

# The GOOD News

April

The Newsletter of the First Congregational Church of Haddam

2009

## WHAT'S UP?

### April 5 Palm Sunday Worship and Communion

Isaiah 50:4-9a;  
Psalm 31:9-16;  
Phillipians 2:5-11;  
Mark 14:1-15:47

### April 12 Easter

Acts 10:34-43;  
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24;  
1 Corinthians 15:1-11  
Mark 16:1-8  
Easter Egg Hunt

### April 19 2nd Sunday of Easter

Ann Hughes,  
Outdoor Ministries  
Acts 4:32-35;  
Psalm 133;  
1 John 1:1-2:2;  
John 20:199-31

### April 26 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter

Acts 3:12-19;  
Psalm 4;  
1 John 3:1-7;  
Luke 24:36b-48

### May 3 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

Simply Smiles  
Acts 4:5-12;  
Psalm 23;  
1 John 3:16-24  
John 10:11-18

### May 10 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

Acts 10:44-48;  
Psalm 22: 25-31;  
1 John 4:7-21;  
John 15:1-8



**MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 9:**  
7:30 TENEBRAE

**GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 10:**  
7:30 PRAYER SERVICE

**EASTER, APRIL 12:**  
**SUNRISE SERVICE 6:30**  
HADDAM MEADOWS  
BREAKFAST TO FOLLOW AT FCCH

**10:00 WORSHIP**  
FOLLOWED BY EASTER EGG HUNT

### TAG AND BAKE SALE

Start your spring cleaning early and feel good about your tidy house—the annual bake and tag sale will be Saturday, April 25 this year. For more details go to this month's report from the Christian Service Committee below.

### EASTER FLOWERS

There's still time to buy flowers for the Easter altar. Please call Kristin Battistoni (345-3783) or Bim Christianson (526-9386). The payment deadline is Palm Sunday, April 5.

### SPRING CLEAN-UP DAY

We are having a spring clean up day on Saturday, April 18, 2009, from 9:00 to 11:00. Bring your gloves, rakes, trimmers or whatever else you can think of to help us spruce up our Church campus. The amount of time required will be

## WHAT'S NEW?

dependent on the number of volunteers, so we request many hands to make the project go quickly. The Rain Date will be the following Saturday, April 25, 2008. Any questions, please contact a member of the Prudential Committee.

On April 19 Ann Hughes from Silver Lake will be preaching and telling us about outdoor ministries.



### LOOKING FORWARD

On May 3, we will have a return visit from Simply Smiles director

Brian Nurnberger. Ask anyone who was here that snowy Sunday in December when he came to speak, especially the children, and they'll tell you he's not to be missed. Simply Smiles works with impoverished children in Mexico.

**NOTE:** Be sure you have changed the church email in your address book. As of last fall, our new email address is [fcc-haddam@att.net](mailto:fcc-haddam@att.net). A few folks have had emails to the church returned and this may be why.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

The switch over to electronic mailing of our newsletter has caught some by surprise. If you know of someone who is not getting his/her E copy of *The Good News*, please let the church office know. Or if you know of someone who prefers hard copy and is not getting it also let the office know. [Fcc-haddam@att.net](mailto:Fcc-haddam@att.net) or 345-3807.

## REFLECTIONS FROM THE VALLEY SHORE

One year ago, I was preparing to come and serve as your interim pastor. I remember the excitement and nervousness that I felt. I was excited to share as a partner in ministry with you, but I was also concerned about this new chapter of ministry that God was calling me to both as a person and as a pastor. Still, I knew that God has always called people to serve, even with doubts and fears. Men and women have been called into the most challenging circumstances throughout history. From the beginning, God was with Adam, Noah, Moses, Abraham and the disciples; each person rose above the harsh circumstances of their time. God chose leaders not because they were perfect human beings but because of what God saw in each person.

We are about to journey through Holy Week together as a congregation. It might be easy for us to just skip over the events of Holy Week and go right to Easter. But as I sketch out each Holy Week service, I know that Easter is only possible if we allow the week to unfold day by day from Palm Sunday to the Resurrection in the context of our own time and place. A part of me wants to ignore the pain and conflict that is to come as we remember those events. But we cannot.

I know I will need to walk each step as if I've never walked that way before. In order to come closer to God, I will need to stop and be in the moment of each event. The journey begins with joy and celebration Palm Sunday which quickly changes. Maundy Thursday brings the looming act of betrayal, a betrayal so immense that the pain is almost overwhelming. And then as if it were not enough, Good Friday brings the crucifixion, an act impossible to comprehend. Then in those moments that are beyond words, our heavy hearts lead us toward our strength which comes from our God with the rising of the Son.

Each year, I walk through this week with God, asking for more humility, more gentleness, more strength, and more faith as I attempt to understand the extraordinary mystery of the resurrection. The human, frail part of me wants to skip over some of the events because I "know" the story already. Yet with each step, year after year, I become more deeply committed to the beloved son of God. Each year the story goes deeper, and I learn more from the darkness and harshness of the events. Paradoxically, each year I grow closer to God with more faith, more doubts, more love, and more hunger to be a true follower of Christ.

Let us worship together in the Holy Week services as the children of God. We cannot understand Easter unless we have walked with Jesus through Holy Week. Each step of this week can change you and your life. Come just as you are...with ears to hear and hearts that are open. Invite those you know who are isolated or afraid to join us on this incredible journey of challenge and of faith. Let God speak the good news even in the darkest part of our world. Share the word of God and discover the message of the greatest love the world has known. Let us humbly follow God to become the healing presence of Christ and with courage and strength bring hope that will transform our world. Let the darkest pain give way to the light... to the Son that offers forgiveness and healing!!!

Peace and Blessings,

Robin

## CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

In the "joys" category, former FCCH member Harvey Reed called to say Happy St. Patrick's Day and good wishes to his old friends in Haddam. FCCH was Mr. Reed's home church about 20 years ago. He now lives in Paris, Arkansas.

Please tell Robin or one of the deacons the names, concerns, situations which you would like prayers for (with the person's permission). In this issue, we pray for **June Lamoureux** who is recovering from ankle surgery; **Mark Soneson's** mom, Elaine Soneson; **Kristine Pierce's** father and grandmother; **Laura Porter's brother Art**; **Jan Berry's daughter Rhonda Gardner**; **Trevor Powell**; **Cheryl Hotkowski's** father after surgery; **Don Berry**; **Nate Wilkos**; **Andrew Purdy**; **Roger Butler**; **Peter**; **Diane Klare's** mother and the **Klare family** as they mourn the death of Glen's mother; **the Nicholas family** who lost Greg's father March 24; and **Diana Zilahy** and her family who lost Diana's mother March 23. We also remember **Rev. Davida Crabtree**, **Rev. M. J. Hinchliff**, **Deb Duval's** friend Rena, and **Robyn Sparks** who are undergoing breast cancer treatment. And we pray for those who are struggling with issues of aging: **Margaret Widegren**; **Ed and Jan Ortner**; **Jackie Anderson**; **Frank Bubb**, **Leslie Paulonis's brother-in-law**; and **Jo Baldwin**. We also pray for members of our armed forces who

presently serve throughout the world: **Leslie Paulonis's niece**, Erin Eklund, **and Ginny Evensen's nephew**, John Groobe, who is serving in Iraq. We remember our **Pastoral Search Committee** who continue their search, on our behalf, for a settled pastor.

Please let us know if someone in your family or within our congregation has something special to celebrate so we may include that also in our "Family News" section.



When you are hospitalized, you or your family members should notify the church as soon as possible. Upon admission to the hospital, you will be asked if you desire to have your religious affiliation as part of your medical record, and for permission to make your name available to clergy. Please state both your denomination and church name.

### **STARS IN OUR MIDST**

Thanks to all the skilled artists who shared their talents with all of us at the art show on March 22, to all the fine bakers and to all the helping hands who organized and set up the show. We made \$135.35 for the FCCH Family Assistance Fund.



### **CHURCH CARILLON**

Have you ever been near the church at noon or in late afternoon and enjoyed the music from our carillon. That carillon is really a tape driven mechanical device housed in the church that is close to 28 years old. It is operating reliably today, but who knows how long that good fortune will continue? The manufacturer (Schulmerich) no longer supports that model, and we can no longer purchase tapes for it.

The new generation carillons use a solid-state digital signal processor board with no moving parts to wear out. These instruments are low-energy and designed for greater reliability and flexibility. Schulmerich offers 10 different instruments varying in flexibility and application with regular prices ranging from \$65,000 to just under \$9,000. Something closer to the lower end of that price range could serve our needs quite well.

Although there are many things our church needs, updating our carillon will be an investment for our future. The carillon would make our church more present in Haddam, contributing to our growth. The sound of bells can provide spiritual outreach that can be achieved in no other way. Needless to say, a major purchase such as this is not something that we could finance from our regular operating budget. This would, however, make a wonderful gift as a memorial or honorarium. Perhaps there are several people who would like to give, honoring the memory of a loved one, or perhaps in honor of their children?

If you would like to contribute in this manner, you could speak to John Anderson, Chair of the Music committee, or to Pastor Robin, and we will set up a time that we could meet with the Schulmerich representative and pursue the purchase from there.

John Anderson, Chair, Music Committee

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

The following children and youth will be celebrating a birthday this month:

Blair Crafrfey	April 3
Katie Faust	April 4
Alison Halligan	April 7
Greg Duval	April 13
Nick Duval	April 13
Sean Mercier	April 28



As we all know, kids are not the only ones who enjoy birthday celebrations! Please let the church office know the date of your birthday or wedding anniversary so we can put it in the newsletter and celebrate the good news together. ([fcc-haddam@att.net](mailto:fcc-haddam@att.net) or 345-2742)

**MILESTONES**

*BIRTHS*

**Emelia Dawn Munster** was born march 11 to Terry and Debby Munster, their first child. Emelia weighed 9 pounds and was 20-1/2 inches long! She is the granddaughter of Ed and Judy Munster.

**Kate Chamberlain Hausner**, daughter of Suzanne and Eric Hausner, was born March 5, weighed 7 pounds and was 19-1/2 inches long. She is the Hausners' second child.

*BAPTISM*

March 15, we celebrated the Baptism of Ryleigh Catherine Degnan who was born March 3, 2008 at 10:22 p.m. at Middlesex Hospital. Rebecca and Mark Degnan are the parents. Godparents are Katherine Degnan of Key Largo, and Michael Howes of Vancouver WA.

**ADULT DISCUSSION GROUPS**

We have been attending both Adult Discussion Groups since they started last fall. Yes, sometimes it was a drag for working folks to get out for another activity in the evening, but we have really enjoyed both of the sessions, and feel that our time has been well spent. The first session was Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University. It is a DVD based program that provides some pretty basic personal financial advice. Although we are both of retirement age now, some of the advice provided reminded us of things we should have been doing for years. This program would be even more helpful for younger folks. The current session is now complete, but Robin is possibly planning to start another one this spring. We would recommend it to everyone.

The second is also a DVD bible-based series called *Living the Questions* that provides a refreshing, interesting perspective on many different religious topics. The spokesmen are a group of scholars from a wide variety of religious backgrounds. This discussion group is co-led by Rev. Blundon and Rev. Max Olmsted of the Higganum Congregational Church. One word of caution: if you're a biblical literalist, this program is probably not for you. This second series has begun for spring, but each session stands on its own, so anyone could join now and enjoy the remainder of the programs. See Pastor Robin if you are interested in either of the *Living the Questions* groups. The next series of adult discussion groups called *Living the Questions* begins the Sunday after Easter, April 19. There are two opportunities each week to participate: Sundays after worship here at FCC and Thursdays at 1:30 pm at Higganum Congregational Church. There are 7 sessions, but you need not attend all to participate. Please speak to Robin if you would like to join.

John & Liz Anderson

## **COMMITTEE NEWS**

### **Church Council**

The Church Council met on March 18<sup>th</sup> and discussed Robin's March 22<sup>nd</sup> art show, the April 25<sup>th</sup> tag sale, and the May 9<sup>th</sup> roast beef dinner. Volunteers will be calling church family members who have not yet submitted an email address. The Council was unable to find a regular meeting time that accommodates everyone but agreed to meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm. Motions were passed to approve: Robin's salary and allowance allocation; Robin's recommendation of new members; Robin's request for continuing education time off in April; John Anderson's recommendation for soliciting special gifts and bequests for replacement of the carillon; and Nancy's request for \$100 from the Todd Kinney Memorial Fund to partially defray the costs of three Middle School Youth Group members in attending Silver Lake at the end of March.

### **Diaconate**

**Flowers** Easter is fast approaching! If you have not yet ordered your Easter Flowers please see Bim Christianson or call the church office for information. The deadline for ordering flowers is April 5<sup>th</sup>. If you would like, you may drop a check along with the name of the person(s) in whose honor you are dedicating these flowers to the office or mail it to the church at PO Box 215, Haddam, 06438. Call the church office with any questions 345-2742.

**Holy Week** Please join us in worship Maundy Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup> and Good Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. Both services will be held at 7:30 p.m. Sunrise Service will be held at 6:00 a.m. at Haddam Meadows with a breakfast to follow at FCCH. An Easter egg hunt will follow the 10:00 a.m. service.

**Moving of the Pulpit** You may have noticed that the pulpit has moved sides. This change allows Pastor Robin to interact with the choir during service. Let us know what you think about this change. It also allows the church choir to see the children's message as well as more of the service itself.

**Large Print Bulletins** Did you forget your glasses? Large print bulletins as well as large print bibles are available. If you would like large copies of hymns, please let us know. Ask a deacon for a copy if you are interested.

**Caring Connection News** Many members and friends of our Congregation are coping with recent loss or illness; we ask that you keep them in your prayers. Please contact Amy Purdy at 345-2146 if you are willing to make a meal, and/or if you are willing to deliver a meal on behalf of the Caring Connection. In some cases, there may be dietary restrictions for some in need of meals, so please contact Amy or Kristin Battistoni 345-3783 if you have any questions. Meals may be left in the Trinity House freezer, but should be labeled with a description, cooking instruction and the date prepared. Please let Amy or Kristin know if you have left a meal. Many thanks for all your help!

**Communion** We would like to extend the invitation for communion to all teachers and students wishing to receive communion. Please return to the sanctuary after Sunday School.

**Visitation** If you would like to receive a visit from the pastor or know of someone who is in need, please contact the church office or sign up in the church vestibule. If you are signing up a friend, please make sure they are aware they will be receiving a visit before you sign them up.

### **Christian Service**

The Christian Service committee is planning a TAG and BAKE SALE to be held on April 25, from 8:00 AM to 1 PM in the Fellowship Hall. We will need people to assist us in set up, pricing on Thursday and Friday and clean

up on Saturday. Household items, toys and tools will be accepted. You are offered this great chance to clean up at home and benefit the churches mission projects. This is also the day of the Junior Women's Club town wide tag sale.

SAVE THESE DATES: CROP WALK FOR HUNGER October 4, 2009. The Oktober Fest dinner to be held on October 25, 2009.

We have been collecting Personal Hygiene kits for Church World Service in March. There is still time to make up a kit or two as the offering will be dedicated on Palm Sunday. The kit includes 1 hand towel, 1 wash cloth, a nail clipper, a bar of soap, 1 tooth brush in the package, a wide tooth comb, and 6 bandaids. All the items are to be placed in a gallon size plastic bag (available at church). These kits are sent around the world for people who have lost everything. Please help with this project.

WANTED: Household size pots and pans for the kitchen.

Christian Service still has one opening for someone who is interested in mission and would like to be a part of this great committee. Please call Nancy Valentine to join us; we meet on the second Tuesday of the month.

Ginny Evensen

## Search Committee

The Pastoral Search Committee has met several times over the past weeks. We are continuing to receive Ministerial Profiles from the Connecticut Conference. We are reviewing each of the profiles as part of our ongoing process and have begun to follow this step with interviews of candidates who we feel might be a good match for our congregation. Candidates also have provided us with written sermons, CD's, MP3's, and DVD's of their sermons and worship services. All this material has been or is in the process of being circulated among the members of the committee. We as a committee appreciate being held in your prayers as we pursue this important work. Please feel free to speak with members of the committee about your concerns as we move forward. Thanks once again for your support.

Committee Members: John Anderson, Michael Battistoni, Cherylann Hunt, Diane Klare, Gene Porter, Brian Purdy, Walter Zilahy, John Edmondson, Chair.

## Stewardship

"The World of the Generous Gets Larger and Larger"

Despite the economic times we all face, and our continued pastoral transition we are a strong and vibrant church! We asked and you answered. As of this writing we have 62 pledging units for a total of \$108,570. But to top that off one of our members contributed the \$300 needed for continued advertising in the monthly *Haddam Bulletin*. This will maintain our visibility and show our continued strength. Also, since last month's report, Stewardship began its monthly "Giving of the Month" special collection. From the February 22<sup>nd</sup> and March 15<sup>th</sup> collections, we received a total of \$252.00 and a week or two later another generous member gave a large sum, \$500, towards Sunday Nursery Care. The break-down of the \$252 is as follows: Capital Repairs: \$95; FCC Family Assistance Program: \$29; Youth Ministries: \$63; Music: \$5; Christian Service: \$15; Nursery Care: \$30; and Endowment: \$5.

On March 15, we made our second special collection so the accounting for that collection has not been completed. This collection made a plea for supporting Christian Education/Youth Ministries. This was one line item of the budget that had been significantly reduced. Though we may attempt to target a specific area each month, giving to any of the ministries listed on the green envelope will be much appreciated. As our theme states: "The World of the Generous Gets Larger and Larger" and all of you are an example of that. Thank you!

Hopefully you noticed the graph in our notice in the Sunday Bulletin. John Anderson, a member of the Stewardship Committee, devised a way to track how we are doing so we hope not only to show you monthly in the bulletin but also to have a display in our fellowship hall in the near future. Also, thanks to Kristin for our bulletin write-up.

It is clear to me and the rest of the committee that our church members really believe in Jesus' words: "Whatever you do to the least of your brothers you do unto me". Thank you again and please keep in mind that

we would love for newer members to come and join us in serving on committees or in helping out when a committee is preparing for an event. Come and be a part of our wonderful community.

Respectfully, Scott B. Thompson, Stewardship Chair

## Treasurer's Report

First Congregational Church of Haddam Treasurer's Report thru February 28, 2009

Income		Budget	Restricted Savings	9,416
Pledges	19,685	19,890	Petty Cash	101
Loose Offerings	817	1,011	Current Assets	18,720
Endowment	10,000	10,000	Lewis House Repair	40,314
Rent	3723	63	Total Assets	59,035
Total Income	34,255	30,964	Liabilities	
Expenses			Payroll Taxes	322
Operating Expenses	8,756	9,273	Capital Repair Loan	25,000
Salaries	17,079	17,565	Capital Repair Fund	19,089
Total Expenses	25,835	26,837	Restricted Funds	8,142
Net Income	8,390	4,127	Total Liabilities	52,553
			Equity	6,482
Assets			Total Liab & Equity	59,035
Checking	9,202			

Shown are the actual Income and Expenses for January and February 2009 and the year-to-date budgeted amounts. It is still too soon to spot any trends or significant deviations from the Budget. The Coop has prepaid the Rent due thru June. Detailed Financial statements are available upon request.

Respectfully submitted, Alan E. Ortner, Treasurer.

## Christian Education



### Trading Places Children's Winter Program

What a trip! Nineteen children traveled around the world in just 4 evenings! Thank you to the following volunteers who made our adventure a success: Ginny Evensen, Tracy Thompson, Val Williams, Sue Craffey, Jennifer Kelly, Katharine Alley, Patty Blodgett, Christy Manley, Nancy Soneson, Emma Soneson, Gunnar Soneson, and Logan Craffey.

### Rotation Model Sunday School

On April 26<sup>th</sup>, the children will start the Sunday School rotation, *King David*. During this rotation series, the children will participate in the following workshops: Art, Cooking, Science, and Games. **Thank you to the following teachers and assistants: Sue Craffey, Tracy Thompson, Sonia Dole, Jordan Dole, and Emma Soneson.**

## Easter Egg Hunt

The annual children's Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Easter, April 12, following the morning service. This event is for children in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and younger. Each year the eggs are stuffed with candy and trinkets donated by the congregation. If you would like donate, items can be left in the church vestibule.



## 2009 Vacation Bible School



Mark your calendars: **VBS 2009 – Crocodile Dock** is coming July 13<sup>th</sup> – July 17<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. to noon. Watch for more details in the coming weeks.

Many volunteers are needed to help organize and lead workshops in this week-long bayou adventure. The following workshops will be offered: Art, Cooking, Games, Snack, Music, and storytelling/drama. If you can help out, even for a day or two, please contact Nancy Soneson.

## Silver Lake Conference Center Summer Camp

Silver Lake, located in Sharon, CT, is a camp ministry run by the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ. It has been offering top quality camping experiences with a faith component for children enter grades 4 through 12 for many years. Registration information is posted in Fellowship Hall and on the Connecticut Conference website, [www.ctucc.org](http://www.ctucc.org).

## Children's Lenten Project March 1, 2009 – April 5, 2009



During Lent, the Sunday school students are participating in a special Lenten Offering project called "Fill the Ark". Money from this collection will go to Heifer Project International. Children are reminded to bring back their ark bank on April 5<sup>th</sup> for a dedication.

## Sunday Nursery Coverage

For Safe Church purposes, we need to have an additional adult or teen in the nursery room from 9:45 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. each Sunday morning. If 52 of us could volunteer for one half- hour slot, we would be able to completely staff the nursery for the full year. Once the Sunday school children come in for their classes, you are free to return to the sanctuary for worship. The sign-up sheet is located in Fellowship Hall.



## Congratulations to Jeffrey Hunt, the winner of February's candy jar!

The youth group is sponsoring an ongoing fundraiser located in the Fellowship Hall. Each month a large jar of candy will be available for one lucky individual to win. The winner will be announced at the end of each month. For only \$1.00 a guess – all those goodies could be yours! **The money collected so far this year helped send three of our Middle School youth group members to Silver Lake!**

## MSYG

April 19 – Dog Bone fundraiser, FCCH, 4:00 – 5:30, Fellowship Hall

## SHYG

April 19<sup>th</sup> – Meeting at FCCH, 7 – 8:30  
April 26<sup>th</sup> – Meeting at FCCH, 7 – 8:30

# April 2009



- |      |                         |      |                                |
|------|-------------------------|------|--------------------------------|
| S    | Sanctuary               | N    | Nursery                        |
| F H  | Fellowship Hall         | SS   | Sunday School                  |
| TH   | Trinity House           | HYC  | Haddam Youth Center            |
| LH   | Lewis House             | MSYG | Middle School Youth Group      |
| SHYG | Senior High Youth Group | HCC  | Higganum Congregational Church |

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 4:00 Stewardship TH 7:30 Christian Ed. TH	2 6:00 Diaconate TH 7:00 Prudential LH	3	4
<b>PALM SUNDAY</b> 5 10:00 am Worship MSYG swim at HK HS pool	6 7:00 Knitting Group Haddam school vacation wk.	7	8	9 7:30 Maundy Thursday Service of Tenebrae	10 7:30 Good Friday Service	11
<b>EASTER</b> 12 6:30 Sunrise Service Haddam Meadows 10:00 Easter Worship Easter Egg Hunt	13	14 7:00 Christian Service TH	15 7:00 Church Council TH  <b>Newsletter Deadline</b>	16	17	18
19 10:00 Worship Guest: Ann Hughes: Outdoor Ministries MSYG meeting Kill. Cong. Church SHYG FCCH L H 7:00	20	21	22	23 Tag sale prep Call church office for drop off times	24 Tag sale prep Call church office for drop off times	25 8:00-1:00 Tag and Bake Sale FH
26 10:00 Worship SHYG mtg. LH 7:00	27	28	29	30		