

Congregational Church of Bristol Newsletter May 2017

Church telephone: 563-6843; Email: ccob@tidewater.net

To find out what's happening at our church between Sunday services and the monthly newsletter, please visit our website: www.ccobucc.org

MAY 2017 NEWSLETTER

May Birthdays

1st - Carol Ference, Maury Dowse
6th - Lily Mayer, Donna Henrich
9th - Rev. Jim Dowse
13th - William Vincent, Andy Bradbury
22nd - Noah Dawson
28th - Maddy Hobbs
30th - Bette Zwicker



(If you don't see your name on the birthday list, please contact the office 563-6843 and let us know.)

“A Pilgrim’s Ponderings”

May 2017

Dear Bristol Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

"I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'" **Psalm 122:1**

"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching." **Hebrews 10:25**

Dear Friends:

Following the Easter resurrection services here on the Pemaquid Peninsula, Maury and I headed out "west" (New Hampshire) for several days for what is commonly known as a self-directed retreat. We stayed with another clergy couple. Several years ago Randy and Jill bought a home in Bradford and made their "mother-in-law" apartment available to Christian workers who needed or wanted to get away for a time of rest and renewal. It is a beautiful, quiet place located twenty or so miles northwest of Concord, the state capital. The rest came in just relaxing after a busy Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. The renewal came through prayer, reading the Word, talking with each other, as well as our hosts, going for walks, exploring nearby quintessential New England villages, turning off the TV and the computer (it was easy turning off the smartphone: I don't have one!), and making some decisions about leading healthy, balanced lives as we serve God here in Maine. I thank God for providing the time and the resources to get away with Jesus, as our Lord's disciples often did, especially after busy seasons of ministry.

We ended the week down "south" in Boston, attending the baptism of one of our grandnieces and a subsequent large family gathering. The service was held on Sunday afternoon at St. Mary's Church in Waltham, one of the oldest Roman Catholic churches in Greater Boston. The baptismal service followed the 3:00 Mass. Most of the parishioners were from Uganda, including the three priests who led the service. The music was lively and inspiring. What a blessing to find Christians from other parts of the world who love to worship God in spirit and in truth!

We decided in advance that our worship experience for the second Sunday of Easter would be the baptism service. It seemed very strange not to be in worship on Sunday morning. If anybody saw me, I reasoned,

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somehow they would know that I was a minister playing hooky! I only played hooky from school once or twice. The results, while not life-threatening, were unpleasant. How do you drive around trying to keep your eye on the road while at the same time sliding deeply in to the seat? Sunday morning became increasingly uncomfortable. There was no reason why it should be; I was, after all, going to worship with God's people later in the day.

Well, nobody noticed who I was or what I was doing. I was just another person doing his thing on a beautiful Sunday morning. I saw a lot of people "doing their thing": hiking, running, walking the dog, bicycling, sitting on a park bench reading the paper, doing some spring clean-up around the yard, shopping (there was plenty of that), checking out the new cars at the Toyota dealer, and grabbing some coffee at Dunkin' Donuts.

Then it dawned on me: where are the churches? They almost seemed hidden from view, off the beaten path, an anachronism from an earlier era. How many people in suburbia were going to worship? It seemed like very few people were making their way to houses of worship. We live in a culture which ignores pretty much anything to do with Christianity. It is exceedingly easy in 21st century America to experience Sunday simply as a day of leisure. Any mention of "keeping holy the Sabbath" is seen as an infringement upon people's right to, well, do their own thing.

This epistle is not a diatribe against secularism. It is a call for the Church of Jesus Christ to graciously let our neighbors know there is a God who loves us unconditionally. This God gave us His Son, Jesus Christ, that all who believe will have eternal life. It is a very good, uplifting, healthy, and even life-changing thing to rejoice with others and go to the house of the Lord. The saying is true: the church is a hospital for sinners, not a hotel for saints.

May the Church live our Resurrection faith in such a loving way that many will say: "I want what they have." And the good news is: they can. Faith in God is possible and available to all.

Your brother in Christ and Pastor,

Jim

Deacons' Report

The Deacons for the month of May are Dayle Strachan and Jeannie Hunter.

What a day of JOY to be had on Easter Sunday! It was a new beginning with the welcoming of nine new members to our church. It was such a special day!



Baked Bean & Casserole Supper – May 20th

Please join us on Saturday, May 20th at 5:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall for our delicious Baked Bean & Casserole Supper with all the fixin's including dessert - \$8 per person!!



Food Pantry
Donations Needed

Food Pantry – May 7th

The volunteers at the New Harbor Food Pantry are very grateful for the food CCOB collects every first Sunday of the month. They are currently serving approximately 60 individuals. Thank you for your donations.

Fair Update

Sandy Holmes has made a generous offer to store any bulky or larger items for the fair in her locked outdoor shed. Please keep this in mind as you do your spring cleaning. Drop off is by appointment only. Contact Sandy at 563-3957. For smaller items, contact Sandy Averill at 677-2165.

Sandy Holmes is continuing work on the silent auction. The African safari is a definite, so spread the word!

A "Fair" meeting will be held in May. Watch for the date and try to attend if possible.

HAPPY SPRING!

-Sandy Averill



Peninsula Artisans

Church Fair / Peninsula Artisans: Please contact me with any suggestions you may have of artisans who would make a good addition to our fair, and I will be happy to get in touch with them. This year we are charging a flat fee of \$30 per table, inside or out. Thank you. Sandy Guibord, 563-3783. sguibord@operamail.com



Plants and Flowers!

Plants and freshly cut flowers are needed for the Annual Church Fair. If you are willing to donate to the Plant/Flower table, please contact Lora Leduc at 563-2047 or send an email to raylora@tidewater.net. Thank you!

Book Review

One of CCOB's library books...recommended by Sandy Holmes!

"The Shack" by W.M. Paul Young

A great read that has a good storyline where realistic questions are raised and answers to life are revealed. This novel is about a man's struggle after tragedy strikes his family and his struggle to see how God is really in his

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life. This book will help those who may be having trouble with the idea of the Trinity and how it really fits into life. I thoroughly enjoyed the book which was recently made into a movie. Definitely a book that you will be recommending to your friends as well.

Happening in May

“Eat & Pray,” 12 Noon in the Library on the following Wednesdays: May 3, 10, 17, 24, & 31

Holy Communion and Food Pantry Donations, Sunday, May 7

Deacons Meeting, Thursday, May 4 at 3:30 PM

Trustees’ Meeting, Sunday, May 14 at 8:30 AM

Mothers’ Day, Sunday, May 14

Missions Committee Meeting, Wednesday, May 24 at 1:00 PM
