



# Views & Visions

United Congregational Church, Norwalk

EASTER — MAY 2008

*Consecrate Next Week . . .  
And Make the Week Holy !!!*

Set aside (consecrate) time and make next week **HOLY**. Join the celebrations on Palm Sunday, March 16<sup>th</sup>. The morning worship will tell the story of Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

Following worship, we will join together for the **Palm Sunday Gathering**. The Board of Christian Nurture will provide a light lunch and beverages. Stay for fellowship and help stuff the plastic eggs for the **Easter Egg Hunt** for our church children on Easter.

On Thursday evening, March 20<sup>th</sup>, we will return to the upper room in Jerusalem where Jesus gathered with his disciples, shared the cup and bread, and gave the command to serve one another. The service of Tenebrae (shadows), an ancient service, revisits the scriptures, leading us through the evening of agony following Jesus' last supper. This year, we will again be joined by members of the First Congregational Church of Norwalk. Plan to attend and share in this special service. The joint choirs will sing under the direction of our Director of Music, Charlotte Stacey, and Flora

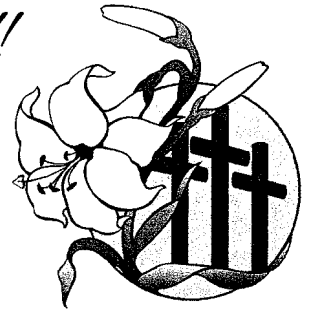
Major, the Interim Organist and Choirmaster at the First Congregational Church. This is the third year we have held a joint Maundy Thursday worship. The choral music and scriptures are very moving. You will be inspired.

(Pastor's note: Throughout my ministry, church members have often said the Tenebrae Service is the most meaningful worship experience of the church year. It is solemn and contemplative. Make a special effort to attend this year's Tenebrae worship service on Maundy Thursday, March 20 at 8pm.)

Easter Sunday is the celebration of the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Invite your family, friends, and neighbors to join us in proclaiming "*Christ the Lord is Risen Today*". Fellowship will follow the service and there will be a special treat for children downstairs.

We all know Easter is very early this year. Karen Lyon e-mailed the pastor some interesting facts about Easter and our calendar. *see page 4*

The One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering will be received through Easter Sunday.



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**Sarah Chesler  
Benefit Concert  
Friday  
March 14, 7pm**

Come and enjoy an evening of music and fellowship. Admission is \$10 for advance tickets or \$15 for tickets bought that night.

**CT Conference  
Annual Meeting**

The Spring Session of the 2008 Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ will be held May 10 at the South Congregational Church in Middletown.

The United Church of Christ's Minister for Creativity and the Arts, the Rev. Cliff Aerie, will lead a day of immersion, experimentation, and inspiration, as participants explore different ways in which the creative arts can enrich the worship, mission, and educational ministries of the church. A central element of the day is the New Wineskins Festival of presentations and performances by innovative members of Connecticut's UCC congregations.

Cliff will be joined by the Oikos Jazz Ensemble, a superb musical group which led much of the worship music during last June's General Synod at the Hartford Civic Center. Oikos will stay following the meeting for a special Global Village Jazz Concert at 7:00 pm.

The meeting itself is scheduled to run from 9:00 am to 4:45 pm, and includes worship, workshops, play shops, the New Wineskins Festival, lunch, sharing on Conference business, and time to meet new friends and greet old ones.

**Views & Visions**

The Newsletter of  
United Congregational Church  
275 Richards Avenue  
Norwalk, CT 06850-2715  
Office: 838-8858 Home Office: 852-7100  
Published 7 Times a Year

**10:30am Worship**

Pastor Gregory Errgong-Weider, 852-7100  
Christian Nurture Director Kerry Wechter, 847-6455  
Director of Music Charlotte Stacey

Editor, Joan Errgong-Weider, 857-4686

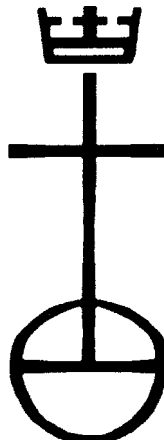
Moderator David Van Buskirk, 846-1999  
Assistant Moderator Ginny Copeland, 838-0872  
Clerk Cheryl Nayardy, 203-445-8160  
Treasurer Gabrielle Daves, 853-0728  
Financial Secretary Ted Fecenko, 866-8861  
Historian Dorothy Yoder, 838-5290

**UCC & OTHER ACTIVITIES**

**CONNECTICUT  
CONFERENCE  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**Silver Lake Registration**

Now Is The Time -- Registration for the 2008 summer season at Silver Lake is now open. Silver Lake is the outdoor conference center of the Connecticut Conference in Sharon, CT. It offers week-long summer camp experiences for children entering fourth grade through post high school. Conferences (sessions) run from July 1 through August 18. The Cost is \$375 unless otherwise noted. Scholarships are available. Pick up a brochure on the table near the bulletin board or visit the Silver Lake website: <http://silverlake.ctucc.org>. You can even register online!



**Obama's General Synod Speech  
Prompts IRS to Investigate  
UCC's Tax-Exempt Status**

by J. Bennett Guess  
UCC Press Release

CLEVELAND (02/26/2008)

The Internal Revenue Service has notified the United Church of Christ's national offices in Cleveland, Ohio that the IRS has opened an investigation into U.S. Sen. Barack Obama's address at the UCC's 2007 General Synod as the church engaging in "political activities."

In the IRS letter dated Feb. 20, the IRS said it was initiating a church tax inquiry "because reasonable belief exists that the United Church of Christ has engaged in political activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status."

The Rev. John H. Thomas, the UCC's general minister and president, called the investigation "disturbing", but said the investigation would reveal that the church did nothing improper or illegal.

Obama, an active member of the United Church of Christ for more than 20 years, addressed the UCC's 50th anniversary General Synod in Hartford, CT, on June 23, 2007, as one of 60 diverse speakers representing the arts, media, academia, science, technology, business and government. Each was asked to reflect on the intersection of their faith and their respective vocations or fields of expertise. The invitation to Obama was extended a year before he became a Democratic presidential candidate.

"The United Church of Christ took great care to ensure that Senator Obama's appearance before the 50th anniversary General Synod met appropriate legal and moral standards," Thomas told United Church News. "We are confident that the IRS investigation will confirm that no laws were violated."

**Silver Lake Needs Counselors**

Are you looking for a great volunteer opportunity this summer? If you are at least eighteen years old and would like to make a difference in the lives of kids at this summer, consider being a volunteer counselor. E-mail [timh@ctucc.org](mailto:timh@ctucc.org) or call 860-364-5526 for an application.

**CT Women of the UCC  
Annual Meeting**

Saturday, April 26  
United Congregational Church  
Bridgeport  
\$16/person includes lunch  
Contact Pam Didio at  
[pamd@ctucc.org](mailto:pamd@ctucc.org)

**Fund Raising Happenings**

Cheryl Nyarady, Chairperson  
Fund Raising Committee



We kicked off our new fund raising campaign with a Spaghetti Dinner in February. We had lots of food and a good time was had by all who attended, as we sat and chatted over an awesome spaghetti dinner! As I type this, we are gearing up for our Clothing and Bake Sale on March 8. Judging by the great assortment of clothes, that is sure to be a success! For the month of April, we will have our Spring Tag Sale on April 26. So start gathering your stuff! In May, we will have a Mother's Day Plant Sale — details will follow on that!

Remember — every dollar made is a dollar we don't have to take from our trust fund!

I would like to take this time to say a **BIG THANK YOU** to my **VOLUNTEERS** that faithfully help out and show up at every fund raising event! You know who you are and I want you to know how very much I appreciate all your help!

**Is Advertising Your Gift ?????**

If anyone out there is into advertising, I would love your help! I am looking for someone to help out with the advertising portion of fund raising. This would be contacting local papers, web sites, etc. I can organize events, but struggle with getting information out there! So, if you have some time and would like to help me, please talk to me on Sundays or email me at cnyarady@aol.com. Any help is greatly appreciated!



**Recycling to Help the Church  
"Reduce, Recycle, and Reuse"**

We have joined a program called Planet Green, which recycles inkjet cartridges and cell phones! So every time you change your ink at home....don't through away those cartridges! Every time you upgrade your cell phone....don't throw it away! Bring them to church and put them in the green recycling box in the back of the church. We ship these cartridges and cell phones back to Planet Green (at no cost to us) and they refund us so much per cartridge or cell phone. With your help, we can make an impact by eliminating the many non-biodegradable plastics and metals contained in inkjets from our landfills. Did you know that a cell phone takes at least 10 lifetimes to breakdown and that plastics used in inkjet cartridges can take over 10 centuries (1000 years) to decompose. So do something good for your environment and help the church at the same time! "Reduce, Recycle, and Reuse"

**FROM THE MODERATOR**


Please remember the FURNACE FUND. If you have any comments on the setup of our sanctuary, see any member of the Board of Deacons or myself. Any other suggestions or comments, there is a suggestion box located on the table behind the last pew. Thank you.

David Van Buskirk, Moderator

**CHURCH COUNCIL ASKS**

**DO YOU HAVE THE GIFT OF HOSPITALITY?**

The Church Council decided to try something new with our coffee hour! In the past, the Church Boards have run the coffee/fellowship time. Now, we are going to try a SIGN UP SHEET for people who may be interested in contributing to and providing hospitality for the coffee hour. The sign up sheet will be on the bulletin board. At council, it was suggested several individuals or one or two families could host the coffee hour. Printed directions for making coffee are available. If nobody signs up for a particular Sunday, it will revert back to the Board's responsibility for that Sunday as indicated below:

- |               |  |                            |
|---------------|--|----------------------------|
| First Sunday  |  | Board of Christian Nurture |
| Second Sunday |  | Board of Membership        |
| Third Sunday  |  | Board of Stewardship       |
| Fourth Sunday |  | Board of Deacons           |
| Fifth Sunday  |  | Board of Church Properties |

**NEW MEMBERS TO BE RECEIVED**

**PALM SUNDAY - March 16, 2008**

Membership in United Congregational Church, Norwalk is open to all. If you are interested in belonging to this church, please speak with the Pastor.

**CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING for PROGRAM**

*Sunday, May 18, 2008*

To prepare for this Annual Meeting there will be a season of discerning "gifts" that members possess to serve in leadership positions and on boards and committees, the nominating process used in the past.

The Pastor's final month of sabbatical leave will begin after the Annual Meeting for Program.

**SPEAKING OF FINANCES . . .**

Please make an effort to keep up with your 2008 pledges so that . . . I'm sure you know the rest of the story. — Ted Fecenko, Church Financial Officer

**FROM THE PASTOR**

I think you'll find this Easter information quite interesting. Since Easter is so early this year, the Board of Christian Nurture is not considering an outdoor egg hunt. Instead, an indoor treasure egg hunt is planned.

**Interesting Facts About The Date of Easter**

*shared by Karen Lyon*

I thought this was interesting!! Do you realize how early Easter is this year? As you may know, Easter is always the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring Equinox (which is March 20). This dating of Easter is based on the lunar calendar that Hebrew people used to identify Passover, which is why it moves around on our Roman calendar.

Found out a couple of things you might be interested in! Based on the above, Easter can actually be one day earlier (March 22) but that is pretty rare.

This year is the earliest Easter any of us will ever see the rest of our lives! And only the most elderly of our population have ever seen it this early (95 years old or older!). And none of us have ever, or will ever, see it a day earlier!

**Here's the Facts**

- 1) The next time Easter will be this early (March 23) will be in the year 2228 (220 years from now). The last time it was this early was in 1913. (If you're 95 or older, you were around then.)
- 2) The next time it will be a day earlier, March 22, will be in the year 2285 (277 years from now). The last time it was on March 22 was in 1818. So, no one alive today has or will ever see it any earlier than this year!

It doesn't matter what the date of Easter is. As your pastor, I always remind you that Easter is a Season, not just one Sunday. Easter is a season when we sing "Alleluia" and explore, once again, the post-resurrection stories of Christ. Come and join the happy throng throughout the Easter Season.

An early Easter also means an early Pentecost Celebration. This year it will be on May 11, which is also Mother's Day. Kerry and I will plan a very special, all ages worship for Pentecost.

Blessings,

*Gregory*

**CONGRATULATIONS** to *Cindy Pitteway* and Roger Hargrove, who were married at our church on Saturday, March 1. The new blended family has five children and all five of them (Matthieu, Charlie, Emma, Natalie and Thomas) were happy to participate in the wedding ceremony. Our pastor was joined by the Rev. Paul Carling, Associate Rector of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Darien for the nuptials.

**CONDOLENCES** to *Malcolm Powell* whose wife, Margaret (Peggy), passed away in February. Peggy's Celebration of Life was held at St. Matthew's Catholic Church. Please continue to hold Malcolm and his family in your prayers.

**CONCERN** is in our hearts for *Margaret Bardos*, who has been in and out of the hospital several times this year. A prayer for her and/or an encouraging word or card to her husband, *Dan*, would be a thoughtful and much appreciated gesture.

**CHANGE** is always present in every walk of life and change is always challenging. The moving of the pews in our sanctuary has been a challenging change for all of us. The Deacons had tweaked the pew arrangement again and again to attempt to address the various comments. The arrangement of the pews is still a work in progress. If you want to hear a funny story, ask the pastor about the pew that fell apart and crashed to the floor while he was attempting to move it.

**CARRYING** items that don't fit in the trunk of a car is generally a time when you want to borrow a truck. The Pastor has loaned his truck to several church members throughout the years. This winter, he sold his pick up truck, but not before *Jean Harper* borrowed it and the pastor to move a table into her condo. It's a good story, but when the Pastor tells it, he exaggerates a bit about falling into the brook as they were carrying the table. Jean's table was the last story, but having a truck for 12 years created many great adventures.

**GRATITUDE** (*finally a paragraph that doesn't start with a "C"*) is expressed to *David Van Buskirk* for his long service as Treasurer of the West Norwalk Nursery School. Also a word of thanks to *Gabrielle Daves* who has become the new WNNS treasurer.