

THE HERALD

May 2015

Easter Sunday at Saugatuck:



- Sunrise Service at Compo Beach hosted by four churches; Greens Farms CC, United Methodist of Westport & Wilton, Norfield of Weston and Saugatuck Congregational Church.
- The Children's Time on Easter Sunday
- A Saugatuck Tradition: After the worship service the congregation joins the choir to sing the Hallelujah Chorus
- A beautiful day to be back in our church and to have an Easter Egg Hunt on the front lawn.
- "Look what we have!"



Photographs by Bruce Borner, Mark Mathias, Katherine Ross, Lisa Tantillo & Alison Patton



Glad and Generous Hearts

“Lately I’ve been reading the Acts of the Apostles really carefully. And if you start to read it and think it’s kind of a quaint snapshot of the earliest Christian community, that’s one thing. But what if you were to read it as a measure of the health of any community?”

Those words were spoken by Jesuit priest Greg Boyle in an interview with Krista Tippett on the NPR radio program, *On Being*. (in the episode, *“The Calling of Delight: On Gangs, Service and Kinship”*. It’s a great episode; you can listen to it at www.onbeing.org). His reflection on the book of Acts caught my ear, because this is the time of year when we read excerpts from Acts, leading up to Pentecost, on May 24th. Among the most frequently quoted verses in the book of Acts is this one:

“All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the good will of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:44-47)

Father Boyle asks what it would be like to measure the health of a community using these verses. Do we attend to those in need? Do we break bread together, giving God thanks? Do we share what we have with glad and generous hearts? In other words: When you hang out among us, can you feel the love? Is our joy infectious?

I particularly like that phrase: ‘Glad and generous hearts.’ ‘Glad and generous’ is the opposite of close-fisted and anxious. It implies kindness, good humor, the willingness to let go and a certain lightness of spirit. Who do you know that has a ‘glad and generous heart?’ Archbishop Desmond Tutu comes to my mind. And the Dalai Lama. I have a picture of these two faithful men dancing together at a public gathering in India (or, to be more precise, of Archbishop Tutu teaching the Dalai Lama a few moves). Here are two men who have witnessed terrible human suffering, yet still they have a remarkable capacity for joy. They laugh easily; they give freely to those around them. They practice forgiveness often. Their faith, their love, is expansive.



I am inspired by people like Father Boyle, Archbishop Tutu and the Dalai Lama, but also by people I have actually met: mentors, colleagues and members of this community. It’s not just the religious icons who know how to live generous, open-hearted lives. We can all do that. Indeed, it is our vocation, as Easter people, to cultivate that kind of community, a community in which we can laugh, and forgive, and praise God with our whole hearts, because we cannot help ourselves. May it be so!

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Alison

Don’t Miss Our Story Tent Sunday

May 31st

Saugatuck Congregational Church

This year’s Story Tent is The Rabbi’s Daughter’s Story Tent. It’s a spin on a great little story called The Rabbi’s Gift in which members of a monastery that’s fallen on hard times encounter a rabbi who has no solution to their issues, but tells them that one of the monks there is the Messiah. Of course, soon, everything starts to change. Our play uses a similar starting point, and looks hard at the ways in which we can and can’t be like Jesus – acting out a few parables and miracles along the way. It also looks at how the way we see ourselves and others can be transformational beyond our wildest expectations, and how those transformations are not always as comfortable as we anticipated.

Michael Hendricks & Katherine Ross



From Our Associate Pastor for Youth and Children:

As the school year winds down, we are winding up for our three culminating events in the Church School and Youth Ministry calendars.

First on the list is the Middle School Heifer Trip, which is taking place May 1-3. Our Middle School youth will be spending the weekend on the Heifer Farm in Rutland, Massachusetts. This is a really unique program that involves not only hands-on experience working with the animals on the farm but also a host of hands-on activities learning about the work Heifer does around the world. The "main event" is an overnight in the Global Village, a collection of houses set up to simulate the communities that Heifer works in. Our group is assigned to a "country" and the kids will eat food similar to what their counterparts in that culture might eat and get a taste of what their lives might be like. This year we have something of a smaller middle school youth group, and so we're adding an additional component to the mix: we're bringing along High School mentors who will work with the younger students to help them learn and get the most out of the trip.

After we get back from Heifer, it's full-speed ahead with this year's Story Tent preparations. Story Tent is something of a culminating moment for our Church School each year, involving every kid in the church in putting on a play for the whole congregation. This year, the story behind Story Tent is focused around the miracles and parables of Jesus. Our 5-8th grade students, who have been writing and practicing the script, have been learning all year about what it means for Jesus to be a "messiah" and how we also can live into our calling to bring God's new life into our community. Story Tent this year is happening on May 31 and we will reproduce the cabaret style we've seen the last couple of years by relocating worship to Hoskins' Hall for the morning.

Just a couple of weeks after Story Tent school lets out, our High School Youth Group will be heading off to Portland, Maine for this year's mission trip. In Portland and possibly in nearby Lewiston they will be ministering in particular to communities of immigrants and refugees who have fled violence in Central and East Africa. Many in these communities will be Muslim, so this will be a ministry not just across cultural lines but to members of another faith. Our youth will be helping with some light construction projects, leading programming for the local children, and hosting community events in area parks. It will be a really profound learning experience beginning with a commissioning service during our morning worship on June 21. We'll return after a week of service and fun on Saturday, June 27.

All three of these events reflect things we've been working towards all year in our ministries to Children and Youth. They also reflect the great way that Children and Youth in our church are empowered and supported by this congregation. Story Tent happens because this church appreciates that even our youngest members can be our worship leaders and teachers. And our Middle and High School service trips wouldn't be possible without a huge amount of support and backing from every member of this congregation. I deeply appreciate the way this church values its young people and supports them as they learn and grow in their faith. That support really makes a difference in their lives!

Alexander P. Floyd Marshall

Musings from the Moderator

*In their hearts humans plan their course,
but the Lord establishes their steps.*

Proverbs 16:9

It is not often that many of us take time out from our incredibly hectic lives to simply think and plan. The amazing thing is that twenty-two of us, Saugatuck Church members and staff, did just that on a recent beautiful spring morning. On April 18, 2015, we all gathered in our sparkling new youth room, to share hopes and dreams about our church with each other. Under the incredibly astute guidance of the Reverend Susan Townsley, this group of Saugatuck leaders opened their hearts and minds to the future of the church. I, for one, was grateful to have been a part of this special day.

Although there was some preplanning for this retreat, Susan deftly led us through a series of exercises that allowed the group to set the direction and the tone of the day. There were many opportunities to share – both in the larger group as well as in the smaller groups that formed to discuss ideas more in depth. We learned a technique for communication called *2 Plus* which taught us to try two positive statements before giving a negative statement when someone presents a new idea that might not be to our liking. So if you hear folks whispering *2 Plus* to each other – you’ll know what’s happening! One of the highlights of the day was that we were able to use the new doors in Hoskins Hall to access the patio and garden – and many of us carried our lunch out into the sun to continue our conversations from the morning.

Through discussion, values clarification, dreaming and visioning, the retreat group began to hone in on two idea clusters. One was celebrating and clarifying our values with all ages of children, youth and adults through intergenerational mission work and worship. The other cluster was seeking out God’s presence in the arts by creating opportunities to express our faith through the arts. Envisioning how we see Saugatuck Church in the future created a sense of excitement and anticipation of what we could do in the next couple of years.

But as always, it isn’t up to just a small group of people to create a vision for Saugatuck Church. What is your vision? Where lays your excitement? What are your ideas? Our job now is to fine tune our vision – create a plan – and let God lead the way. If we hold on to the warmth, friendship and love that were present on April 18th – our visions will soon become a reality.

Peace,

Priscilla Long



Open House at Silver Lake

Silver Lake Conference Center in Sharon, CT will hold its annual Open House on Sunday, May 17 from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM. This is a great opportunity for families to get to know what happens at Silver Lake and learn more about their summer program in particular. Tour the camp, meet the staff, ask questions, and eat cookies. (Yes, really.) If you have or know children entering grades 4 through 12 this fall, they can choose from a variety of week-long conferences this summer. Learn more about the Open House event and Silver Lake’s programs at www.silverlakeect.org or ask Craig Patton, our steward for Silver Lake Conference Center.

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Meet the Newest Member of our Church Family



On March 29th, Judy Puchalski joined the Saugatuck Congregational Church. Judy, pictured above with Moderator Priscilla Long, Sponsor Linda Bruce, Pastor Alison and Betsy Boak, Deacon.

Judy lives in Norwalk with her sister, Susan, and her two dogs, Scooter & Westie. She is an avid Yankee fan and enjoys her season tickets. She became involved with the Saugatuck community through her relationships with the women's group, fellowship hour and worship. She remarked that she was quite surprised by how welcome and comfortable it was to be here from the start—she feels it was *meant to be*. *Welcome Judy.*

Happy Birthday from Saugatuck Congregational Church!

Take a moment to wish the following members of your church family well!



May Birthdays

- 2 Carolyn Meyer
- 3 Steph Bulkeley
- 7 Lois Himes
- 9 Marion Yingling
- 13 Bill Morse
- 16 Linda Lange
- 17 Carl Leaman
- 18 Preston Koster

Celebrate the birthdays within the Saugatuck family! Email the information (month/day for adults and month/day/year for children) to Alison Rivard mofish@optonline.net

Kerry Wood Wins at CSFA Product Awards Competition



The CT Specialty Food Association (CSFA) held its fourteenth Product Awards Competition on Tuesday, March 24, 2015, at the Aqua Turf in Plantsville. One hundred seventy-nine specialty food items from Connecticut-based manufacturers were entered into 33 categories, with hopes of receiving the prestigious honor of CSFA Product Award Winner 2015. A panel of 24 judges consisting of local media personalities, food writers, Connecticut chefs, and wine specialists scored products on overall taste/texture, aroma, and appearance.

In the Salad Dressing category: 1st Place Kerry Wood Healthy Foods, Westport, CT Ginger Carrot Dressing; 2nd Place Harry's Bishops Corner, West Hartford, CT Caesar Dressing; 3rd Place TIE between Harry's Bishops Corner, West Hartford, CT Sundried Tomato Balsamic Vinaigrette Dressing and Kerry Wood Healthy Foods, Westport, CT Balsamic TUSCANY Parmesan Dressing ,

Memorial Service for Jack Morrow

A memorial service for Jack Morrow will be held at the Saugatuck Congregational Church on **Saturday, May 30th at 11am** with a reception following at the church.

Surviving Jack are his children, John Morrow (Hayette), Jean Hughey (Matt), Maggie Rogers (Tim), Ruth Marchant (Matt) and his eight grandchildren.,

PRAYERS FOR OUR CHURCH:

Christine Allen; Susan Bemus; Russ Brenneman; Ken and Jean Bowden; Pat Doolittle; Emily Duvoisin; Jim Goodenough; Michael Helfer; the Mayer family; Carolyn Meyer; Kathi Mitchell; Colleen Plantinga; Betty Raila; Kris Schwindeman-Devendorf; Judy and Susan Puchalski; Jim Sweeney; Sheldon Thompson (Kathy Ross's father); and Sarah Wheeler (Holly Wheeler's sister). Pat Doolittle had a bad fall and suffered a broken pelvis. She would enjoy cards and letters from her Saugatuck friends. Please hold all in God's presence and in the light of Christ.

COMING UP @ SAUGATUCK

★ **Women's Spirituality Group:** 2nd and 4th Sunday evenings 5-6:30pm, Fellowship Room

★ **One Great Hour of Sharing** Special Offering will be received and blessed—May 3, Sunday, during 10am worship

★ **Yoga @ Saugatuck:** Six-week series of gentle yoga classes,

Location: Saugatuck Congregational Church Chapel Room (4th floor). Dates: Mondays, May 4 – June 15 from 6:30 pm – 7:45 pm. Cost: \$60 for six classes.

Enjoy a relaxed flow and simple stretches designed to release tension, stress and strain, and increase flexibility, energy and focus. Attention to breathing and a spirit of mindfulness will be incorporated to enhance our practice, No prior yoga experience is necessary.

Teacher Bio: Meredith Lederer (RYT-200), is a Certified Yoga Instructor and Saugatuck Church member. She is a member of the Yoga Alliance. She teaches in the YOGAspirit(r) style, Hatha yoga with Iyengar tendencies.

For questions, or to sign up, please contact Meredith Lederer: merlederer@msn.com or (203) 464-1114.

★ Saugatuck Congregational Church Notice of Informational Meeting: Sunday, May 17

Notice is hereby given that there will be an Informational Meeting on Sunday, May 17th, immediately following the 10am worship service:

To hear an update on the 2015 Budget from the Board of Trustees and to explore strategies for reducing the deficit and strengthening the finances to support our ministries

Priscilla Long
Moderator

Janet Canning
Clerk



★ **June 7th:** Visit by the Rev. Martin Copenhaver, author of *Jesus is the Question* (our Lenten book study) United Church of Christ minister and president, Andover-Newton Theological Seminary

★ **June 7th:** The Crafters are planning a mini tag sale at Fellowship Hour on Sunday, June 7. We are looking for donations of gently used household items. These items can be dropped off to Marcia at the church office. As usual, all monies from this sale will benefit Saugatuck Church! Questions? Call Ina Lozyniak (203-221-1165).

★ **June 13th:** Pivot Work Day, Saturday, 9am—2:30pm: Join us as we work with Pivot Ministries partners to rehab one of their residence buildings. Carpool 8:30am. For details and sign-up contact Frank Basler: frank.basler@gmail.com.

Pivot Ministries Work Day and Father/Son Sleepover

Several have asked when we are doing another work day at Pivot Ministries. Here's the answer!

Friday, June 12

- 6:30 pm Fathers and sons arrive at the Intervention Center, 485 Jane Street, Bridgeport, and enjoy dinner with Pivot's Students (the men) and Staff. This will include an orientation to their program and discussions with some of the men about what brought them to Pivot and what they have been experiencing.

- After dinner participate in the Ministry's normal Bible study,
- Then informal conversation and possibly a movie and discussion.

Saturday, June 13

- Breakfast
- 9:00 am -- Others from Saugatuck will join in on work projects in the Pembroke Street house, which is being restored. Plumbing and electrical are complete. We can expect to help with light carpentry (e.g. moldings), dry wall, and painting.
- 12:30 Lunch and more conversation with Pivot's Students and Staff members.
- Afterwards, everyone is free to leave or stay for some more work in the afternoon.

Alex and Tag and Jack Mendillo are organizing the sleepover. *All who would like to join the work day on Saturday, contact Frank Basler at 203-345-5682, and he will organize car pooling.*

Missions Fair: Sunday, March 29 after worship; Learning about our mission partners and discovering ways to get involved and make a difference!



Pivot House

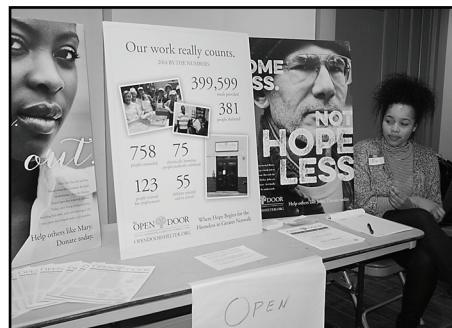


McGivney Center

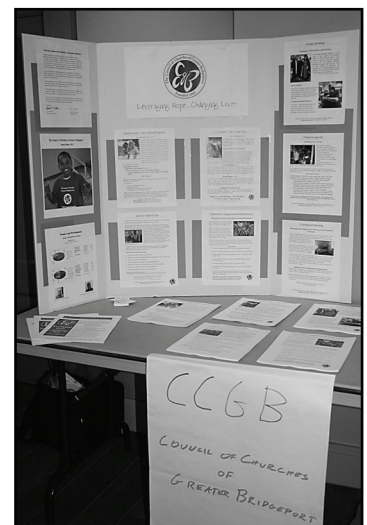


Person to Person

Photos by Jane Mangold



Open Door



Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport

A few Mission Steward Openings are still Available

How can helping one of these *Mission Partners* enrich your life? Open Door Shelter and Positive Directions still need a couple of people to partner during one month of the year to...

Become familiar with the organization so you can look for ways other Saugatuck members can get involved; possibly organize hands-on projects.

1 month/year educate the Congregation about your organization, e.g write a Herald article and bulletin prayers.

Perhaps organize a special offering that month.

Meet with other Stewards 2-3 times/year to coordinate and make budget decisions.

Two offerings need a couple of people to help us raise funds for missions and to support Alison: The Christmas Offering and the Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

The Christmas Offering involves looking at past letters to the congregation, writing the one for this year, and gathering a few friends to help prepare a bulk mailing.

Both that offering and the Pastor's Discretionary fund involve managing publicity (Herald article, bulletin announcements, and announcements during the service).

Want to have another Angel Tree this year, collecting children's gifts for partner agencies? It's very rewarding! Find two or three others to form a team and then...

Contact: frank.basler@gmail.com

Thank you for considering these opportunities to help Saugatuck serve our community!

American Cancer Society	Nancy Wargo	V
American Heart Association Advisory Committee	Paul Betts	Adv. B
Amnesty International	Anne Salmond	
CT Special Olympics Sailing	Doug Johnston	V
CT Swimming	Nancy Wargo	V, B
Darien Book Aid	Joanne Leaman	V
First Congregational Church, Norwalk	Susan Meyer	V
Food Access Coalition	Frank Basler	B
League of Women's Voters	Priscilla Long, V, S; Alison Rivard, B	V,B, S
Norwalk Thrift Shop	Jackie Flournoy	V
Project Return	Kim Mathias	Adv. B
Rotary	Mark Mathias, Larry Aasen	V
School Volunteer Association	Lois Himes, Priscilla Long	V
Senior Center home delivered meals	Holly Betts, Paul Betts	V
USA Swimming	Nancy Wargo	V, C
Westport Library	Gary Stuart – book sale	V
Westport Women's Club	Rose Jordan	V, B
Norwalk Swimming	Nancy Wargo	V,B

CEMETERY COMMITTEE RECOGNITION CELEBRATION

SAYING GOOD-BYE TO VI AND PEGGY



A festive gathering was held on Sunday evening, March 29, to recognize and pay tribute to outgoing members of the Evergreen Cemetery Committee.

The celebration was organized by Mia Costanza Wiggers, Vonni Spies and Carolyn Meyer for the main purpose of wishing a fond farewell to Vi Takahashi and Peggy Brady who are moving away, to Hamden CT and Wilmington, NC respectively, and to thank those members who are going off the committee, Margaret Yingling, Susan Pike and Pat Harris. Also Colleen Plantinga who along with Peggy Brady kept our window boxes and Memorial Garden in flowers and decorative shrubs.

Vi Takahashi, along with her late husband, Gene, and Elwood Betts were the original founders of the committee which was started in 2001. Other early members were Rose and Lee Jordan, Margaret and Orvis Yingling, and Peggy Brady (with assistance from her husband, Paul, on many occasions). More recent members include Susan Pike and Pat Harris.

Rev. Alison introduced Vi who gave a brief history of the cemetery committee along with several humorous anecdotes. John Walsh also added a few kind words and others shared their comments. Mia presented the committee members with lovely flowering Primroses. It was a delightful event held in our new Fellowship Room with refreshments provided by the hostesses.

Betsy and Craig Gillespie have volunteered to be the new chairs of the committee and they were applauded for stepping up to this responsibility. Rose Jordan will remain along with new members Diane and Eric Bosch.

Submitted by
Rose Jordan
3/29/15



More on the Evergreen Cemetery Committee Reception



The twelve years service of the retiring Evergreen Cemetery Committee. was noted with a celebratory reception on March 29th. Original members of the committee, Peggy Brady, Rose Jordan, Vi Takahashi, and Margaret Yingling were present and were joined by other members, Pat Harris and Susan Pike.

Nancy Takahashi, landscape architect, who laid out the plans for the restoration of the cemetery, came from Virginia to join in the celebration. Nancy is the daughter of Vi and the late Gene Takahashi.

Vi Takahashi gave a detailed description of the restoration which began in 2001 and became a 2 year process undertaken by Elwood Betts and Gene Takahashi. Vi recounted how she and Gene had gone to the cemetery in the early '90's preparing to buy a plot and were appalled by its appearance. It was overgrown with brush and poison ivy; tombs were overturned. They decided not to buy a plot because they didn't think anyone would be able to find them if they were buried there.

In the late '90's, through the help of the Kowalski Bros. and the Boy Scouts, and later the Gault Co. land was cleared and the restoration became a reality.

John Walsh spoke of the history of our 179 year old cemetery and the good and hard times that befell the cemetery. Today, thanks to the foresight and hard work of the committee, Evergreen is a serene and peaceful resting place for church members and family and a beautiful park-like setting for all to enjoy.

Hosting the delightful and heartwarming reception were Mia Costanza and Linda Yingling.

Vi Takahashi



Nancy Takahashi and David Oakland were enjoying the reception with Linda Bruce. Nancy is a professional landscape architect and designed the restoration of the cemetery. We are all very proud of our cemetery located in the center of Westport on Evergreen —a quiet , serene and beautiful cemetery.



Isabel Blair and outgoing member of the Evergreen Cemetery Committee Pat Harris talking about the many improvements made during the renovation.

Two Troop 36 Boy Scouts Earn Eagle Rank

Two Boy Scouts in Troop 36 have achieved Scouting's highest honor. Peter Campbell and Steven Bean have earned the rank of Eagle, something only 5 percent of Scouts ever accomplish. The rank of Eagle represents years of commitment to a goal which is supported by families, Scout leaders and the community. Twenty-one merit badges are required for the eagle rank in addition to a leadership project.

Peter's Eagle project was done to benefit Sherwood Island State Park. It entailed constructing interpretive panels to display the information and findings of a recent archaeological dig of a colonial homestead at Sherwood Island, as well as to provide the history and context of these findings. He also outlined the historic foundation homestead foundations so that they visually pop as visitors walk through the inner core of the Park—the original homestead area.

Steven's Eagle project was done to benefit Greens Farms Congregational Church where he worships. The project involved cleaning 300 gravestones at the Lower Cemetery and repositioning 40 of those that had moved out of place. Besides his scout troop, Steven had volunteers from school and church.

In earning the rank of Eagle, Peter said, "To me, scouting means perseverance, hard work, leadership, and cooperation. From school, to work and service, and cooperation. He feels the most important thing he learned in Scouting is communication skills.

Scouting has been important to Steven. "Without scouts in my life I wouldn't have grown into the person I am today and I am thankful to have been enriched by Boy Scouts. One of the most important things, if not the most important thing, I've learned from scouts and Mr. Berry is the joy of giving of yourself."

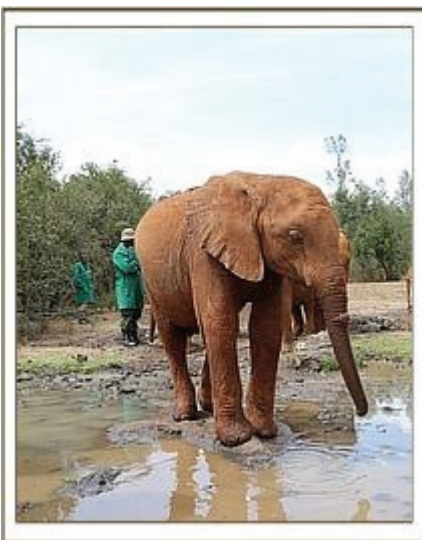
Peter and Steven will be honored with an Eagle Court of Honor this spring. Troop 36 is chartered by the Saugatuck Congregational Church. Matt Ferencz serves as Scoutmaster.

Excerpted from the April 9 Westport Minuteman.

THE DAVID SHELDRIK WILDLIFE TRUST



Foster An Elephant Orphan Certificate



Meet Sirimon, a 2+ year old elephant, orphaned by poachers .

Dear Saugatuck Congregational Church,

You have been given a unique and wonderful gift by Where Elephants Roam Tea. You are now the proud foster parent of an orphaned elephant called **SIRIMON**, and in-turn this gift is a gift of life, helping to support him as he grows up.

To read the latest entries in the Keeper's Diary regarding your orphan visit our website regularly you will be able to keep in touch with your orphan's life. You will receive monthly updates which will summarize the year along with photographs from time to time creating a valuable record for you to keep.

Most Sincerely,
Daphne Sheldrick

Website <http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org>

thank you Saugatuck Church for allowing us to launch Where Elephants Roam Tea in Hoskins Hall this past Saturday. You are now part of our mission to help save elephants. We have adopted Sirimon in your name. He is yours to love.

Lisa Feistel & Doreen Birdsell



YOUTH AND CHILDREN

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Church School: Each Sunday children are invited to leave with their teachers following the scripture reading.

Joint Youth Group Bible Study with Green's Farms Church: Tuesday, 7:45-8:45pm

Youth Group: Wednesday, 7pm in the Saugatuck Youth Room(4th floor).

Castles in the Sand, May 9 at Compo Beach. Come support Homes with Hope and help Saugatuck Church build the best sand sculpture ever (not that it's a competition...!)

Story Tent, May 31: Mark your calendars for a Cabaret-Style worship service featuring a play written by our 5-8th grade students!

High School Mission Trip to Portland, ME: June 21-27, 2015! It's not too late to sign up, talk to Alex for more info!

2015 Summer Schedule 8:30am Compo Beach by the Cannons



June 28: Methodist Church

July 5: Wilton

July 12: Green's Farms -- 2 SCC Baptisms??

July 19: Norfield

July 26: Saugatuck – Alison preaching

Aug 2: Green's Farms

Aug 9: Methodist Church

Aug 16: Norfield

Aug 23: Saugatuck – Alex preaching; Pivot Ministries singing

Aug 30: Wilton

One Great Hour of Sharing: Water—Our Precious, Unpredictable Resource

We tend to take water for granted, except when there isn't enough water safe for drinking and other uses, or when there is too much water, in one place. OGHS works toward sustainable communities that have safe water, providing assistance to organizations such as the Women's Cooperative Cocovico in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa. Cocovico is a 200 female member-owner coop which coordinates a market serving 10,000 customers daily, but it also helps provide access to clean water, electricity and public toilets for its members and their families.

Here on the East Coast, you may not have heard much about the Colorado great flood of September 2013, when more than a foot of rain fell on the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains and the South St. Vrain River overflowed its banks, triggering wide flooding, mud and rock slides. OGHS was present in the adjoining farming community of Longmont devastated by the flood. Hundreds of houses were destroyed—and because they were outside the flood plain and not eligible for flood insurance—the homeowners were not entitled to FEMA relief. OGHS donations helped the UCC church of Longmont provide direct cleanup and other helping hands, and financial resources to rebuild.

Here's the personal connection of this flood for me and for Saugatuck Church. Ten months after the flood, in July 2014, a group of us heading up the highway to Rocky Mountain National Park, saw evidence of flood damage that was shocking, even after months of valiant effort to rebuild homes and repair roads. And there, along the roadway, the historic stone Chapel on the Rock was sitting on the rock which saved it from the flood, surrounded by acres of mud and fallen tree trunks. That was the second disaster in two years that this chapel had survived. In November 2011, a month that is familiar to Saugatuck members, the Chapel on the Rock was spared from a horrible fire that destroyed most of the retreat center of which it is a part, forcing the center to close its doors. Again in 2013, the Chapel on the Rock was saved, although much of the surrounding terrain was destroyed.

Alison Rivard. Mission Steward

May 3 Saugatuck will receive and bless a special offering to celebrate One Great Hour of Sharing. This year the our offering supports well installations in Africa and flood remediation in the US. Here is an article about one community in need of wells. Joanne DeMauriac Leaman

At the Paris Marathon last Sunday, Siabatou Sanneh of Gambia stood out from the other racers -- in addition to her race number, she wore traditional Gambian garb and carried 45 pounds of water on her head. Sanneh, who had never left her home country before, participated in the marathon as part of an effort to raise awareness of the difficulties African women face in accessing clean water. While she walked the race, she also wore a sign that read: "In Africa, women travel this distance everyday to get potable water. Help us shorten the distance."

Sanneh, a mother of four, lives in a small village of 300 people and started carrying water when she was five years old. Now, she and two of her daughters, 12-year-old Nyima and 20-

year-old Mamina, carry water together: "I wake up in the morning, and go and collect water from a well. I have to walk 8 km (5 miles) there and back. I do this three times a day at least." Each woman carries over 40 pounds of water on the return trip, wearing flip flops and often walking in extreme heat.

Sanneh was walking on behalf of Water For Africa, a charitable organization that's working to draw attention for the need for bore-dug wells with water pumps, rather than the hand-dug wells that are common there. In Sanneh's home country, Water For Africa estimates 200 to 300 water pumps would supply the needs of the whole population -- an urgent need, since 40 to 60 percent of the current wells and pump-

ing systems are deteriorating. Sanneh says, "I want them to help us dig bore holes, a sustainable water source, but not only more holes, I want more sustainable ones too. That's all we need."

While she couldn't walk the full length of the marathon because "it was too long and the container on my head was too heavy," Sanneh still captured the attention of people around the world. She's pleased that her efforts have helped draw attention to the need for greater action to improve water access. For Sanneh, it would be a dream come true: "I don't want my children and their children to be collecting water from the well when they are my age."

A Party for Marty

After 24 years as Executive Director of Positive Directions Marty Hauhuth is retiring. Please join us to thank Marty and celebrate all that she has done for the communities of Westport, Weston, Fairfield and Wilton through her work at Positive Directions.

Wednesday, June 3rd, 4:30-6:30 pm
Saugatuck Congregational Church
Fellowship Room
345 Post Road East
Westport

Help us to Honor Marty!

Make a contribution to Positive Directions in her name to ensure that this crucial work continues.

We are also putting together a book of tributes. Please send your stories and accolades to Lynn Abramson, Positive Directions, 420 Post Road East, Westport, CT 06880 or by email to LA.positivedirections@qamil.com

If you think you can join us please rsvp to: info@positive-directions.org



The Rev. Martin Copenhaver will be our guest preacher on Sunday, June 7th. Details will be announced in our church bulletin, website and our eblast media.

The Rev. Martin B. Copenhaver is a magna cum laude graduate of Dickinson College and received his M.Div. from Yale Divinity School in 1980. Rev. Copenhaver served churches in Phoenix, Arizona, Burlington, Vermont, Westport, Connecticut, Wellesley Congregational Church and is now President of Andover Newton Seminary in Newton Center, Massachusetts.

He is the author of five books: *Living Faith While Holding Doubts*; *To Begin at the Beginning: An Introduction to the Christian Faith*; *Good News in Exile* (co-authored with Anthony B. Robinson and William Willimon); and *Words for the Journey: Letters to Our Teenagers About Life and Faith* (co-authored with Anthony B. Robinson). His most recent book, *Jesus is the Question* was our Lenten book study.

Rev. Copenhaver was winner of the Mersick Prize for preaching and has had many of his sermons published in the Harper & Row "Best Sermons" series.

Rev. Copenhaver was an associate pastor at Saugatuck following his graduation from the Yale Divinity School. Saugatuck is always delighted to welcome back former pastors.

More News from our Saugatuck Church Family



Diane and Alyssa Barone made holiday candy with the proceeds going toward the Youth Mission Trip to Portland, Maine. Barone candy is outstanding. Only problem, you want more!



The Staples Orphenians performed in San Francisco's Davies Symphony Hall as part of the National Youth Choral Festival. They were among 10 high school choral groups from across the country selected to participate by the Grammy award-winning choir Chanticleer. They appeared with an orchestra conducted by Ragnar Bohlin, the music director of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus. One of the performers was our own Nicole Mathias. *Mark Mathias for WestportNow.com*