



The North Church

BEACON

The deadline for the next BEACON is *Friday, May 18, 2012*. Send entries to beacon@fccucc.org.

First Congregational Church
 United Church of Christ
 South Portland, Maine 04106
 Phone (207) 799-3361
 Fax (207) 799-4095
 E-mail: office@fccucc.org
<http://www.fccucc.org>

May 6, 2012

Worship

1

Pastor and Pew

2

S L & W / Youth

3

E G & F

3-4

Mission & Outreach

4-5

Administration

5

Seniors

5

Looking Ahead in Worship

Sunday May 13 - Festival of the Christian Home and Blanket Sunday
 At 8:30 and 10:00 a.m., we will celebrate our Christian family through scripture, poetry and music. The Children's Choir will sing. We will collect a special offering for Church World Service to offer blankets to offer comfort to the homeless, the stranger, and the refugee. Each blanket costs \$5.

Sunday May 20 - Scholarship Sunday and Installation of Elders
 At 8:30 and 10:00 a.m., we will ponder the resurrection in the non-canonical text Gospel of Peter. In the 10:00 am service, we will honor those furthering the education by offering scholarships and will celebrate the installation of our new elders - Elinor Redmond, Tracy Greenwood and Gail Dransfield. The Hilltop Ringers will chime to the glory of God. Immediately after worship, we will share in the 278th Annual Meeting.

Sunday May 27 - Pentecost Sunday
 At 8:30 and 10:00 a.m., we will celebrate the birthday of the Christian church by listening carefully for good news in Ezekiel 37:1-14. In the 10:00 am service, Caroline Mahoney will sing a special solo. This will also be the last Sunday of Sunday School.

Sunday June 3 - Children's Celebration Sunday
 In the 8:30 a.m. chapel service, we will ponder the mystery of the Holy Trinity and celebrate communion. At the 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary service, our Sunday School children will lead us in praise to our God. We will celebrate the ministry of our teachers, honor the good work that Diana Howe has done in our nursery and share in a special communion ritual. Immediately after worship, we will gather in the parking lot for grilled items lovingly prepared by the Eskimo Men's Club and share in the Annual Church Picnic.

Sunday June 10 - Confirmation Sunday
 At 8:30 and 10:00 a.m., we will share in the power of the words offered in 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1. During the 10:00 am Sanctuary worship, we will celebrate the commitment of faith of those young people that choose to become members of our church family through Confirmation. Immediately after worship, there will be cake to celebrate.



PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

For peace and peacemakers; for those in the military and their loved ones; for all who live without sufficient food, water, shelter, safety; for the hope of the world.

Celebrations:

for the **90 year old members** of our church honored on Thursday May 3; for **those who have been members for 50 years or more**; for the **elders** of this church family.

Concerns:

Melba White at Seaside; **Ruth Upshall** living with cancer; **Marilyn Seavey** whose grandson, Kerry Queen, died last week; **John McCall** anticipating surgery this week.

The Power of the Laity

There's a room in our church building called the Laity Room. It's a room that's rarely called the Laity Room -- especially by our children who giggle and squeal when they hear this strange word. And they are right, it's a strange word that refers simply to anyone that is not ordained. There may have been a time where that was helpful to distinguish between all of the clergy that existed in the world, but that certainly isn't the world we live in now. There aren't many people that are clergy. Most everyone is a layperson.

So, there must be power in the laity simply by the numbers. Something about majority rules, right?

Or maybe not.

As an ordained leader, and someone that can't check the laity box, I wonder if the laity recognize their own power. I wonder if the church has done all it can to affirm that liturgy is the work of the people. I wonder if our ancestors have encouraged individual gifts beyond the rubrics of a professional office. I wonder if I have done all that I can to empower every member of this church into full and vibrant ministry. It's something that John McCall started talking about the moment I arrived in South Portland six years ago. He talks about it all of the time. He has had a clear conviction that the vitality of this church is in the power of the laity. Now, when John's health requires him to rest and renew, we have the opportunity to truly live out that vision. It's already happened in a series of emails and phone calls that I have received of church members eager to help, support and visit.

As I work to create a plan with faithful leaders in our church, it strikes me that this is what we should be doing all of the time. This shouldn't be something we just do when the Senior Pastor is infirmed. (Sorry for that word choice, John.) This is something we should be doing each and every day that we choose to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ -- because that is the real power of the laity. It's not just about numbers. It's something that can't be contained in one room but reaches to every individual that we feed or love. This is so much more powerful than any professional title. The power of the laity is that God sees us as beloved -- and we can offer that blessing to each other no matter who we are or where we are on life's journey.

My prayer is that we can hold onto that power for a long, long time.

Elsa



STEEPLE LIGHTING

The steeple is lighted the week of **May 13** in loving memory of **Frank J. Potenzo** by his wife Beatrice Potenzo.

The steeple is lighted the week of **May 20** in memory of our parents / grandparents / great grandparents **Beatrice and William DeTine, Agnes and Donald Gray and William and Margaret Hill** by Beth DeTine and Sarah Gray.

MAY ALTAR MEMORIALS

The flowers on the altar **May 6** were given by Christie Cannell and family in loving memory of her brother **Luke**.

The flowers on the altar **May 13** are given in loving memory of **Frank Potenzo** by Bea Potenzo and children, Joanne Freeman, Frank J. Potenzo Jr. and Anthony J. Potenzo.

The flowers on the altar **May 20** are given in loving memory of **Miles E. and Mina Haskell** by Miles T. Haskell and family.

Summer is (Almost) Here! Beach Chair Theology is Back!

Beach Chair Theology will return this summer. This is our fifth summer - and our very own Scott Berry is eager to host again. Bring a Beach chair and a Bible. The coffee will be poured and Bibles will be opened at **8:00 a.m.** We'll be reading the Book of Jonah - chapter by chapter. Please also look for reading materials available around the church building to learn more about this whale of a tale.

- **Tuesday June 19:** Jonah 1
- **Tuesday July 10:** Jonah 2

- **Tuesday August 7:** Jonah 3
- **Tuesday August 14:** Jonah 4

Directions to Scott's home: take 77 to Two Lights Road. Follow this to Mare's Hollow Lane (on your right where the paintings are sold). Make a sharp right. Scott's home is the first on the left. There is ample parking on the grass right before his home. Scott may even be out there to direct traffic.

Elsa A. Peters
elsa@fccucc.org

The Men's Gathering – May 31st

One hundred years from now

It will not matter

What kind of house I lived in,
How much I had in my bank,
Nor what my clothes looked like.

One hundred years from now

It will not matter

What kind of school I attended,
What kind of typewriter I used,
How large or how small my church,

But the world may be....

A little better because...

I was important in the life of a child.

- Author Unknown

Our first two gatherings were well attended with great leadership from Mike Quinn and Jeff Sandler. This month we will gather for our third and last (this year) session with Scott Berry as our leader. Our church has an extraordinarily interesting congregation but our busy-ness seldom affords us the opportunity to share conversation. But here it is! Join us Thursday, May 31 from 7-9:00 p.m. in our own Davison Lounge.

One of our gang shared these words of wisdom: *One Hundred Years from Now ...*

Jerry Onos

Youth Ministry Schedule

Sunday May 27, 12:00 p.m.:

Seadogs Game with 1 p.m. game time

Sunday May 27, 4:00 p.m.:

End of Year Cookout

Jerry Reynolds
youth@fccucc.org



Spring Rummage Sale Update

The sale is done and we made \$2055! This will help our budget.

I want to thank all those grateful people who offered contributions, who helped setting up, selling and taking down. It is a long list but I am truly thankful to you all and for putting up with me!

I also want to mention concerns about the donations for our sale. Please keep in mind that the donations need to be in good working order and clean – like

something you would consider purchasing yourself. Unfortunately we encountered some items that did not make this standard... an electrical appliance with the cord cut off, laptop computer that could not be turned on, stained and dirty and cut clothing... we work hard twice a year and are proud of our sale.

Prudy Wiggins

Blanket Sunday – May 13, 2012

Mother's Day, Sunday May 13th, is a day of celebration and is also Blanket Sunday in our church. Again, as we have for many years, we ask that you consider a to the Church World Service Blanket+ program.

For over 60 years, Church World Service (CWS) has worked in partnership with local communities around the world to identify their needs and access the resources they need to build the foundation for a more viable future, including:

- Blankets, tents, food and other emergency supplies in the wake of a disaster.
- Tools and seeds for refugees returning home to replant their fields.
- Wells for families living in drought prone areas to provide clean, safe water to drink and to irrigate crops and gardens.
- Literacy training and micro credit for women struggling to realize their potential.

A \$5 donation will go toward the purchase of a blanket which is used for warmth, cover and protection from the elements.

I will be at coffee hour on April 29 and May 6 to accept your donations and you can pick up a Mother's Day card or an all occasion card. If you pay by check please make it out to the church and put "blankets" in the memo field. You can also put your donation in one of the CWS envelopes found in the pew rack.

Kathy Cotter

HILLTOP GUILD MEETING - MAY 10 -

On **Thursday, May 10th**, all women of the church are invited to join us at **6:00 p.m.** in Wright Pavilion for an evening of good food, fun and fellowship. Dinner will be catered by the Buttered Biscuit.

Call Joan Dennison at 799-3193 to reserve your space if you are not on one of our call lists and would like to join us. The cost of dinner is \$15.00.

Marie Jordan
Co-Chair

MICAH PROJECT HAPPENINGS !

On **Sunday May 20th** there will be an **Interfaith Walk for Habitat for Humanity**. The official walk start time is at 1:00 p.m., but there is a BBQ lunch from 12 to 2! The 4.5-mile walk begins at St. Pius X Church at 492 Ocean Avenue in Portland (near intersection of Ocean Ave and Washington Avenue, at the top of Payson Park).

Also, plans are in the works to **spruce up the gardens around the church this spring!** If you are interested in helping plan or plant --- or both, please let me know. We hope to have a date for this in the next few weeks!

FMI on either of the above projects, please contact Deb Dagnan @ 749-5045 or through the church website via "Micah Project". Thanks!!

CHURCH LOCKS & KEYS

We have re-keyed the locks to the church. Please swing by my office to exchange your old key for a new one **M, T, TH or F.**

Cyndi Alden
Business Manager
cda@fccucc.org



SENIOR ACTIVITIES

Thursday, May 17- Lunch and Fun at noon in Wright Pavilion. Bring your lunch and beverages will be provided. Stay after lunch for a domino game or board game of your choice or, if not, just join us for lunch.

Thursday, May 24 - Plan to have **breakfast at I-Hop at 9:00.** We always have good food and great conversations. If you need a ride, call Kathy at 799-3361 #112.

Thursday, June 7 - SAGE meeting at 1:00 in the 3rd/4th grade classroom above the church office.

Please stay tuned in for information regarding summer picnics, island tours, garden tours, matinee plays and whatever else we are able to arrange.

Building Use Awareness

We have many outside groups who use our building throughout the week/month. Please have respect for those groups using the facilities by not entering the rooms where a yoga class is in progress, or a meeting being held. There is a building use calendar in the front office (posted on the gray bulletin board next to the mailboxes) with a daily view of which groups are using the various rooms. You can

refer to this information to find out when any particular room is available. Thank you.

Cyndi Alden
Business Manager
cda@fccucc.org

Have You Registered for Pilgrim Lodge Yet ???

Being a camper is a great experience that always brings me closer to nature, to new friends and to God. The whole camp: the lodge, outdoor chapel, hiking trails, cabin row, and waterfront, seems to scream 'I am God's creation!' PL is not tainted by cell phones, iPods, TV's or computers, and I feel that it's actually really easy to let those things go and have fun in nature instead. Whether you're a child, teen, or adult there will always be a place for you at Pilgrim Lodge. Breathe in the clear, fresh air and embrace God's wonderful creation.

If you're interested in going to Pilgrim Lodge this summer, your church offers camperships for all our members in order to diminish the family's burden. Whether you are an adult or a teenager, please explore the Pilgrim Lodge website (www.pilgrimlodge.org) to see what PL might have in store for you. When you register, simply alert the Church Office (office@fccucc.org) and we'll make sure that a campership is offered to you this summer.

Elsa A. Peters
elsa@fccucc.org

This is what Sally Keiter offered in reflection of her experience at Pilgrim Lodge two years ago. This year, she's registered for two weeks of camp and will be a counselor-in-training at our church's summer camp in West Gardiner.

THE NORTH CHURCH BEACON
Published by the First Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ
301 Cottage Road, South Portland, ME 04106

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Portland, ME
Permit No. 944

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Post Office
Time Sensitive Newsletter

Find us at: www.facebook.com/fccucc

The Discovery Center

The Discovery Center, a ministry of South Portland First Congregational Church, is **now accepting registration for 3, 4, and 5 year olds for 2012-2013.**

- We are a hands on, child centered learning environment where kids learn through doing and playing.
- We offer a loving and caring place to introduce your child to their first preschool experience.
- Our pre-K class prepares children for kindergarten through a developmentally appropriate curriculum that focuses on sharing, recognizing our name and letters of the alphabet.

Give us a call today. Contact Pam Howard for questions or to set up a tour at [207-799-3361](tel:207-799-3361), ext. 107.