

# THE HERALD

March & April 2015 Volume 12 Issue 3



## HOLY WEEK

### LISTENING to God and to Each Other: Small Group gatherings during Lent

**All-Ages Video Discussion Group:** Wednesday evenings in Lent (March 18, 25): 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm, hosted by the Youth Group in the Youth Room.

**Centering Prayer:** Thursday evenings in Lent  
5:30 – 6:15 pm — Bell Loft, Saugatuck Church

**Small Group Book Discussion:** Sunday afternoons in Lent (March 22, 29): 3:30 – 5:00 pm. Discussion led by Rev. Alison Patton.

*BOOK: Jesus is the Question: The 307 Questions Jesus Asked and the 3 He Answered, by Martin Copenhaver.*

**Palm Sunday – All-Ages Worship – Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>**  
10:00 am – Saugatuck Church Sanctuary

**Tenebrae Service – Maundy Thursday, April 2<sup>th</sup>**  
7:00 pm – Saugatuck Church Sanctuary

**Community Good Friday Service-- The Seven Last Words, April 3<sup>rd</sup> – 12noon-3pm,** hosted by Saugatuck Congregational Church with Christ and Holy Trinity, Saugatuck Church Sanctuary

**Easter Sunday – Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>**  
*Sunrise Service* at Compo Beach (Time TBA)  
*Festival Worship* – 10:00 am – Saugatuck Church Sanctuary

\* Art: *Lent* block print by Memphis artist, Martha Kelly



## Pastoral Reflection at the Rededication Worship for Saugatuck Congregational Church, UCC

*Celebrate all the good things the Lord your God has done for you.”  
“You are here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world.”  
“Christ is building you into a dwelling place for God.”*

“Oil the hinges of our hearts’ doors, that they may swing easily open to welcome you.

There they stood on the sandy banks of the Jordan River – the river they’d just crossed over after years of wandering in the wilderness. Wilderness dust still clung to their feet and ankles; their eyes were wide as they surveyed the beauty before them. “This is it,” thought the Israelites. “THIS is the land that flows with milk and honey, the land we’ve been dreaming about all these years, the home for which we have yearned with our whole hearts...”

It had taken them 40 years to get there, 40 years of wandering, struggle and strife, faith and doubt. And what’s the first thing they did? After they rubbed their eyes in wonder? After they pinched themselves and hugged whomever was close at hand? After they wept or laughed or erupted in cheers or danced like mad on that riverbank? The first thing they did, the first thing they were told to do: was to grab a basket, and fill it with all manner of good things – their first fruits – the produce of this new land – and take it to the temple. There, they were to proclaim these words in public: “My father was a starving Aramean. Our ancestors settled in Egypt, but we suffered terribly at the hands of Pharaoh. Then God heard our cries: God freed us from bondage and led us to this new place. GOD did this! God has been faithful, every step of the way.”

Now here WE stand, on the threshold of a new day, wooden floors built by our ancestors, richly restored and solid beneath our feet. Here we stand after three years of waiting, working and worshipping all around Westport. The dust of the journey still clings to our feet; and our own eyes are wide with wonder, as we rediscover this spiritual home for which so many hearts have

yearned. There are details yet to complete. Our settling in will no doubt, take time. But first things first: On this day, we pause to remember and give thanks – to all of you, and to the Holy One who led us to this moment, this place. We look back long enough to remember the pain and also the promise. We marvel at the long list of faithful, generous-hearted folks who have accompanied us along the way! We look at what we’ve lost, and also what we’ve gained: a basket *full* of blessings: hope born of struggle and insight born of living our lives at a different angle. What new perspectives would we have missed, had we remained within the walls of this beloved Saugatuck Church?

We did not ask for it, and those who stood on the lawn, that night and on the days that followed, those who witnessed the raging fire, and the charred remains, know firsthand how heart-wrenching it is to be displaced, in the blink of an eye, to lose a home that has meant so much to so many, to lose a *building*, and with it, the capacity to extend hospitality; to become a perpetual guest, when we have so often been the host.

No, we did not ask for that. But even as the smoke dissipated, a Saugatuck member offered up this prayer: That our grief might deepen our compassion for others who suffer, might help us to see them more clearly.

I was interviewing for this position at the time, just coming to understand how the fire had impacted this community, and that prayer pulled me up short: honest and courageous, prayed as it was just weeks after the blaze, when Saugatuck’s loss was still fresh and tender to touch. It reminded me, and everyone around that table, that though we have known trial by fire, we

are neither the first, nor the last. Other fires rage with even greater destructive force – literal fires that fragment families and sometimes whole communities, the fires that flare up during war and unrest; and the slower burning fires of injustice, poverty and despair.

So, *this* is among our first fruits: the discovery (or perhaps the rediscovery) that loss has a way of expanding our view, if we let it, of pulling back the curtain to show us that hardship connects us with the whole human race, reminds us that we ought to look after each other, that we are called to be a force for good in the world. “Be kind, for *everyone* is fighting a great battle.” (said the Scottish author Ian McLaren). And “Do not oppress the alien, the sojourner,” God commanded the Israelites, “for you *know* the heart of the sojourner.” (Exodus 23:9). In other words: welcome others, because you know what it’s like to need a gracious welcome.

Here’s something else we’ve seen more clearly, from the vantage point of a Church without Walls: the value of shared ministry; the amazing things we can do together, that are so much better, more interesting, and more impactful than if we did them alone. From community feasts to shared worship; from film discussions at the library to food drives at Thanksgiving; from joint tea parties to joint work projects: Together, we’ve been learning, growing, transforming lives. On the one hand, this is nothing new: Saugatuck Church is grateful to have grown up here, in the heart of Westport, where we’ve collaborated with the Town of Westport, Homes with Hope, the library, the YMCA and so many faith communities, for decades. These last three years just serve

## Musings from the Church Moderator – March 2015

*God, this Lenten season, give us hearts to hear the answers to every question we ask, and integrity to answer the questions before us. ~ Kenneth I. Samuel, Re-Lent, Lent Devotional, 2015*

Now that the amazing Rededication Service is behind us, it is time for the Church Council to forge ahead with the many challenges of living into our new church building. And, believe me; along with the many joys of this incredible new building, with each day there are challenges to face. *God, this Lenten season, give us hearts to hear...*

At last month's Council meeting, the group began the exploration of the work ahead. At the end of the meeting, work groups were formed to research different facets of the church, and they will report back at this month's meeting. *God, give us hearts to hear the answers to every question we ask...*

In addition to this work, the Council will hold a retreat on **April 18, 2015**. This retreat, led by Susan Townsley, United Church of Christ Minister, and open to all members of the congregation, will focus on how the Council will lead during the next year to eighteen months. This retreat will also help the group more clearly discern the purpose of God's work at Saugatuck Church. Please consider joining in for this day of lively discussion and exploration, as many voices are needed. *God...give us integrity to answer the questions before us.*

The challenges are many, but the rewards are great. We do unbelievable work as a church. Open your heart and find your part.

Peace,

Priscilla Long



---

*(Continued from page 2)*

to reinforce the power and potential of our partnerships.

This is our basket of blessings, piled high! We offer it up today, publicly proclaiming: *"Our mothers and fathers were wandering colonists. Our ancestors settled along the Saugatuck River. Here we built our church; and here we flourished for over 175 years. In 2011, we suffered a devastating fire. But God heard our cries: God led us to this new place, sent us companions for the journey and sustained us along the way. GOD did this! Thanks be to God."*

Today, finally, we get to celebrate all these good things; today, we turn again from being guest to being host. We throw wide our doors and say, "Come in!" Here's what I hope you will find when you enter Saugatuck Church: an exuberant welcome and an open spirit. I hope you'll feel honored just as you are, curious or skeptical, grieving or joyful, strong or struggling. Whatever your own faith tradition, I hope you will find here partners for your journey. In short, I hope that we have managed to build a home for God's Spirit. Not the only home, not even God's primary place of residence. God's spirit blows where it chooses, and might just as well show up at your kitchen table, or at the bus stop or even in the board room. But I do hope – indeed trust – that God will choose to dwell here, among us and in us, as God has done all along.

You'll know it to be so, if you meet several Saugatuck members headed out the door even as you walk in. For as one Saugatuck member recently remarked, *"We built the doors to keep the building warm, but not to keep us inside."* Our building was saved from fire, but our hearts, they still burn: with gratitude, and hope and an urge to live and serve others as God first loved us. That's the *second thing* – after we look around us in wonder; after we weep and laugh and erupt in cheers; after we grab that basket, pile it high and declare our thanks: After *all* that comes *living* as God's people, *ever becoming* God's dwelling place. Maybe you will join us – I hope you will: here, within these new-old walls – where we ask our most pressing questions, find comfort and challenge, give thanks and praise; and on the other side of those doors, where the real work begins: extinguishing the fires of injustice, caring for one another, and being a force for good in the world. May our lights so shine.

Amen!

Pastoral Reflection at the Rededication Worship for Saugatuck Congregational Church, UCC  
©Rev. Alison J. Buttrick Patton  
March 8, 2015

# Saugatuck Celebrated! Standing Ovation for our Fire Department



Members of the Westport Fire Department received a standing ovation at Saugatuck Congregational Church rededication service. They included (l-r) Fire Chief Andrew Kingsbury, Assistant Chief Larry Conklin, and Deputy Chief Robert Kepchar. *Dave Matlow for WestportNow.*



The Staples High School Orphenians, Men's Gospel Choir First Congregational Church of Norwalk, Children and Youth of Saugatuck Church, and the Saugatuck Chancel Choir wearing their new choir robes performed at the rededication

*Photos by Bruce Borner and Mark Mathias. For more photos go to our website [www.saugatuckchurch.org](http://www.saugatuckchurch.org)*

## Rededication Worship Participants



The participating Clergy were (left to right): Michael Friedman, Senior Rabbi, Temple Israel; Sara Verasco, Minister, First Congregational Church of Guilford; Michael Ciba, Regional Minister, Fairfield West Association, CT conference UCC; Alexander P. Floyd Marshall, Associate Pastor For Youth and Children's Ministries, Saugatuck Congregational Church; Alison Patton, Pastor, Saugatuck Congregational Church; Kent Siladi, Conference Minister, Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ; Ed Horne, Pastor, United Methodist Church of Westport and Weston; Ted Hoskins, Pastor Emeritus.



With Pastors Alison and Ted Hoskins are several of our Westport politicians (left to right): Jim Marpe, First Selectman; Eileen Flug, Moderator of the RTM, Jonathan Steinberg, State Representative; Helen Garten, Board of Selectman Member; Toni Boucher, State Senator; Gail Lavielle, State Representative.

# Come to the Missions Fair, Sunday March 29!

At our wonderful Rededication Service, Kent Siladi, our UCC Conference Minister told us to *shine!*

Missions has long been a way Saugatuck has shined. We have been known as the “missions church,” a church that serves the poor and works to build a sustainable world.

This year we would like to re-focus our outreach activity by supporting the way you already shine in the organizations you serve as a board member or volunteer and/or by engaging each member as a Co-Steward for one Saugatuck’s mission activities.

The Mission’s Fair during coffee hour on the 29<sup>th</sup> will give you an opportunity to talk with the executive director or representative of each of our Missions Partners to understand their current priorities and programs. This could help you decide whether you would like be one of two advocates for them within the congregation.

There will be a sign up board to indicate the mission partner or initiative you’d like to “steward.” Plus there will be another board to help us compile a list of who is already serving which other organizations.

## ***Mission Partner***

CCGB (Council of Churches)  
Homes with Hope  
Open Door Shelter  
P2P (Person to Person)  
Pivot Ministries  
Positive Directions  
Saugatuck Nursery School  
Silver Lake

## ***Other Missions Initiatives***

Christmas Offering  
Easter Offering  
McGivney Camperships offering  
One Great Hour of Sharing offering  
Pastor’s Discretionary Fund offering  
Environmental Action  
Bread for the World letter writing  
Crop Walk, May 3  
Angel Tree

**What does it mean to be a Co-Steward for a Mission Partner?** One month/year each pair of Stewards will write Herald articles, bulletin prayers, and, perhaps organize a special offering for your mission partner. By becoming familiar with the organization, you will look for ways other Saugatuck members could get involved, possibly organizing hands-on projects. You will meet with other Stewards three times a year to coordinate our work and decide on allocating the proceeds from the Easter and Christmas offerings and the Operating Fund allocation.

**What does it meant to help steward one of the other Initiatives?** The first three involve looking at past letters to the congregation, writing the one for this year, and gathering a few friends to help prepare a bulk mailing. All nine initiatives involve managing publicity and, for the last four, organizing an activity.

**Become a Co-Steward and help Saugatuck SHINE!  
Frank Basler, Board of Missions**

Saugatuck Congregational Church has recently given 147 pairs of used eyeglasses to New Eyes for the Needy. New Eyes has helped 7,900,000 poor people in 57 countries to see more clearly.

Since about 1987, our church has participated in this program. Church members are urged to bring used eyeglasses and give them to Marcia Harrington who gives them to Larry Aasen for shipment to the Eyeglasses headquarters in Short Hill New Jersey.

Thanks, Larry Aasen



**One of the most powerful parts of our rededication service on March 8 was the sight of the burned emblem of a cross** on what used to be a panel from the Fellowship Room wall, perhaps the last remnant of the fire that we possess. The sight was striking for a lot of reasons, but in particular it stood out to me as a great reflection of what the cross means in the Christian faith.

During this season of Lent we know what's coming in the story of Jesus: death on a cross. The disciples don't want to believe it when Jesus warns them, but we know, with the hindsight of history, just what happened. The challenge for us is not believing that Jesus dies, it's understanding why he dies and what it all means.

My own personal understanding of "the cross" would take up a lot more space than Jane would like for this Herald article, but here's the one sentence summary: The cross establishes a covenant between God and humanity and it reflects the incredible transformation of something that is a symbol of evil, violence, and rejection into a moment of blessing, peace, and reconciliation.

The notion of covenant is familiar to us: we speak of our church covenant and of baptismal covenants. And each month we remember the covenant established by Jesus on the cross when we celebrate communion. But it's the transformation part of the cross that I think is really remarkably symbolized by that image blazed into the wall of our old church.

Jesus death on the cross is the most clear-cut rejection that humanity could muster for someone sent by God: *we will have none of your message or your kingdom*, the people seem to say. And yet the cross is also the vehicle through which God says, "no matter what you say or do, I will still forgive you and love you, and this moment is the proof of that promise." God takes the worst thing we could find to do and turns it into the good news of the gospel: that no matter who we are or what we have done God will always welcome us back. It's an incredible transformation of meaning: to say "this act of violence against me is what I will use to establish a covenant of peace with you," that's not something we expect. And yet that is what God does.

That sort of radical transformation is one way we can think about our own journey at Saugatuck Church. An incredible disaster, something we never could have imagined, a fire destroying our church home, has been transformed (albeit in three years instead of three days) into a beautiful opportunity for us to renew our vision and mission as a church. All that remains of what was lost is the emblem of a cross burned into the wall, no longer a symbol of loss but now a symbol of how far we've come.

So what will we do with this transformation? Just as God transformed the cross into a message of reconciliation and hope, so its message is meant to transform each of us. When we celebrate communion, we are not just participating in a ritual, we are reminding ourselves of the covenant that Jesus established, a covenant that beckons us to set aside those things that separate us from God and from one another so that we might be transformed into bearers of God's love and peace.

So what about our church? We have been blessed by an incredible transformation of our own, a disaster turned into new life. Now how will that transformation transform us? What will it inspire us to do that we could not do before? What will it challenge us to let go of so that we might be transformed? What will we find when that transformation happens that we might not ever have otherwise seen or known?

Just as the Cross of Christ challenges us to enter into a new, transformed life, so the scorched image of our own cross is a challenge to us to be transformed as a community. None of us yet knows what that will look like— that's the nature of transformations— but I hope you are as excited for this new beginning as I am!

Alexander P. Floyd Marshall  
Associate Pastor For Youth and Children's Ministries  
Saugatuck Congregational Church, UCC (Open and Affirming)  
(203) 227-1261, Ext. 203

@alex\_p\_marshall [www.saugatuckchurch.org](http://www.saugatuckchurch.org) [www.facebook.com/saugatuckchurch](https://www.facebook.com/saugatuckchurch)  
[www.facebook.com/saugatuckchurch](https://www.facebook.com/saugatuckchurch)

# Faith unshaken, Saugatuck Congregational Church Celebrates Joyous Homecoming

Fighting back tears, Anne Patterson was clearly moved as she surveyed the historic sanctuary of the restored Saugatuck Congregation Church on Sunday afternoon.

"Heavenly," she said, describing how she felt as the congregation celebrated its official return to the church after a 2011 fire ravaged part of the structure. "It feels like coming home."

Patterson shared that emotion with a large crowd on hand for a rededication service that marked completion of extensive repairs and reconstruction in the wake of the blaze Nov. 20, 2011, which rendered the church unusable. The restored sanctuary was once again filled to capacity by hundreds of people -- members of the congregation and the community at large -- whose lives have been touched by church, and who look forward to its next chapter of the 183-year-old congregation.

"We are delighted to swing wide our doors ..." said the Rev. Alison J. Buttrick Patton, Saugatuck Congregational's minister, "and welcome back our community partners. The Saugatuck Nursery School returned to the building two weeks ago, Boy Scout Troop 36 is back, and many 12-step groups will be returning in the coming weeks."

"They did a great job," Lisa Betts of Westport, who was married at the church 29 years ago, said of the restoration. "It's gorgeous."

The rededication service included choirs and speakers, as well as special guests, including the Rev. Theodore "Ted" Hoskins, the former Saugatuck Congregational minister who retired to Maine 20 years ago.



"It's a beautiful space," she said of the sanctuary. "The acoustics are phenomenal, quite frankly, and the newly built Steinway is phenomenal."

"It's very exciting," said Sara Walsh, who served on the building committee. "It feels like we're delivering the parishioners' spiritual house back to them."

"It feels great to see people again, I'll tell you that," said Hoskins, who served here from 1971 to 1994.

Regarding the fresh look of the building, he said, "Oh wow! It's just fantastic. They've really done a great job."

The project involved a balancing act between rebuilding the most heavily damaged sections of the church complex, primarily the offices, meeting rooms and classrooms, while freshening and refurbishing the historic elements that survived the flames.

Care was taken to restore the historic sanctuary's features such as original flooring, pews and replica windows. As a result of the renovations, rear second-story windows that had previously been boarded up have been opened to provide bright southern exposure.

Along with restoring other existing rooms, such as the quaint Fellowship Room, there are also unique additions. There is a second-story recreation room, as well as an upstairs worship room available for smaller services and choir rehearsals.

"I was here the day of the fire," recalled Heather Hamilton, director of music, who is relieved to be back in the building.

"We worked long and hard," she added, "because you're constantly trying to find something that's appropriate to the building and the sanctuary at a cost that the insurance would cover."

"It's just fantastic to be back here," said Bob Mitchell, a longtime member of the church. "This is just incredible."

"God has shown on us," he said. "We've got beautiful weather and we hope this will be a fitting kick off to what will be a long stay in the church."

"From the troop perspective, it's great to be back," said Stephen Bean of Westport, an Eagle Scout with Troop 36, which had been housed at the church for decades prior to the fire.

"It feels like being home after so many years," he said. "We're pleased to get our equipment back here."

"The loss of a church can be devastating, especially one with such an historic presence in our community," said First Selectman Jim Marpe. "But it is in the face of despair that the very tenets of all faiths -- caring, acceptance, goodwill and common humanity -- are stressed and propelled to the forefront."

---

*Text and photos by James Liotta, Westport News, 3/10/2015*





Good morning, Church!

Dear Saugatuck Congregational Church, I am so happy and pleased for you, that you are now home, in your place of worship and mission. Know that I dearly wish I could be with you on this bright day in your life together. I have fond memories of our brief 10 weeks and how we built each other up and just plain ol' had a good time together!

You were there for me during a long period of searching for a church of my own, and I so appreciated the opportunity to serve with you. You were so giving and generous as you opened yourselves and shared who you are as a congregation. You were so buoyant and confident, yet also aware of what you had lost. You were willing to be vulnerable so that you could move into the future toward which God was leading you.

You were a church without walls. Now that those walls are back, pretend they're not there. Keep that spirit of flexibility, of going where the Spirit leads, of feeling happy just because you're together. And I know, with Alison as your guide, this church is going places.

I pray that God will bless you with much joy, laughter, and grace.

Peace be with you, Cynthia Robinson, New Ark United Church of Christ, Newark, DE

---

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,



I can only imagine our great joy in returning to the meeting house! So many lives have been changed within the walls of Saugatuck. Some literally saved! It is rich with memories of almost two centuries of faithful witness to the Gospel. There is little doubt that it is a "thin place" for many!

I am sorry to miss out on the festivities of this special day, but wish you all the very best in the years ahead as you make new memories. May you continue to be like the proverbial city on the hill, as your steeple reaches for the sky. May the beauty of the sanctuary continue to be matched by the beauty of your faith and work in Westport and beyond.

God bless you all. John Danner

---

Rev. Lloyd Van Vactor

Retired UCC Missionary who served for 27 years in the Philippines Was a student minister for three years with Gibson Daniels, Ordained and married to first wife here. Early beneficiary of our Missionary Roast. Now retired in Seattle, WA. Wishes us a joyful return!

---

## **SAUGATUCK WILL MAKE OUR ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERING (OGHS) SUNDAY, APRIL 26**

Abdullah is 10 years old and from Somalia. Back in 2011, Abdullah, his mother, and young brother fled Somalia because of the conflict there, and have been living in Indonesia ever since.



"In 2013, my dream finally came true," said Abdullah. "Maria Angelia informed my mother that my enrollment in the primary school near our house had been successful." Maria is a Church World Service staff person working with refugees in Indonesia.

Abdullah enjoys getting ready for his school day. He appreciates the opportunity to attend school, just like other children his age around the world. One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) supports reading. Your gifts to the offering provide books, schools supplies and teachers in communities where children like Abdullah, need opportunities to attend school.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SAUGATUCK

Learn more at [www.saugatuckchurch.org](http://www.saugatuckchurch.org), on Facebook or at 203.227.1261

## ***March & April See Page 1 For Holy Week Schedule***

***Sunday 10am Worship & 11 am Fellowship Hour: Every Sunday***

***Boy Scout Meetings: Every Monday Night 7:30pm Hoskins Hall***

***Joint Youth Group Bible Study with Greens Farms: Every Tuesday 7:45pm***

***Chancel Choir Rehearsals: 7:30pm, March 26, April 2, 9, 16 and 30***

***Lenten Small Group Discussion: March 22, 29: 3:30-5:00 pm.***

*Book: Jesus is the Question: The 307 Questions Jesus Asked and the 3 He Answered by Martin Copenhaver*

***Lenten Video Discussions: March 25; 7-8pm hosted by the Youth Group in Youth Room***

***Crafters: Every Tuesday 9:30-11:30 am through May***

***Bible Study: Every Wednesday 9:30am***

***Centering Prayer: Every Thursday Evening 5:50-6:15pm Bell Loft, Saugatuck Church***

***Guest Speaker : Sunday, March 22, 11:30-12:30 Hasan Doagoo, International Peacemaking Program***

***Women's Spirituality: Sunday, March 22, April 5 & 29, 5:30 pm***

***Missions Fair: Sunday, March 29, after worship service***

## ***Sign Up to Host Fellowship Hour***

***The link to sign up to host fellowship hour is now live!***

***I would appreciate your help getting the word out by putting a reference to the link in the bulletin each Sunday, putting it in the Herald and creating a button to access the link from the SCC website. The link to go to our sign up form is:***

***[www.SignUpGenius.com/go/8050944AFA62EA46-fellowship](http://www.SignUpGenius.com/go/8050944AFA62EA46-fellowship)***

## **The Chancel Choir Rehearsal Schedule is as follows:**

**Thursdays' March 26**

**April 2, 9, 16 and 30**

**As always- JOIN THE CHOIR- we rehearse on Thursday evenings from 7:30 to 9PM. High schoolers through adults welcome! If you play an instrument and are interested in playing during a service, let Heather know. [heather@saugatuckchurch.org](mailto:heather@saugatuckchurch.org)**

# Saugatuck Happenings



Annual Meeting in Hoskins Hall on February 8th



Women's Retreat at Silver Lake on March 14 & 15



Youth Skiing Trip



Sledding at Winslow Park

## Troop 36 Names New Scoutmaster

A 27-year old former Eagle Scout has been named Scoutmaster of Boy Scout Troop 36, which is chartered by Saugatuck Congregational Church. Matt Ferencz was promoted from assistant Scoutmaster and succeeds Jack Berry, who led Troop 36 for more than 20 years, the troop said in a news release. The troop lists a membership of 12 boys.

Eagle Scout is Scouting's highest honor, attained by about 5 percent of Scouts nationally, according to the Boy Scouts of America. Ferencz was awarded his Eagle badge as a member of Troop 36 in 2005. He rejoined the troop as Assistant Scoutmaster last fall.



A 2006 Staples High School graduate, the new Scoutmaster earned degrees in economics and international business from Dickinson College in 2010 and works in the finance industry.

Troop 36 will sponsor open house for boys 11 to 17 on Monday April 6 from 7:30 to 9:30pm at Saugatuck Congregational Church. *Westport News, April 13, 2015*

# Our Church Family

Happy Birthday from Saugatuck Congregational Church!  
 Take a moment to wish the following members  
 of your church family well!

## MARCH & APRIL BIRTHDAYS

2	Lois Gillespie	4	Jane Mangold
10	Tina Crosby	5	Tom Long
11	Rees Himes	7	Karen Kim
22	Nick Boak	9	Ed Potter
25	Sophie Call	11	Colleen Plantinga
	Daniel Call	14	Emily Flood
29	Scott Peterson	26	Martin Van Breems
30	Emily Flood	28	Anne Patterson
		29	Jeff Boak
			Kate Koster



Ellery Taylor Hart, the very sweet daughter of Ken and Rachel Hart was baptized on Sunday, February 8th at the 10am worship service.

*Photo by Mark Mathias.*

## Memorial Services

- A memorial service for Jack Morrow is being planned for Saturday, May 30th, at 11am. Reception in Hoskins Hall will follow.
- Isabel Gordon, 98, died on February 10 at home. She wrote and illustrated children's books. She was a self-taught photographer. She became immensely interested in the monarch butterfly. She became a lecturer and field guide at local spots including schools in Bridgeport. A memorial service was held at Saugatuck on Friday, March 20th.
- A memorial service for Bob Curtis will be held at Saugatuck on Saturday, March 28th at 2pm.
- Beverly Travers, 88, died February 9th at Norwalk Hospital. Beverly was a longtime member of Saugatuck. She enjoyed singing in the choir. Surviving is a son John of Los Angeles CA. Beverly was married to John Travers, the father of Mary Travers of the folk singing trio, Peter, Paul and Mary. The couple also provided a home for several foster children.

## Update on the Brennemens

"You are so good to keep in touch. I really miss home (including friends and church and familiar stores) and am starting to count days until our return. But there may be a lot of them: Russell is mending slowly but steadily in the post-hospital "care center". It is very small but close to Amy's house and seems very well staffed. He is now putting weight on his newly operated leg and walks with a walker pretty steadily. Meanwhile, of course, I'm a big help with my big black cane or sitting in a wheelchair in his room while we both doze and read the NYTimes. A quiet life, you might say!" Freddie

Freddie would love to hear from her Saugatuck Church Family: [fsbrenneman@gmail.com](mailto:fsbrenneman@gmail.com)

## Prayer Given at the Rededication Service by Rev. Sarah Verasco

All embracing God of the past,  
We give you thanks for the people of this church who have gone before us:  
Those who have nurtured each other, fed the hungry, visited the sick, proclaimed the gospel and reached out to the world with a theology of inclusion and a thirst for justice.  
We lift them up to you, O God, as we express our gratitude for their good works, their good stewardship, and the rich heritage they have left us.

All embracing God of our present, we give you thanks for the beauty and gift of this day and for this occasion to gather. We thank you for the strength and perseverance of this extended community and the congregation and spirit that is Saugatuck Congregational Church, United Church of Christ.

In celebrating this new beginning and rededication, may this congregation be rededicated to Your service both within and through and beyond this space.

May your wisdom be revealed in a mission worthy of your name.

May your courageous creativity birth new initiatives- engaging neighbors near and far.

May your grace be at work in all their dealings, one with another, and with their community partners and partners in ministry.

And may a joyful and generous spirit flourish as a reflection of your glory and goodness .

All embracing God of the future,  
We give you thanks for tomorrow.

As you draw us deeper into your promise for all of creation, keep us steadfast in the assurance that whatever the future holds, you will be there waiting for us.



---

Dear Saugatuck Church,

When I received an email from Alison letting us know that she would be reading my mother's name (Marj Potter) and ringing a chime in her memory during worship yesterday morning, I cried, and then I realized with some chagrin that we had never formally thanked all of you for the caring and community you provided for my mother and father while they lived in Westport, and continued to provide via letters and emails after they moved to Lincoln, MA to be near Kathy and me. Your caring was also evident in the wonderful Memorial Service and tea celebrating my mother's life; from the picture of their beloved church on the bulletin cover, to the many people who came out in the pouring rain to celebrate her life and share their remembrances of her.

My mother would not be happy to know that it took us this long to thank all of you, but I hope you will accept our belated, heartfelt gratitude and not assume that this delay in writing in any way reflects a lack of deep appreciation for all that you did for my parents, and us.



I am happy to report that my father is doing better, and learning how to go on without my mother (as we are trying to

do as well). Kathy and I continue to keep a close eye on him with regular visits, grocery deliveries and so forth. New hearing aids make it easier for him to connect with the other residents at the Commons where he lives. He is walking with a cane, which is a big improvement from a few months ago when he was using a walker. He is continuing hormone treatments for an aggressive form of prostate cancer, but so far, so good.

He relishes the news he receives from all of you, and followed the progress of the rebuilding and return to your Sanctuary on Christmas Eve. We've been talking to him about coming down for your Rededication Worship Service in March...we'll have to see...

We are glad (and relieved) that my parents moved when they did, (especially with this snow upon snow upon snow) but were very sad that it meant that they had to leave behind their beloved Saugatuck Church community which had been so central to their lives for 40 years.

So, thank you, and may God continue to bless you.

Sue Spencer (and Donald, Kathy & Judy)

## **COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF GREATER BRIDGEPORT**

Did you know that the U.S. now has the highest incarceration rate in the world? Compared to other developed countries, the U.S. has a rate 6 to 10 times higher than similar countries, even though U.S. crime rates are not materially different.

At the January 20<sup>th</sup> Delegates Meeting, Frank Basler and Alison Rivard learned about the need for reform and how CCGB's CO-OP Center, for more than 40 years, has been assisting men and women transition from incarceration into the Bridgeport community. The CO-OP Center's dedicated case managers offer resources from vocational learning including computer skills and GED preparation, job search assistance and transportation, and health/mental health referrals.

We heard as well from the Chairman of **Malta Justice Initiative**, a prison ministry of the Order of Malta based here in Southport. A bipartisan coalition of Connecticut correctional professionals, judges, ministers and others are working to inform residents about the extraordinary cost and ineffectiveness of our state criminal justice and corrections system, and to offer ideas for reform based on what's worked in other states.

For more information, see <http://ccgb.org/?q=LCM-AdultServ> and [www.maltajusticeinitiative.org](http://www.maltajusticeinitiative.org).

### **BE GENEROUS WITH YOUR EASTER OFFERING**

Fr. Richard Rohr said in his March 16 daily meditation, "The Trinity clarifies that God is a fountain fullness of outflowing love.... It's a theological impossibility, if you get the doctrine of Trinity correct, for there to be any hatred, wrath, or pettiness in God. A Trinitarian God is internally and externally the same--*infinite generosity*." [italics added]

---

## **THE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF GREATER BRIDGEPORT**

invites you to our annual **Spring Fling**

**Saturday, April 25, 2015**

**6:00 to 9:30 PM**

**Live...from Broadway to Bridgeport**

**At United Congregational Church, 877 Park Ave, Bridgeport**

**Act I**

**6:00 Reception in Pilgrim Hall**

**Featuring delectable appetizers & drinks  
(wine, beer, soda)**

**Act II**

**2015 Faith & Community Award**

**Honoring**

**Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church**

**Act III**

**LIVE... From Broadway to Bridgeport**

**R.E.S.P.E.C.T!!**

**Broadway performers from The New Paradigm Theatre**

**Bring your own picnic-style supper & drinks**