

Old South First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

June Telstar 2013

Beloved Community,

As I wrote in my Spring Annual Report (reprinted on page 18), a healthy congregation is a like a healthy garden: new life emerges as the season fades for other parts of the ecosystem. It's the circle of life, and God called that good!

In June, this sacred cycle will play out before our eyes. We will honor two of our most vibrant ministries as they prepare to take a well-deserved break for the summer: our children's ministry (June 9) and our choir (June 16). We will also welcome our newly elected moderator, Sherry Jenckes, and launch Old South's newest ministry to the community, "Plant Another Row" (see pg 5).

As most of our committees begin their hiatus, our extraordinary fundraising team will be planning two of Old South's most iconic events: Pie on the Porch during the Farmington Summer Solstice Fair on June 22, and Strawberry Shortcake on Independence Day.



A Few Notes about Upcoming Services

Bell and Steeple Dedication We will have my official installation as your pastor on July 21 at 2 pm, just one week before my one-year anniversary.

On Sunday, June 2 we will honor all who helped make possible the restoration of our bell, supports, and steeple. Please join us in worship as we celebrate this Old South treasure, as well as its many stewards in our community.

Although many in our community scatter to the lakes or the ocean during these short months of summer bliss, our nearly 200-year-old faith community never lacks opportunities to connect. Check out the following pages to see what summer could hold for your family at Old South.

Children's Sunday
We will be celebrating our youth and children's ministries on Sunday, June 9, during our morning worship. We thank all of our dedicated Sunday School teachers, Sunday School Superintendents, Christian Education Committee, our Interim Youth Program Coordinator and of course, our youth, for the many joyful ways they add to our experience of worship

Blessings on the Journey
Alexis

for July 21 at 2:00 pm at Old South so mark your calendars now and plan to come to this very special event.

From the Moderator:

Greetings Church Family,

When I was asked to serve as moderator, my first thought was that Donna is leaving pretty big shoes to fill. Have you seen that lady's cowgirl boots? One thing that has been especially meaningful, and helpful over the past three plus years has been Donna's wonderful Telstar messages each month. Through all the changes and challenges, there's been this steady, loving, supportive and reassuring voice telling us in so many ways that we are an exceptionally blessed church family, God is with us on our journey through transitions, and we will be OK. Thank you, Donna.

As committees change, new folks come on board to serve in the life of the church, others step back or shift to new calls, I assume that I have not been alone in the discernment process to consider how to answer a call to serve in a new way. So, for me it came down to a few basic questions: do I have the time and energy to serve joyfully in this role, how would it feel to say yes, and how would it feel to say no? The yes/no questions were pretty clear. It felt like a heavy weight was lifted. The serving "joyfully" part took a little more exploration. Ultimately it changed from being a question to an intention.



We are a busy, vibrant, emerging church. Yes, time and energy consuming church. Everyone serving, either in a new way, or in a continuing one at Old South does so in the midst of

All the Annual Business Meeting on May 10 of the Grinber As we work together, play together, serve together, Director of Youth and Children's Ministries, reach out to the wider community, engage with our global family, and worship the God that brings us together in sacred community, there is great joy to be shared. I am honored to be called, and filled with joy to serve with you.

Sherry Jendras pleased that the congregation has agreed with our nomination of Jodie for this important role.



Everyday Justice. This slim, easily readable work looks into seven different topics and offers possibilities for what we might do as individuals to address these various forms of injustice. (We also discussed possible congregational actions -- more on that this fall.) Some of

the topics are familiar to us at Old South, such as the poverty faced by global coffee farmers and the role that fair-trade coffee can play in improving their lot, or the importance of proper electronic waste disposal. Others have received occasional attention here, like choosing to eat in a way that doesn't implicitly sanction unjust workers' conditions, unwanted chemical treatments, and unwise carbon emissions as food is shipped thousands of miles to reach us. And still other topics, like the issues surrounding clothing -- the chemicals that can harm farm workers, garment workers, and us, and the sweatshop conditions under which all too many garment workers labor -- had not been addressed here before.

In her seven chapters Clawson covers seven broad, overlapping areas: coffee; chocolate; cars (fossil fuels and Earthcare); food; clothing; waste (plastics, recycling, consumerism); and debt (poor nations skimping on health and education to pay back loans). In our book group we had time to cover all but the last chapter. Although the book is fairly recent (2009) new manifestations of these issues pop up all the time, so we also looked at some news articles from the past twelve months. The most instructive and tragic example of this was the April 24 Rana Plaza disaster in Bangladesh, the sweatshop building collapse that killed at least 1100 workers; earning wages as low as \$37 per month. (Local labor organizers estimate \$60 per month as the bare minimum livable wage given the cost of living.) Her income gave her a sense of independence, so that when her husband mistreated her, she left him. Even more unaddressed: Western retailers turning a blind eye to conditions in their supply chain. Western consumers interested in nothing but saving a few cents on a cheap T-shirt; and perhaps most difficult of all, the question of whether several million Bangladeshi women aren't given when born. But the need for money forced her to go to work on April 24 even though everyone knew that the building had developed cracks the day before, because her bosses clearly didn't care about the safety problem. "I need to buy milk for my son" she had explained to her family. Now her son lacks more than just milk.

So how do we address these problems and the other problems

customers and accepting some responsibility for the situation, these companies will preserve jobs while making them safer. The Walt Disney Company, on the other hand, quickly severed ties with all Bangladeshi factories, a cut-and-run approach that places corporate image above human needs.

Clawson writes from a faith-based perspective, reminding us that human needs also happen to be God's desires. The simplest daily choices -- choosing a tomato to eat, remembering to bring a cloth grocery bag to put it in, selecting a car to drive it home in, diapering a baby, clothing an adult, munching a piece of chocolate that wasn't produced with child slave labor -- can be acts of faith, because they have powerful repercussions for multitudes of God's children. We typically don't see those people, don't know them, perhaps don't inhabit the same tectonic plate; but they're there all the same, relying on us to make choices that permit them to live a life of *shalom*, of peace and wholeness. Toxins, brutal work conditions, rising sea levels, poverty, and unfreedom make wholeness impossible, but it is in our power to create a better world, to build God's kingdom on Earth. In some areas, like recycling, we're making progress; in others, like sweatshops, perhaps this is the moment when things will start to improve; but for others, like climate change, the CO₂ concentration is 400 parts per million with no turnaround in sight. Yet if a fuel economy seems so entrenched that committed individuals can't make a difference, Clawson reminds us that we have been seemed that way as well, and that after decades of struggle the abolitionists finally prevailed. Acting as individuals, as congregations, as citizens and as consumers, we have the hands and feet and voices in the world, we too can prevail.

Chris Magri



and cookies/bars. And, as always, we will need helpers to set up tables, serve our guests, and help with the clean up. There is always room for more helpers, so please consider joining us. There is no long-term commitment necessary.

We have also made the decision again this year to take the months of July and August off, so we will be resuming this ministry in September.

Stan Wheeler, Rocell Marcellino, Co-chairs



Stone Soup Bible Study

We are currently working to identify those of you who are interested in a weekly Bible Study group. Please contact Phyllis (778-0424) in the church office to be added to this list or sign your name up on the list posted in the Vestry (Assembly Room) today, and we will be in touch with you!

Psalm 32 Galatians 2:15-21 Luke 7:36-8:3

June Lectionary Readings

- Fifth Sunday after Pentecost 2013 June 23,
 Second Sunday after Pentecost 2013 June 2,
 Psalm 19:1-4, (5-7), 8-15a
 Psalm 42 and 43 Isaiah 65:1-9
 1 Kings 18:20-21, (22-29), 30-39
 Psalm 22:1-9 Galatians 3:23-29 Luke 8:26-39
 Psalm 96:1-9
 Psalm 96:1-9 Galatians 1:1-12 Luke 7:1-10
 Sixth Sunday after Pentecost 2013 June 30,
 Third Sunday after Pentecost 2013 June 9, 2013
 2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14
 Psalm 77:1-2, 19-20 Psalms 119:15-16, 19-21
 Psalm 146:1-5 Kings 17:1-24
 Psalm 16 Galatians 5:1, 13-25 Luke 9:51-62
 Psalm 30 Galatians 1:11-24 Luke 7:11-17
- Fourth Sunday after Pe 2013 June 16,
 1 Kir i-21a
 Psalm 5:1 10, 13-15



On June 2, we will be recognizing our graduating seniors, including Ryan Flanagan, Joshua Marcellino, and Omar Salem.

Celebration Sunday

Celebration Sunday just around the corner! We will wrap up the Sunday School year on June 9th. Following worship, the Sunday School invites you to an Open House in their classrooms in the Newman Wing.

Old South Youth Programs

Greetings, Old South Families and Friends,

You are cordially invited to our Sunday School Open House, to be held immediately after the worship service on Children's Sunday, June 9th. Join us for coffee and tea in the Chapel, and tour the classrooms both upstairs and down to see what we've been working on. Children will be serving refreshments in each classroom. We hope you can join us!

The month of June brings us to several moments of celebration for Old South children and youth. On June 2, we will be recognizing our graduating seniors, including Ryan Flanagan, Joshua Marcellino, and Omar Salem. Then, on June 9, the Children's Sunday service will conclude our Sunday School year. This service will include a discussion-based class for Middle School teens, for an enhanced Chapel time, and for a Youth Group for kids in grades 4, 5, and 6---older children who did not have the opportunity to receive a Bible from Old South when they were younger. We'll also have a moment to see a new music opportunity for younger children. More details to come!

Thank our teachers, whose dedication and service we deeply appreciate. At this service, we'll also hear music from several children and teens, as well as a performance by the Old South Youth Orchestra and Youth Choir.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone at Old South for their warm support as we moved into the position of Director of Youth and Children's Ministries. I deeply appreciate your encouragement, and I sincerely hope to provide the children and teens of Old South with a vibrant and nurturing experience. Although we won't have Sunday School or Youth Group meetings in July or August, we WILL have a party---a Summer Celebration event. Watch for details in the summer electronic edition of Telstar; families will also be contacted via e-mail. Although it's still in the planning stages, the party will most definitely include wacky games and yummy food---and perhaps the biggest ice cream sundae we've ever seen...

With gratitude,

The Farmington Downtown Business Association has cancelled the former SummerFest (moonlight madness) held the last Friday in July. A new event celebrating Summer Solstice will be held on Saturday, June 22. The Fundraising Committee, along with our great Old South volunteers, will be hosting the Pie on the Porch in the afternoon featuring homemade pies, bread pudding, and cold beverages served up with some down home musical entertainment and storytelling.

We will be soliciting 50 pies, bread pudding, vanilla ice cream, canned whipped topping and frozen lemonade. Volunteers will be needed to set up, cashier, serve desserts and beverages, hostess, cut and plate desserts, and clean up. Sign up sheets will be available beginning May 26th. For more information contact Brenda Scribner, Debbie Davis-Robinson or Hallie Yorks.



Annual July 4th Strawberry Shortcake

Old South Church staff will be serving up fresh baked biscuits, put more fresh strawberries at the table, please contact Brenda Scribner, Hallie Yorks or Debbie Davis-Robinson at the Scribner House lawn July 4th during the downtown Farmington festivities. Volunteers will be needed to clean, hull and mash strawberries picked by Pike (during party), as well as folks on the 4th to help bake biscuits, serve and clean up. Don't miss this yummy event. Proceeds benefit Old South Church ministries.



Coffee order

The deadline for **Sunday Fundraising Table** Certified Coffee from Figgal table will be at 8pm on Saturday mornings. Ask Myra Vallette for details. Her email is Hannaford grocery cards and all other groceries or call her at 778-4386 cards and you'd like to be on Myra's table it is to be placed about 10:00 AM. Office ordering days, let office hours. The FRC is looking for



200th Anniversary Celebration

Put your party planning skills to work helping Old South organize our anniversary celebration. If you would like to join the planning committee for our anniversary year events, please notify the church office (farmingtonucc@myfairpoint.net), speak to Pastor Alexis (500-0304 or alexisfullerwright@gmail.com) or Sherry Jenckes (cjenckes@myfairpoint.net).

Telstar News

The next mailed Telstar will be the September issue. However, there will be an electronically sent newsletter sometime this summer. If you would like to be added to our email list, please send your email address to: farmingtonucc@myfairpoint.net



WOMEN'S RETREAT SIGN-UPS UNDERWAY

The Women's Retreat for 2013 is at the Notre Dame Spiritual Center in Alfred, ME. For more information, please join us— a deposit of \$30 will reserve your spot. Check may be made out to "Old South" and marked for the "Women's Retreat" and given to Phyllis Pederson in the church office. Confidential scholarship assistance is available— please speak to Phyllis if you need assistance. If budgeting your payments is helpful, from my Old South Family, we'd love to help you so much for the gift I received on Sunday May 19 at the end of my last annual meeting as Moderator. As many of you probably did not see it, I was given, on behalf of all of you, a Peace Dove made in Haiti from recycled 50 gallon drums and purchased from a Fair Trade organization called Ten Thousand Villages. I don't think you could have hit on more of my "hot buttons" than finding something recycled from "drums". Fair Trade. and a symbol of



Note of Thanks

A friend once told me that every lesson in life can be found in a garden. As I look out at my garden now, I see the circle of life at work: the crocuses, our first signs of life this spring, are already dying back, making room for the next set of green shoots. Everything has its cycle – and God called that good.

We find ourselves in the midst of our own life cycle at Old South. Some of our ministries are in full, vibrant bloom, bringing new color and dimension into our community all the time. Others remain strong and steady in the background, like the faithful evergreens that dot our landscape. Still others that have flourished for years are ready to pull back and make room for new growth. This is what a healthy garden looks like.

Of course, successful gardening must start with tilled, well-nourished soil. To that end, the governing council has voted to move forward this fall with a new visioning process; we want to create the healthiest soil we can for Old South to flourish.

In our case, that means embarking on a congregational discernment process to look at who we are, where we are, and what God is calling us to do and be. We often think that thriving churches are generalists –being all things to all people. ~~As you know, that is a false assumption. This process has a particular gift for us: it is a process that will help us discern our particular gifts and how we can best use them. It is a process that will help us discern our particular gifts and how we can best use them. It is a process that will help us discern our particular gifts and how we can best use them.~~ As you know, that is a false assumption. This process has a particular gift for us: it is a process that will help us discern our particular gifts and how we can best use them. It is a process that will help us discern our particular gifts and how we can best use them. It is a process that will help us discern our particular gifts and how we can best use them.

Inspired by the book *Holy Conversations* by Gill Rendle & Adam Mann, the governing council is putting together a team of six lay leaders who will lead a series of small group “holy conversations” this fall. Authentic soil can only come from the congregation, so that is where the process begins. These “holy conversations” will not only help us define our identity and purpose, but also discern what the church could look like if our mission were fulfilled.

Pastor Alexis will be away June 26-July 5 to attend the United Church of Christ General Synod in Long Beach, California. She will still be available by phone for pastoral emergencies at 207/500-0304. During this time, you may also contact the

church: open to all, and affirming of all God's beloved children.
No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are
welcome here.

Rev. Alexis Fuller-Wright
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