

Cross Ways

The Newsletter of
The Congregational Church of Brookfield
160 Whisconier Road,
Brookfield, CT 06804
(203) 775-1259

February 2012



“Shrove Sunday” Pancake Supper

February 19th 5:30—7 pm

Fellowship Hall

Come join the Fellowship and Christian Education Committees as we kick-off the Lenten Season! We'll start with pancakes, sausages, and more and then we'll enjoy some games and activities *for all ages*. This promises to be a fun event, so please come join us as we begin Lent with a little bit of a Mardi Gras influence. Please bring a canned good for the Brookfield Food Pantry if you are able. We hope to see all of you there. *Bring a friend!*

Crossways for Church Council Meeting of January 10, 2012

In an effort to keep the congregation informed this is a brief summary of items discussed during the monthly Church Council Meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Commend those who have been committed to keeping their pledges current. Committees are keeping their budgets in line.

Aquarian Water Line Project Update: A task force will continue to meet to determine the best usage for the monies received for this project. There will be an excavation of part of the parking lot to bring a water line into the church. The fire hydrant was not installed on church property as originally planned- it is on the island between Rte 133 and Rte 25. Project completion projection is January 23rd.

Committee Reports:

Church in Society: Will be holding a food drive in February for the local food pantry.

Christian Education: The committee is working on education matters for Lent.

Deacons: The committee reviewed, updated and approved the membership list.

Church Growth: The next new member Sunday will be March 4th. Open houses will occur on 1/29 and 2/12.

Church House: The committee is working on creating a list of the priorities of projects for the church property. A few items on the list are roof, painting the church, repair and painting of the steeple, gutters, flooring in the meetinghouse, cushions in the meetinghouse.

Church Council Meetings are open to all and are scheduled for the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 in Brooks Hall. If you would like to have something put on the agenda for a Church Council meeting please contact Les Slater, Moderator or Nancy Vodra, Vice Moderator.



Stressed? Feeling Down? Need Encouragement?

Stephen Ministers provide care for people experiencing a major crisis as well as support for people weighed down by the little things in life. If you're going through a major crisis or if you're feeling down, lonely, stressed or discouraged, you could benefit from the care, support, and encouragement of a Stephen Minister. It's free. It's confidential. And it will really make a difference in your life!

What is Stephen ministry?

Stephen Ministry is grounded in Jesus' command to love one another. Through one-to-one caring and confidential relationships, those who are hurting receive the love and care they need to support them.

What is Stephen ministry for?

Loneliness	Hospitalization
Loss of a spouse	Separation and divorce
Retirement	Grief
Unemployment	Terminal illness
Despair	Being shut-in
Childbirth	Most of life's struggles

What Does Stephen Ministry Provide?

Someone who cares	Someone who supports
Someone who listens	Someone who prays for you

Who Can Benefit?

Anyone going through difficult times who needs someone to care, listen and share God's love with them on a one-to-one confidential basis.

To request a Stephen Minister to walk with you during this time of difficulty in your life call the church office (203) 775-1259 and speak to one of our Pastors who will connect you to a Stephen Minister. Remember, God never intended us to go through difficult times alone.



Report of the 2011 Giving Tree

Thanks to the generous response by the congregation to the 2011 Giving Tree project, we were able to deliver Christmas gifts to three (3) “adopted” families through the Brookfield Social Services (BSS), and sixteen (16) individuals through Interfaith AIDS Ministry (IAM). We delivered over 40 gifts wrapped with love to Social Services and approximately 48 gifts to IAM. The generosity of our congregation is nothing short of a miracle witnessed each and every year. Five families of our congregation also combined donations for a large gift item request that came to us through Social Services. BSS has been overwhelmed by and appreciative of our generosity. They know that they can come to our church with any requests, and we will fulfill them with joy.

In addition, The Church in Society Committee delivered many donations to Miriam’s Kitchen, Dorothy Day and Holy Joe’s Cafe. Many extra gift cards were given to BSS, IAM and a few to our own CCB Pastors’ Fund to use where needed this holiday season and beyond. In these difficult financial times, to know that we had “extra” gifts to give, above and beyond our gifts to the families that we committed to assist, shows of the love of a wonderful church community.

The CIS Committee thanks all who joined in sharing the joys of Christmas gifting and extends a round of applause to you for bringing your packages properly marked to the church by the due date. Every gift arrived on time!



Madeline Honeyford and Emma Gianoplus are hosting an Oxfam America Hunger Banquet at CCB in March for their confirmation project. For those of you who are unfamiliar with this event, At an *Oxfam America Hunger Banquet*, guests randomly draw tickets that assign them to different income levels, based on the latest statistics about the number of people living in poverty. Depending on where they sit, some receive a filling dinner, while others eat a simple meal or share sparse portions of rice and water. This event will blow your mind and make you appreciate how fortunate we are to enjoy the gifts that God has given us. We hope you can clear your calendars for this exciting event!



Feeding Hungry Hearts Food Drive

Please join *Church In Society* with helping those in our midst who are less fortunate.

This year we will continue to support *Brookfield Social Services Food Pantry*, as well as add a new opportunity, the *Morning Glory Breakfast Program*.

During the month of February we ask that you pick up a shopping bag in Brooks Hall or Fellowship Hall, take the attached list to your local grocer, and purchase items in need. Please return your bag to Brooks Hall during February and CIS will deliver your donations to Social Services in the Town Hall.

The Morning Glory Breakfast Program, located at Dorothy Day Hospitality House, is an operation in Danbury that serves a hot balanced breakfast to the hungry five days a week. Over the past four-and-a half years they have served over 100,000 breakfasts. A donation of \$25.00 would feed a hungry individual for a month at Morning Glory, although any donation would be appreciated. Checks can be made out to "Catholic Charities Morning Glory Breakfast Program". A representative will be speaking during a service in February so we can learn more about this wonderful program.



Join the JYF on Super Bowl Sunday (Feb. 5th) for the SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

Each year groups from across the country take time on SuperBowl Sunday to collect donations for local food charities. This year the Junior Youth Fellowship will be collecting monetary donations after both services to benefit the Brookfield Food Pantry.

Check out these Stats:

\$60 – the amount the average American spent on SuperBowl Party related items and snacks in 2011.

\$3 million – The cost of a 30 second TV ad during the SuperBowl in 2011.

\$9.6 million – The amount of money raised for over 10,000 charities across the US in 2011 through Souper Bowl of Caring.

49 million – The number of Americans living in food insecure households, including over 16 million children

So grab that extra change or more – bring it to church and put it in the soup pots on February 5th. While you are watching the SuperBowl that night you will know that you did your part in helping serve those who are less fortunate. *Thank you in advance for your support!*

Adult Education Opportunities

What Happens When We Pray? – February 20, 2012

Do you wonder what happens when you pray? Even if we believe that prayer is an important and necessary way to maintain our relationship with God, we often come to moments when we question, or merely wonder, whether our prayers make any difference. This conversation about prayer will provide a safe place to present questions that arise and a time to reflect on what we believe about prayer, especially when we ask God for something. ***Join us on Monday, February 20th from 7-8:30 pm in Brooks Hall for this discussion and educational opportunity.*** (We will also have a chance to review some of the basics about prayer that we shared in our “How to Pray for and With Others” class last fall.)

Contemporary Issues Study

The Monday Morning Women’s Group has begun studying contemporary issues such as social programs, education, reproductive rights, tax reform, campaign finance reform, war and military spending, and phobias & prejudice from 9:30-11am on Mondays in the Church Library using some essays from William Sloane Coffin’s book *The Heart is a Little to the Left*, resources from the Bible, information from the UCC, and the news.

We understand that some others of you may be interested in “tackling” these topics from a faith perspective. If you are and would like to find an alternative time to meet and discuss please speak with Pastor Jen (203-775-1259 or jennifer@ucgb.org).

Lent Is Coming...

Lent is on its way, and here are just a few of the highlights that we will experience together as we explore **God’s Wellspring of Welcome:**

Sunday, February 19th – Shrove Sunday Pancake Dinner – 5:30-7pm

Join us as we kick off Lent in Fellowship Hall with this great opportunity for good food, trivia challenges, a service project, and more. This is an ALL ages event. (Note: Gluten free options will be available.)

Wednesday, February 22nd – Ash Wednesday Service – 7:30am

Come to the Meetinghouse for this service of centering and optional imposition of ashes to begin your Lenten Journey.

Tuesday Lenten Lunches in Fellowship Hall on February 28th, March 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th, and April 3rd.

Preaching and Worship based on some of the Old Testament “Standards” – scriptures about the very beginning of faith and covenant relationship with our God.

Adult Education Opportunities about contemporary issues, unbinding our hearts, and more. (See more information in articles throughout this issue of Crossways, in the Sunday bulletins, and online at www.ucgb.org.)

Youth Fellowship Opportunities for service, ecumenical gathering, and relationship building.

We look forward to growing and transforming on our Lenten Journey together!



Senior Youth Fellowship in February

Saturday, February 4th = Jungle Themed Laser Tag & Pizza Night – 6:30-10 pm

You asked for it, and here it is! Let's go laser tagging. The Shelton Sports Complex is home to Jungle Themed Laser Tag, where you are dropped into the middle of the jungle and need to protect yourself and your teammates. We will meet at CCB at 6:30 pm and return by 10 pm. Bring \$15 which includes pizza dinner, a private room, and an hour of laser tag exclusively for our group. *(Note: If this cost is prohibitive for you please speak with Pastor Jen. We have funds to be sure that EVERYONE is able to join in the laser-tagging fun!)*

Sunday, February 5th = NO MEETING

Sunday, February 12th = Are You For Real? – 7-8:30 pm

What's in name? A look? A silent pause? These used to be the questions people had to ask. Now it's all about Facebook, Twitter, and other types of social media. Have you ever had a tough time "reading" what someone meant by a post to your wall or by a phrase sent in a text? Even emoticons can be deceiving! Let's take some time to figure out what are the highs and lows of social media – and to test if who we are in SYF (and at CCB) is who we are online and beyond the walls of the church as well.

Sunday, February 19th = Shrove Sunday Pancake Dinner

We are kicking off the season of Lent once again with a fabulous pancake dinner. *SYF will host a community service opportunity for everyone to participate in before dinner starts*, and then we will stay on to eat LOTS of pancakes, to try our hand at some CCB and Lenten Trivia, and to see if we might not win in the pancake flipping relay. Please bring a canned good or two for the Food Pantry (some of the most needed items include stews, hearty soups, and canned meats). We will work to help set up for dinner and our service opportunity beginning at **5 pm** and will stay on to help clean up until about **7:30 pm**. Join us for part or all of this great evening! Families are welcome for dinner from 5:30-7 pm.

Sunday, February 26th = You've Got a Friend In Me – 7-8:30 pm

What does it mean to love your neighbor as yourself – especially if your neighbor seems different in lots of ways? You don't have to go to a different country to find the challenge that this question presents...but just walk down the halls in school, or through the door at youth fellowship. Tonight is the night to talk about the difference between acquaintances and friends, and how to have the courage to be an ally to those who might be different than you.

Junior Youth Fellowship in February

Sunday, February 5th = Souper Bowl of Caring

Join us in sharing about this GREAT organization and event that happens on Super Bowl Sunday each year. We will be planning for this morning on Sunday, January 29th during our JYF meeting. We will need people to participate in an announcement during worship and in Children's Chapel, to collect donations for Souper Bowl of Caring, and to count the donations after church. All of the proceeds will go to the Brookfield Social Services Food Pantry.

Sunday, February 5th = NO Evening Meeting

Sunday, February 12th = It Just Takes a Little Chocolate – 5-6:30pm

This just happens to be the Sunday before Valentine's Day and what better a way to celebrate then to spend some time talking about the holiday, participating in some Valentine's activities, and creating chocolate goodies for ourselves and goodie bags to share with the senior citizens who use the Brookfield Food Pantry? We hope you can join us!

Sunday, February 19th = Shrove Sunday Pancake Dinner – 5:30-7pm

We are kicking off the season of Lent once again with a fabulous pancake dinner. On the menu for the evening: a service project, LOTS of pancakes, some CCB and Lenten Trivia, and a pancake flipping relay. Please bring a canned good or two for the Food Pantry (some of the most needed items include stews, hearty soups, and canned meats).

Families are welcome!

Sunday, February 26th = Do You Hear What I Hear? – 5-6:30pm

Are you a good listener? Are you good at sharing openly about yourself and what is important to you? What do you think other people really hear when you are talking? What way is the most comfortable for you to communicate with other people (i.e. in person, on line, via phone, etc.). We will have a chance to explore these questions and to practice some listening skills. Come on out...it might just be informative AND Fun!

Confirmation Class



Confirmation Class will meet on **Monday, February 13th from 7-8:30 pm**. We will be discussing History (of Christianity, the church, the UCC, and CCB). Remember to bring your Check-In Assignments if you have not turned them in already.

The Confirmation Healthy Choices Retreat will take place from **Saturday afternoon, February 25th - Sunday, February 26th**. More details will be arriving in the mail and via e-mail.





SERRV Valentine Sale

Would you like an opportunity to help those in need and find a gift for your Valentine at the same time? A Serrv sale can fill that role!!!

A sale will be offered after both services on **Sunday January 29** (for you early prepared shoppers) and again on **February 12** for the last minute shoppers among us! Pick your date and see the new gift items available. Any questions or requests, please contact Linda Siciliano, Karen Underhill or Marie Immohr.



Save the Date!
Saturday
March 17, 2012

Job lists will be posted outside the office, please sign up and join the effort.

In addition, The Church House Committee would like to thank Pete McPadden for climbing way, way up to change the outdoor flood lamps on the steeple and the back of Fellowship Hall.

We also continue to thank John Morrison and the Gang for their work at the Parsonage and everywhere else Church House can't get to. In addition to all the work at the Parsonage, here are a few jobs the Gang have taken on recently:

- Installing the partitions in the men's bathroom
- Replacing the water-soaked wall by the mailboxes and removing the leaking radiator
- Repairing the post lamp by the court yard walk

The ***Job Search Workshop***, formerly called the Career Networking group, is a group focused on those who are unemployed or returning to the workplace and would like to get some advice and share ideas. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays at 9:30 in Brooks Hall, when there is sufficient interest. Please email our facilitator, Sue Lemke, a 20 year Career Services professional if you are interested or for more information.

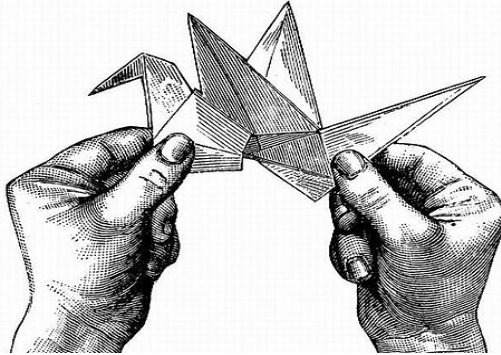


Crossways Deadline

Articles for the March issue of Crossways should be emailed to me by February 15, 2012. If you do not have access to email, please leave your articles at the church office. If you have any questions please contact.

Thanks,
Val Jackson

Stewardship 2012
Transforming Attitudes
Count Yourself Blessed



Your pledge transforms our church ...
Can it also transform your heart?

During our stewardship campaign this year we are exploring the many ways our giving can be a powerful and transformative action in the world. ***We're asking if you could consider this year increasing your giving by \$5 per week.*** By "stepping up" your pledge you will not only boost our budget so that many more lives can be transformed by our ministries, we are confident that you will also find your own attitude transformed as well.

If you would like to receive pledge information, please contact us at office@uccb.org. You may also give online at www.uccb.org and click on the stewardship link.

Join us in worship this month and be a part of the transformation. ***Please return pledge cards as soon as you can, but by Feb. 26th at the latest. Thank you!***

Fellowship Of Concern



CONTINUING CONCERNS:

Don Baker & Edie Yake
Judith Fisher
Donna Geck
Evelyn Gerowe
Anne Hardin
Joyce Insull
Madeline Hanewicz
Marian Magilton
Marge Nohe
Audrey Taylor & John Stryker
Bill Ward

See printed CrossWays for addresses.

IN MEMORIAM:

Our sympathy is extended to:

- Ron Geck and family, on the death of his Uncle John on Jan. 14, 2012.

WITH THANKS:

Dear CCB Family:

I would like to thank all of the angels at the church for caring for Dominic and I. Everyone's love and blessings helped us and our families during our difficult times with his illness and then with his passing. The celebration of his life on Saturday, January 14th at the church was a blessed event surrounded by love.

With thanks,
Cindy Field

Dear Saint Nick,

You did it! You found your way to my heart, yet again. Clearly we have walked the path at CCB with heartfelt meanings from the Yankee Fair to inclusive pageants and campfire riddles. You deserve a smartie! Many thanks for your Christmas "Nick". However you did reveal yourself, behind your white beard, you did reveal yourself. You have keen insights and a generous heart... Thank you Nick! Thanks for all the memories.
(Name withheld)

Dear Members of the Congregational Church,

I will no longer be coming to your church. Since I have had a stroke, my daughter brought me down to Elizabeth City, an assisted living home. It is only 10 minutes from my daughter so we visit & walk every-day. It's a lovely place & I have made many friends. Of course I will miss all the friends at church but the Lord works in mysterious ways. We have a lot of activities here which helps in recovery — body & brain!

God Bless You all,
Carolyn Miller

NEW ADDRESS:

Seta Chengrian

Carolyn Miller

Al & Marion Miller

What Do New Members Want? Transformed Lives

This is a core message of Church Growth researcher Martha Grace Reese, whose “Real Life Evangelism” series of books were the product of four years of Lilly Endowment-funded research into mainline churches (much like ours) who are growing and changing – and not stagnating, declining, or dying. Her most shocking statistic was that only 1% of the mainline churches she surveyed actually reached out to “unchurched” people in their communities in significant numbers. The rest of us tend to do the best job in welcoming people who already know how to “do church” – people looking to transfer their membership, not join a church for the first time... or for the first time in a long time.

During our 2012 Lenten Season, which begins February 26, we'll be sharing *stories of transformation*, so please let me or Jen know if you have a story to tell. As we look at our theme “*Wellspring of Welcome*” we'll talk about what it means to be a people who (like our Hebrew ancestors in faith) live in faithful covenant with God and with one another. Building loving and caring relationships are a huge part of who we are at CCB, and those healthy human and holy connections can be powerfully healing and transformative... especially to people who have experienced persecution or exclusion in other settings.

Some of the questions that Reese addresses with her research are:

- Why do people first visit the church they join?
- What gets visitors back for a second visit?
- Why do new members join?
- At what points in their lives are people most open to becoming involved (or re-involved) in church?
- What does conversion or recommitment look like?
- What aspects of being a Christian are most important to you?

If you who'd like to learn more about what current research shows about these questions or if you would like to explore more about your own faith journey and spiritual transformation process, our 5 pm Sunday night Adult Study Group will read Martha Grace Reese's “*Unbinding Your Heart: 40 Days of Faith Sharing*” this Lent. If you are interested in joining us for this 6-week series, please let me know so that we can order a book for you.

As Jesus said, “Follow me, and I will make you fish for people!” So we hope you will join us as we learn together how to pray and connect better with the Holy Spirit — and how to learn from Jesus, as our “mentor” and companion in the Christian Way. Through God's grace, we receive strength to participate in God's Reign of Love as “fisher-disciples” who can confidently and courageously reach out to others in Christ's name.

Board of Deacons

Your Deacon Branch provides a way for you to have a specific member of the Board with whom to relate. If you have requests or concerns that you'd like to share with a lay person, your Deacon is available. Naturally, if you're more comfortable calling one of the other deacons, or one of your pastors, please feel free to do so. Such requests or concerns might include:

- a need for prayer
- a request for help (transport to a doctor's appointment, church function, etc.)
- a sorrow (illness, accident, death)
- a joy (a birth, graduation, upcoming wedding, etc.)
- something that particularly pleases you, or would better meet your needs in the worship service

Remember, if you don't know your Deacon, ask someone to introduce you. He or she will look forward to meeting you – in church or out!

A-BEN	Greg Berner
BER-CI	Barbara Anderson
CL-DI	Joanna Sanderson
DO-FI	Bob Bergman
FO-HI	Carol Howe
HO-LA	Sue Boughton
LE-MAR	Walt Fisher
MAT-MU	Sharon Santi
N-RI	Margitta Savo
RO-SI	Linae Wutzl
SL-T	Dan McKee
U-Z	Martha Parvis

Deacon Branches 2011-2012

Deacon at Large: Kylie D'Arcangelo

Youth Deacons:

Grant Morrison
Lauren Timmerman

Time to start dreaming of summertime at the lake!

Silver Lake Church Camp applications are here...

If someone in your family is interested in signing up for a week this summer at the Silver Lake Conference Center — our wonderful United Church of Christ camp in beautiful northwestern (Sharon) Connecticut — just stop by the Church Office and pick up an application, or you can apply on-line at www.ctucc.org. Conferences are available for those entering grade 4 and older.

NOTE: *All Fairfield East Association campership applications must be completed and returned by **April 1** this year. Some additional financial aid is also available through our CCB Christian Growth and Enrichment Fund. Please talk to Pastor Bryn or Pastor Jen if you need to apply.*

You are invited to join us for a *CRUCIAL Leadership Development Opportunity!*

What? “Crucial Conversations” Training with Richard Stewart

When? Saturday, Feb. 11, 2012

8:30 am to 5 pm

Cost: \$15 for lunch (curriculum packs for 25 participants, which sell at \$250 each, were donated by the authors to Richard)

Registration Deadline: Feb. 5 (please RSVP to office@ucgb.org)

Where? First Congregational Church of Danbury

164 Deer Hill Avenue
Danbury, CT 06810
(203) 744-6177

NOTE: *Free parking is available on Saturdays at the Danbury city lot across the street.*

“Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking when Stakes Are High”

The authors are leading authorities in organizational effectiveness and leadership. Their book is the basis for this 7 ½ hour training that will teach and help you practice the tools to handle life’s most difficult and important conversations. You’ll learn how to:

- Prepare well for high-stakes conversations in potentially conflict-laden situations
- Transform anger and hurt feelings into powerful, transformative dialogue
- Make it safe to talk about almost anything
- Be persuasive, not abrasive

Committee Chairmen and Church Council Reps

Please call these elected representatives with any questions or comments regarding any matter of interest or concern to you:

Moderator: Les Slater
Vice Moderator: Nancy Vodra
Clerk: Lyn Lyon
Treasurer: Laurie Matson
Investment Treasurer: Greg Labas

Committee Chairs

Christian Ed Monica Pondiccio
Church Growth Mike Anastas
Church House Kathy Wandelmaier
Church-In-Society Sue Slater
Deacons Sharon Santi
Fellowship Maurice Downey
Nominating Dave Honeyford
Personnel Walt Fisher
Stewardship Lisa Brown
Worship Jean Dorrell

Church Council Representatives

Christian Ed Robin Montgomery
Church Growth Jan Labas
Church House Sandy Boughton
Church In Society Marianne Gaffey
Deacons Linae Wutzl
Fellowship Kim Downey
Nominating Jean Dorrell
Stewardship Desere Edwards
Worship Kristen Dorrell
Historian Gordon Markiewicz
Anniversary Campaign: Nancy Vodra

Pastoral Relations Committee

Jean Dorrell (chair), Dave Honeyford, Robin Murphy, Leslie Sands, and Richard Stewart

<i>Senior Pastor</i>	<i>Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia</i>	
<i>Associate Pastor</i>	<i>Rev. Jennifer Whipple</i>	
<i>Organist/Choir</i>	<i>Toni Sullivan</i>	
<i>Church School</i>	<i>Heather Berner</i>	
<i>Church Office</i>	<i>Jeannine McCullough</i>	<i>Office: 203-775-1259 office@uccb.org</i>



In Between Opportunity – Sunday, February 5th.

Join Pastor Jen in Fellowship Hall from 9:30-10:15 am for a discussion about *“What I Learned on Sabbatical: A Quick Journey through 3 Months of Family Time, Faith Building, and Fires!”* This will be a chance to hear a little bit more about what sabbatical time was like for Pastor Jen, as well as to ask questions about what this time may have meant for the ministries of our church.

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Non-Profit Org. U.S. POSTAGE PAID Brookfield, CT

Sunday Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

The Rev. Bryn Smallwood-Garcia, Senior Pastor
The Rev. Jennifer Whipple, Associate Pastor
The Rev. M. S. Desmond, Pastor Emeritus



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED