will be to set agendas in advance and open these meetings and discussions to anyone interested.

After all, in a Congregational church, we are all leaders.

-- Howard Fielding for the Board of Deacons

FROM THE TREASURER

We have worked hard to try to make your financial support of the church as easy as possible. Here are some FAQs and the answers:

Q: I would like to know more about options to donate to the church electronically vs. cash or writing a paper check. Can I change my method of giving to on-line?

A: Yes, you can - and it's easy! Electronic payments can be set up on a one time, weekly, or monthly basis.

Q: Can I make donations with a credit card?

A: Yes, you can. Right now that is possible from the Pilgrim's Pace link on our web site and soon it will be on the home page as well.

Q: Can I have automatic withdrawals made from my bank account?

A: Yes, that's easily done through your bank if you are already doing any of your banking online.

Q: Can someone help me set this up?

A: Yes, you can ask Bob Giannini, our treasurer, or Shari Morris, Assistant Treasurer, and they can help.

The Stewpot

Forecasting the weather

At our Homecoming event here at the Middlebury Congregational Church, each committee and board had a “welcome back” table. At the Stewardship table, we had some fun with a raffle, and I had an interesting experience. I was speaking with one person about why a pledge is better than the tradition of simply putting money in the plate on Sundays. As I tried to explain this, he got an “A-hah!” expression and said “Oh..... it’s like forecasting the weather, so you can know what to expect and be able to plan.”

That’s it exactly! As is often the case, members are the church’s most valuable resource: for ideas, for hands and hearts to get the work of our church done, and for the financial resources needed to “make it happen.” It’s nice to know that we can count on each other on sunny days as well as during stormy ones. Thank you to the families and individuals who have already sent in their pledge cards – that’s sunshine for our church family!

As we plan for 2012, I am asking *each and every family* to make a 2012 pledge of financial support, and to make it the most generous one possible. Our Stewardship Goal for a bright and sunny 2012: at least 100 pledges of an average amount of \$1,500/pledge. At that level we would increase our pledged income by almost 50% over last year and help ensure that we don’t need to cut into some of our important programs and missions to make budget.

Our new year will be a time of new beginnings, and with the support and commitment of each member of our church family, this will be the beginning of a new and stronger chapter in the life of the Middlebury Congregational Church.

Forecast for 2012:

It’s up to you. Let’s make our forecast a good one.

In faith and fellowship,
Janine Sullivan-Wiley
Chairman, Stewardship Committee

CAN YOU HELP?

The auction and mission committees are looking for storage space for the May auction/flea market. It would be a shame to turn away good stuff because we have nowhere to put it! Barns, garages, and basements are great, especially if they are dry and critter-free!

We are accepting donations for the Auction and Flea Market year round. So when you are cleaning keep us in mind. All donations may be brought to the Church or if they are too big we can pick them up. Please call the church office if you have any questions or can help with storage space.

S.O.S. for SOLDIERS



A recent article on the front page of the Bee-Intelligencer showed photos of a Middlebury soldier, Phillip Strobel, with his dad and sister. The article stated that Phillip didn’t find military food “very appetizing”. When civilians asked what they could do to help, Phillip said, “Send SpaghettiOs.”

In response to Phillip and all our armed forces, MCC is sponsoring an **S.O.S. for SOLDIERS** drive (S.O.S. stands for **socks or SpaghettiOs.**) Although white socks are appreciated, black, brown, or green are preferred. Also, any canned pasta, or chili is appropriate. The drive will continue until the Sunday before Veteran’s Day, which is November 6. Thank you!!!

STAR TREE 2011



We will be officially starting our star tree project on Sunday, November 27, which is Hanging of the Greens Sunday. We have pledged to give Christmas gifts to 100 needy children in Waterbury. The last date to return your wrapped gifts with the star on it will be **December 18**. Leslie House has offered to chair this event so please contact her or anyone on the Mission Committee if you have any questions.

Leslie House	Dave House	Brenda Romaniello
Alberta Weller	Marnee Palladino	Karen Waranowicz
Andrea Douyard	Debra Balletto	

COLUMBUS DAY SERVICE PROJECT

Many heartfelt thanks go out to all who helped in the sandwich project for GWIM that took place on Monday, October 10. Your donations of ham, cheese, bread, juice, snacks, and money allowed us to provide 200 lunches for people in need.

Thanks go out to all those helping hands who made and distributed the sandwiches in front of the First Congregational Church on West Main Street in Waterbury. Last year, there were extra sandwiches to donate to the soup kitchen at 1:00 when the distribution time ended. This year, the lunches were gone by 12:15.

This demonstrates how the need for our continued support has grown. Please remember to continue to pick up peanut butter, jelly, and cereal whenever you can. Those in need are so grateful for our help!



The Children in the 4 year old class went apple picking at Blue Jay Orchards. We had a beautiful day at the orchard. We will be taking a trip on a school bus to visit the Institute of American Indian Studies in Washington, CT in early November.

We are going to start collecting "Labels for Education". An envelope will be hanging in the Social Room for donations. Examples of brands that you can find these labels on are: Campbells soups, beans and gravies; Pepperidge Farms products, Post cereals and treats, Prego products, Franco-American products and Dannon kids yogurts. Just look on the UPS label.

Fifth Annual

Pilgrim's Pace 5K Road Race



and
Fitness Walk

and
Children's Fun Run

Saturday, November 5th, 2011

Race Time: 10:00 a.m.

Registration Time: 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Pre-registration - \$20

Registration Race Day - \$25

(participants receive:

t-shirt (1st 100 registered), free snacks, prizes/awards)

Children's activities – 10 & Under Free

(Prizes for all children age 10 & Under)

Chili & Beverages available for Sale!

Sponsors Welcome!

Registration by mail:

Forms available below & @ www.middleburyucc.org

Online Registration & Payment:

www.middleburyucc.org

Proceeds benefit local food banks



Thanksgiving Baskets

We will again be putting together Thanksgiving Baskets for a number of local families. There are more families in our town this year who are struggling and we are happy to be able to help bring joy into their lives.

Items needed are:

Turkeys, stuffing, gravy, cranberry sauce, Pre-spiced pumpkin filling, evaporated milk, pie crust, whipped topping, dinner rolls, fancy bread, olives, pickles, sparkling apple cider, breakfast foods, Thanksgiving paper goods & grocery gift cards.

Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board outside the kitchen or you may call the church office (203-758-2671) to sign up.

*All contribution must be brought to the church no later than **November 21st at 11:00 am** for delivery to the families.*

Preschool On The Green Presents

NOVEMBERFEST

HOLIDAY SHOPPING NIGHT

November 18th
6:00 – 8:30 pm

At the Middlebury Congregational Church
1242 Whittemore Rd., Middlebury
(For more information call 203-577-2275)

Featuring:

Hairdoozies <i>Dress up your hair!</i>	Naminals <i>Your child's name in animal art!</i>	Tastfully Simple <i>Easy to prepare food & gifts!</i>
Pampered Chef <i>Versatile kitchen tools to simplify cooking!</i>	Lena Jones Photography <i>Building Memories!</i>	PartyLite <i>Candles & Home Accents!</i>
Russian Crafts <i>Traditional Russian Gifts!</i>	Teacup Auction <i>Take a chance on something Special!</i>	Lia Sophia <i>Unique Fashion Jewelry!</i>
	Send Out Cards <i>Online Cards! "Changing Lives One Card at a Time!"</i>	Homemade Treats <i>Bring a treat home!</i>

Proceeds will be used to purchase classroom equipment for Preschool On The Green

Mark your calendars
for
An exciting Advent Season



HANGING OF THE GREENS

Sunday, November 27th

Join us for service in which we kick-off Advent
and decorate the Sanctuary
followed by a Pot Luck

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Sunday, December 11th

This will be a multigenerational event as we re-enact The Greatest
Story Ever Told through words and music.
*(There is a part for everyone and all ages, so don't forget to sign
up in the social hall. We will have a practice/run through
on Saturday, December 10th from 10 am -12.)*

ADVENT WORKSHOP

Sunday, December 18th

The children will go to Noah's Ark
for Advent/Christmas crafts to celebrate the season.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Saturday, December 24th

5:00 pm

Candlelight Service of Music and Celebration

11:00 pm

Candlelight Service of Prayer and Music

Sunday, December 25th

10:00 am

Casual Family Service of Fellowship and Celebration

*Join Our Community's Churches
for
The Annual
Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service
In the Middlebury Congregational Church Sanctuary
on
Tuesday, November 22nd, 2011
7:30 pm*

*Father Dennis Vincenzo from St. John of the Cross
will be providing the sermon.*

(Bring a treat to share during a time of fellowship following the service)

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

*This year we are inviting all four churches in Middlebury
(including the 2 new ones) to participate in the Annual
Thanksgiving Service. Since we are hosting it this year **we
need your help in providing treats** for fellowship following
the service. Please let the Church Office know if you can
bake something to share.*

CHURCH RECORDS

DEATHS

Ferdinand Lowther Starbuck Jr. on August 26th.

Edwin Atchison on September 18th

*The Deadline for December
Church Life:*

November 21st @ 9:00 a.m.

If you take pictures during a service or a function please email them to me for the Crier, Church Life, Bulletin Board and/or website.

Thank you!

Jeanine

(jbonaventure@middleburyucc.org)