

Old South First Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ

February  
Telstar 2013

Beloved Old South,

Last week, during our fleeting mid-winter thaw, I got the briefest taste of that mythical fifth New England season: mud season. Like Pigpen from *Peanuts*, all week I moved in a cloud of mud, leaving a trail of slushy dirt everywhere I went. Although it'll be another month or more until we hit mud season in earnest, it occurs to me that Lent, which starts on February 13th this year, is like our own spiritual mud season. It's a time when we reflect on the parts of our spiritual lives that are thick, messy, and inconvenient -- and when we make space for new life to emerge.

In her March 2012 Huffington Post article, *Lent, Mud Season, and Letting Things Get Messy*, UCC pastor Rev. Emily Heath wrote:

“[Lent is] the time when we look deeply at what's inside of us, and start to find the places that we are trying to keep frozen and impenetrable to God's grace. We all have them. They're filled with fear,

As we face a historic decline in the protestant church, maybe it's time to let go of that legacy of facades and embrace Lent as our own spiritual mud season. Maybe, like mud season, Lent can serve as a reminder that underneath the messiness, new life is waiting to bud forth. Any gardener can tell you that it's only when the earth thaws and the waters recede that the messiness passes and new life first into Lent. Deep down we know that letting God into the deepest parts of our soul can make things messy.”

As part of our 6 week journey towards new life, I hope you will consider joining our Adult Ed series, *Living the Questions*, every Tuesday night from February 19 through March 26. During this incredibly rich video- and discussion-based study, we will wade through the very kinds of challenging questions of faith often avoided by the church. This vision of Beloved Old South, this Lenten time, and we join ourselves to those suffering the messy questions of that legacy with that live within us -- because it's in those deep and life-giving conversations that we will find ourselves treading a path towards new life.



## Service of Ashes and Healing Prayer February 13, 5:30 pm, Chapel

Our annual service of ashes and healing prayer will be held in the Newman Wing Chapel. The cross of ashes on our foreheads signifies our mortality and our need to turn to God (the word “repent” means “to turn”), as well as God’s love for us in all of our humanity. The healing prayer emphasizes the beginning of Lent as a time of self-reflection and healing. Join us for either or both of these spiritual traditions, or just to be a part of our worship together as we begin the journey of Lent.



## *Adult Education Opportunity*

This February and March, join us as we engage the deep questions of faith during our Adult Education series, *Living the Questions* (L/Q). L/Q is an open-minded alternative to studies that attempt to give participants all the answers and instead strives to create an environment where participants can interact with one another in exploring what's next for Christianity. We will meet from 6:45-8:00 pm Tuesdays Feb. 19, Feb. 26, and March 5; Wednesday March 13 and Tuesday March 19 and March 26 in the Newman Wing Chapel. Please sign up in the vestry or contact Phyllis in the church office (778-0424) if you are interested in joining us.

The purpose of the meeting is:




1. To receive Financial Reports from 2012; 3
2. To approve the 2013 Budget;
3. To transact such other or further business that may properly



## From the Moderator

Super Bowl, Valentine's Day, blizzards, and Annual Meeting...that's what February is made of! February 10<sup>th</sup> after church will mark our first "financial" annual meeting devoted to spending some quality time with our budget, spreadsheets, projections, wish lists, and questions about all of the above.

2012 was a year of tough financial choices and commitment for us all. The Capital Campaign was a challenge and a gift. We made great strides and can be proud of changing our financial future. We identified significant future problems and have blunted their potential damage, but we need continued community awareness and resolve to keep moving in this positive direction.

As always, annual meeting will include food, coffee, and some great conversation and laugh  ne with open hearts and minds and be blessed with G  e amongst us as we wrestle with the balance betw  eeds, spiritual living, physical realities, and our co: ls.

## DEACONS' CORNER

Donna Wheeler

### *Passing of the Peace*

During this time of flu outbreak and cold season, the deacons would like to encourage you to share God's love and peace with each other during the service in a manner that limits risk of infection. On Sundays during the time in the service when we pass the peace, you are invited to greet your neighbor with a bow or a nod of your head or in a manner that you feel most comfortable limiting your exposure. In addition, there is hand sanitizer available in the narthex and several places throughout the church where you may wash your hands if you

# REACH OUT

## Outreach Corner

The Outreach Committee will be working on issues of local hunger and food insecurity in the coming months. We'd like to share the following global information with you first:

An estimated 925 million people globally will go hungry today. 7 billion people share the planet and by 2050 the world's population is expected to increase to 9 billion people. This increase will put enormous pressure on global food capacity. Added to that, more people in Western-style and growing economies are adopting a high calorie, meat-based diet, and the price of staples - like corn used for cattle feed - continue to rise as a proportion of daily living expenses for the poor. Environmental degradation and crop damage due to climate change, the rise of biofuels, and agricultural distortions due to export farming add to the instability of local food cultures, creating conditions of increased food insecurity, hunger and malnutrition.

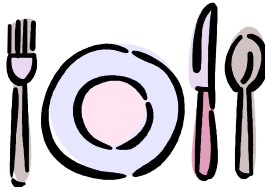
the numbers continue to rise. In many of the local schools, including our elementary schools, students are sent home on Fridays with a tote full of food to get them through the weekend. These youth rely on the school breakfast and lunch programs. But what welcomed me.... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." In this compelling scripture, Jesus includes even the summer, many area districts have already begun doing this and we believe that this is vital work that needs to be done "deserving" or "undeserving" poor, nor does he make a distinction between those who live close to us and those who may live in other places. He calls all his followers to share what we have and to work towards a time when all people have enough food and water for their needs.

Locally, the Care and Share Food Pantry gives assistance to over 700 individuals each month, and





Don't forget your Care and Share food closet contributions on Communion Sunday, Feb. 3. You may also make financial contributions to Care and Share by marking your donation for Care and Share and submitting it along with your regular offering on Sunday mornings. Thank you for your continuing support of this ecumenical ministry.



## Community Luncheon Report

The January Community Lunch was certainly a challenge! We battled the weather and the sickness going around Farmington, finding that several people that are normally part of our ministry were unable to help due to illness. The turnout was also considerably less than normal, most likely due to a combination of weather and illness. However, at the end of the day we served 117 meals! And we were able to have a fund-raising bean day, turned out to be a good day after all.



Our February meal (based on a recipe from the book "The Kitchen" by Florence), delicious meat loaf (based on a recipe from the book "The Kitchen" by Florence), mashed potatoes, green beans and cake. There will, as always, be a sign-up sheet posted in the Ministry kitchen. Please take a moment to check it out and see if there might be an opportunity for YOU to help.

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Stan Wheeler  
Rocell Marcellino, Co-chairs



employee -- and the boss should have been paying various local, state, and federal taxes.

Not far into Kim Bobo's book I realized that this was no isolated incident. Such misclassification is a prime form of "payroll fraud" which prevents workers from receiving overtime, unemployment, and workers' compensation, and cheats government out of taxes that should have been paid. Sometimes cashiers are misclassified as managers; sometimes janitors or restaurant dishwashers are misclassified as independent contractors. FedEx claims that all of its 14,000 drivers are independent contractors despite the fact that the company controls the routes, schedules, and working conditions, and despite the fact that these "independent" drivers aren't even allowed to use their FedEx vans for personal errands unless the decals are covered up. Obviously this represents vast savings for a company that engages in such practices, putting pressure on any ethical competitors who want to stay in business -- say, UPS, whose drivers are unionized. In 2007 the IRS fined FedEx \$319 million for just one year's worth of back taxes and penalties. The total cost to the IRS of misclassification has been estimated at \$4.7 billion per year.

Payroll fraud is actually rather subtle compared to some other forms of wage theft. It is illegal to pay workers for the time they spend driving to work, signed pay stubs to take from their pay that would indicate that pay below the final pay wage, when this happens all the time. (Only a boss over this payment by falsifying time sheets. It is illegal, first of all, to have a top shill deposit staff. And, here's a restaurant illegal to refuse to give you because you didn't work at one of these abuses as a regular pay and they illegal to take workers to give you a \$2600 penalty, the job is 50% of the illegal take over workers' tips. It is illegal to deduct wages for breaks that workers are not actually allowed to take. It is illegal for managers to demand cash kickbacks from employees. The real reason for keeping their jobs (this means) and as far from a boss's part and a restaurant is illegal if you own and refuse to give workers a tip when they are not paid to be washed and the back end back in which a customer's interest is illegal to your staff. Steal \$2600 from your employer and you'll probably go to jail; steal \$2600 from your employee and you probably won't. Unions, which are good at educating workers about their rights, are

me -- is flourishing, we should align ourselves with the prophets and Jesus by focusing on mistreatment of the poorest members of society. And while charity is a fine thing, we Christians (and Jews and Muslims and ...) should also work for justice, striving to change society to end wage theft. "Although congregations should steer clear of partisan politics, it is not right for them to avoid broader public (e.g., 'political') debates of the day.... Jesus spoke out in the streets and on the hilltops, and he spoke about caring for the poor -- political issues of that day as well as ours." And so should his followers speak out.



### Justice and Witness Green Tips for Stains



- Treat stains as soon as possible. The longer they set, the harder it is to get them out.
- Soften up old stains with glycerin (available at natural markets and health food stores). Rub the glycerin into the stain with your finger or an old toothbrush until the spot is softened. Then spot treat or soak before washing.

Old South Youth Programs February 2013

**Sunday School** Wash in cold water only. Hot water sets stains, as does the dryer's heat. If a stain doesn't come clean the first time you treat it, "Praying and Making Ritual," with a fresh look at the very familiar Psalm 23. With help from Cherie Giampietro and Karri McCarthy, we assembled the words of the psalm in a giant puzzle on the Chapel wall. Throughout the coming months, we'll examine rituals ancient and new, including communion and baptism.

**BBC** the wash cycle.

The teen discussion group, led by Patty Schoen and Linda Beck, continues the conversation as it was left off in December, comparing the UCC with other world religions. On January 27th we've scheduled a special combined BBC/Youth Group event---a showing of the 45-

Additionally, the Senior Youth Group is invited to help decorate the UMF North Dining Hall for HEAT DANCE II, the Hollywood-themed dance to raise money for the local heating fund, Ecu-Heat. The dance will be on Friday, Feb., 1, and teens are encouraged to come at 3:00 to help get everything ready. Pizza will be served! We invite teens to return at 7:00 pm, dressed in Hollywood-themed costumes, to join in the fun.

Together, the Senior and Middler Youth Groups will be holding a Dessert Auction on Sunday, Feb. 10 (Annual Meeting Sunday). There will be plenty of tempting creations to bid on; all money collected will be given to local elementary schools in Wilton, Farmington, and New Sharon to help purchase snacks for children.

### Calendar of Upcoming Events:

Friday, February 1: Senior Youth Group to decorate UMF North Dining Hall for HEAT DANCE II; 3:00 pm (meet at UMF, *not* at Old South)

Sunday, February 3: Sunday Kids' Theater (grades preK through 7th); no BBC class

Sunday, February 10: Sunday School classes and BBC; Combined Youth Group Dessert Auction at 10:45 am

Sunday, February 17: vacation week; no youth programs

Sunday, February 24: vacation week; no youth programs

### GIFTS OF TIME AND TALENT



Many thanks to so many of you who have filled out and turned in the Time and Talent forms! It is wonderful to have the documentation of the ways you are willing to share your gifts of time and talent with the Old South ~~Church~~ ~~family~~ for ~~the~~ ~~many~~ ~~recruiting~~ so much easier for the many activities in our church community. If you have not filled out a "Find Gifts in Giving" form for the Gifts of Time and Talent program from the Revised Catechism booklet, The form of the booklet is available for download on the main side of the Sanctuary and on the Church office and through email readings for the month of February office at [farmingtonucc@myfairpoint.net](mailto:farmingtonucc@myfairpoint.net). If you have questions about the Gifts of Time and Talent program, please call Betsy Reiche at 645-2884 or Shirley Waddell at 778-9915.

Jeremiah 1:4-10

Psalm 71:1-6 1

Corinthians 13:1-13

Luke 4:21-30

Transfiguration Sunday, February 10

(Last Sunday before Lent)



## Retiree Lunch

Calling all retirees! Please join us for the monthly Retiree Lunch at NOON on Monday, February 4, in the Vestry of Old South. The menu this month is potluck. Bring a dish to share if you are able and join us! For more information, contact Dick Giard at 897-6228.



### *Benefit Dance for the Ecumenical Fuel Oil Fund*

Join Shepherd's Pie for a Ecumenical Fuel Fund Benefit Dance on Friday, Feb. 1, 7:00 pm in the North Dining Hall at UMF. Dress up as your favorite movie star for this red carpet event -- watch out for the paparazzi! Tickets (\$15) are available at Devaney, Doak and Garrett and the Calico Patch and will be available at the door (\$20). Proceeds will benefit the FAEM Ecumenical Fuel Oil Fund.



### **E-Waste Recycling Event**

Tentative E-Waste Recycling and Disposal Annual Event, Saturday, April 27th from 9 to 1. The Fundraising Committee and volunteers will be working with E-Waste Solutions of Maine collecting tv's, computer components, stereo components, microwaves, phones and other electronics. Recycle responsibly. There are no set fees and donations are accepted. All proceeds benefit the mission of Old South Church. Shepherd's Pie and the Old South Fundraising Committee at UMF

North Dining Hall for the kickoff event. Proceeds will benefit Old South's multi-stage wheelchair project. The project will include the addition of powered lifts and a wheel chair lift. Fundraising Committee and the teaming up on this project. Shepherd's Pie is donating their time and talent with music! UMF has donated the space! More details coming soon... mark your calendars... spread the good news!

**Wanted:** 2 or 3 people to help with the primary organization and overseeing of the annual yard sale with the Fundraising Committee's assistance. Date has not been set. Anyone interested should not delay and contact a member of the Fundraising Committee as soon as possible so organization can begin. Committee members: Debbie Davis-Robinson, Barb Fortier, Linda Fournier, Brenda Scribner, Sally Utans, 17 Susan Wahlstrom, and Hallie Yorks.





New Gil Riley notecards are coming soon! Gil has just left the Fundraising Committee with a disc full of new images to review! Bless you, Gil, for sharing your time and talent with Old South in your photography and printing of the cards.



### Fair Trade Coffee Orders

The next order deadline for Fair Trade Certified coffee, tea and cocoa from Equal Exchange will be 10 am Monday, February 25.

If you would like to order anything, please send an email to Myrna Vallette at [myrna.vallette@gmail.com](mailto:myrna.vallette@gmail.com), or call her at 778-4387. Myrna Vallette coordinates group orders so we qualify for wholesale prices and free shipping.

For those who haven't ordered before, here are a few facts: Doug Dunlap, chaplain at Franklin Memorial Hospital, to donate shawls for patients. Doug said, "We are so grateful to Old South for thinking of patients in the hospital. Prayer shawls are a true source of comfort. Patients find the shawls to be very precious."

- "Fair trade" means that the farmers get, among other things, a guaranteed fair price.

- So far, three have been given from Old South. Anyone who would like to participate in this extension of the Prayer Shawl Ministry is asked to contact Myrna Vallette at 778-4387, or by email at <http://interfaith.equalexchange.com/>.

- Myrna Vallette coordinates group orders so we qualify for wholesale prices and free shipping.
- Shawls (or lap robes) made with soft yarns that won't irritate sensitive skin in pastels or earth tones, are best for the patients.

We can only order by the case (e.g., a case can be six 12-oz. bags, five 2-lb bags, etc.).

## Committee Meetings

- Executive Council: Wednesday the 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm, HPH
- Deacons: Sunday the 3<sup>rd</sup> at 11:00 am, Matthew Room
- Christian Ed: To be announced
- Outreach: Tuesday the 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm, Matthew Room
- Justice and Witness: Tuesday the 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm in the Chapel
- Pastoral Care Team: to be announced
- Pastoral Relations: To be announced
- Trustees: Tuesday the 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm, HPH

## *A Note of Thanks*

Dan and I want to thank all of the members of Old South who prepared wonderful meals for us after my hand surgery in October. The food was delicious and every meal was different – no repeats – amazing. Our Old South family is truly special.

My hands have healed, and it is so nice to be able to sleep through the night without having them fall asleep and ache.

~ Marilyn Hylan



### **UPDATE ON HONDURAS PARTNERSHIP**

Our Conference has been involved with our sister church in Honduras for decades. The closer relationship we now share is the result of

**Hats and Mittens** following Hurricane Mitch in late 1998,

and the realization from both sides that one-way relief work is not the totality of the relationship. Our churches in Maine and Honduras would benefit from developing ways to have exchanges. These will be given out by the teachers to children when needed. They are very grateful for your generosity.

Thank you to all who contributed mittens and hats for children in the local schools. This season we collected 24 pairs of mittens, 5 hats, and 5 scarves. Thanks also to the mitten knitting group. These will be given out by the teachers to children when needed. They are very grateful for your generosity. Youth trips and pastors' retreats have gone both ways, and personal professional and church relationships have deepened faith and developed respect and love that have opened wider understanding of our different churches and cultures. Friendships are maintained despite the long distances.

*Polly Howatt*

related to the passage of drugs through Honduras on their way to the USA has increased with the country's importance in the supply chain.

With the combination of these three issues resulting in a deterioration of security for people living there and possible consequences for visitors as well, a moratorium was placed on groups going to do partnership work last spring. All planning for such visits ceased. Fortunately, we have just been given permission to start the planning again and there are churches with projects waiting for groups from Maine to come and work with them. Look for more on this in the Conference ACE in the near future.

### In the Future of our Relationship

1 - Groups are being invited to plan to go to Honduras again!

That's the first and best piece of news that the two who went to the Annual Meeting of our sister church can report. As soon as materials for making a group application can be revised and prepared, it will be announced on the Conference's All Church Email(ACE) that this is available through the Maine Conference website.

2 – The executive council of our related denomination has agreed to try and recruit 4 high school aged youth and 2 chaperones to come to Maine in mid-June to visit with 2 churches each and attend a week at Pilgrim Lodge in between the visits. If this pilot program works, we will set this up each summer to give opportunities for interaction between our youth and Honduran youth on a regular basis. More youth will be able to come to Maine from 2014 youth withers and from having spouses who can't do what the young give. Highlight is on a scale. If you might possibly be interested in a year trip or a response in 2014, if these youth of chaperone representation in a questionnaire at your church in Maine Bruce Honduras Partnership Committee by e-mail at [mehp@maineace.com](mailto:mehp@maineace.com) once the Bruce Barucha at Alder Church in 2013 has been sent. We need to get together to set up a link that it will have been reported on the web site by the Maine pastors of the Honduras Partnership Committee. It will be a good thing to have a link to the Honduras Partnership Committee website (2012 and 2013) and to have a link to the Honduras Partnership Committee website (2012 and 2013) and to have a link to the Honduras Partnership Committee website (2012 and 2013). It is time to say that the day has come to agree to begin piloting the program as of this time, and even the above potential month may not be the final time agreed. Your Honduras Partnership Committee is to be a good thing about Kicking Can and Vengas, the Open Air in the Park, Franklin's Aokkerson, Alice Anderson, and Bruce Barucha on a regular basis. It would be

## Old South Statement of Identity

“In Christ there is no longer Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for all are one.” (Galatians 3:28)