

THE TOWER

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE GOLDEN HILL
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
An Open and Affirming Congregation

April 2010 Volume 47 Number 4

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Grace and Peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ!

One of the clergy magazines recently dealt with the issue of "church growth." Though it contains many good articles concerning this important issue, nothing seems to be new. I've read many articles and books on this subject because we all want our churches to grow. However it seems, in my opinion, we have no concrete solution. I've learned some ideas from these articles, but found nothing so substantially different from any other ideas which were presented by someone before. But every time, someone quotes the same statistic, and it is this:

This is not the first time I've shared this kind of statistic with you. And you probably remember my talking about it in the past.

When you enjoy a particular restaurant, Broadway show, movie, clothing or good store, doctor, therapist, health spa or anything which you enjoy – you would like to share that with some whom you love and care for. But, it seems, we hardly share our faith in Christ or our spiritual need and spiritual satisfaction, or our church life. Why?

The statistic on church growth indicates that some churches are growing because their own members are inviting their friends to come to the church. When was the last time you invited your friends and neighbors to come and worship with us?

When was the last time you invited your friends and neighbors to come to the Bible class and church activities?

The other question which you may want to ask yourself is this: do I want to invite my friends and neighbors to come to church and worship God the Creator and meet my friends in the church? What was it that first attracted you to come to our church, and kept you coming back? Don't you want to share that with your friends and neighbors? What kind of program (other than worship and Bible study) do you think we should offer?

I am inviting you to give me some feedback to the questions which I have raised in this letter. I hope you will write them down and send them back to me!

Blessings! *Taka*

**New Member Sessions
The Next Series Begins April 14th**

**“The real reasons people
join a church?”**

Why do people join a Church? Six percent join on their own; 10% join for youth programs; 6% join because of a pastor’s sermon; 3% join because of a special need; 2% join because of a pastor’s visit; 7% join because of a good church school; 1% join because of a revival; and 65% join because they are invited by a friend or relative. These figures paralleled findings by the Alban Institute. Asked why they came to church 2% saw an ad; 6% were invited by the pastor; 6% were contacted by an organized outreach program; and 86% were invited by a friend or family members.” —

Action Information

On Wednesday, April 14th, our next series of New Member Sessions will begin. The sessions will start at 7:00 pm on the 14th and continue for five consecutive weeks through May 12th. Those completing the series will join on Sunday, May 16th. Other series will follow in the spring. If you are interested in uniting with Golden Hill, please contact Taka or Melodye through the church office (336-0152). If you’re still deciding, participation in the sessions does not require you to join the church, so come out for the discussion.

**Golden Hill’s Film Series
on Immigration Reform**

Approximately 40 people attended both films on immigration in January and March, including a class of immigrants from the Bridgeport Parent Center’s ESL class. “Made in L.A.” dealt with worker’s rights and the problems of sweatshops. “Farmingville” showed the escalating tensions in a Long Island town between Hispanic day laborers and the suburban community. As a follow-up to the issues addressed in “Farmingville”, the NYAC Task Force on Immigration recommends that we read the recent March 8 article in the NY Times.

From the New York Times

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/09/nyregion/09patchogue.html>

In Jury Selection for Hate Crime, a Struggle to Find Tolerance

By Manny Fernandez, Published: March 8, 2010
Prospective jurors in the case of the 2008 killing of a 37-year-old Ecuadorean in Patchogue, N.Y., have brought up issues about the treatment of immigrants in Suffolk County.

Thank You

Thank you all for your continued prayers for Peter and all of our U.S. Service Personnel. As you read this Peter is back in the United States and preparing to report to Ft Leonard Wood, MO. There he will be training to work with mine dogs for future assignments. His new address is not yet available. We are very proud of him and appreciate the support we receive from you, our church family. - *Dave and Dale Janoski*

Thank you to all of you for your beautiful cards, kind thoughts and prayers at the time of my father's death. I am always grateful for my Golden Hill family, but most especially at times such as this. May the peace of Christ be with you all,

MAY "TOWER" DEADLINE

Our submission deadline for the May issue will be on April 15. Include your name and committee or organization with your submission. Please submit articles to the blue folder in the church office, or send via email to: tower@goldenhill.org

The Tower is a monthly newsletter of the Golden Hill United Methodist Church, 210 Elm Street, Bridgeport, CT. Submission deadline for articles is the 11th day of the month.

Jenny McLachlan, Editor

Contributors to this issue: *Mary Agostino, Becki Anderson, Shannon Dihmes, Dick Dmochowski, Sonya Green, Pastor Takayuki Ishii, Roena Littlejohn, Phyllis Machledt, Melodye Merola, Polly Torrence, The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport*

Weekenders are Back!

We're on the home stretch for this school year! Thanks for being so faithful in your donations. You make it possible for us to maintain an inventory of "kid friendly" foods, which is a great help in menu planning (not to mention packing the backpacks!)



Gratitude goes to Our Savior's Lutheran Church, who work on Community Suppers and have brought generous donations to Weekenders as well. We appreciate the support!

We also want to thank our own Golden Hill UMYF, who will be sharing some of the proceeds from their Thirty Hour Famine, with the Weekenders project. Show your appreciation of our youth, by signing up to sponsor one or more of them, and support both the UMYF and Weekenders!

Our weekly grocery needs are posted in the main kitchen, on bulletin boards in the Narthex, outside the Parlor, and outside the Church Office. In addition, Shannon and Melodye have made it possible for lists to be posted on our church web site, www.goldenhill.org. Check us out before you head to the grocery store! While we can use any items on the standard list, the items that are most challenging to stock enough of are the "protein" foods—tuna fish, canned chicken, cans of pasta and tomato sauce, Vienna sausage, soups, or microwaveable stew. If you can include a few of these in your shopping, we will accumulate enough for 38 backpacks without undue stress on anyone.



One more thought: Would you like to be a backpack packer, but have a schedule that doesn't allow a commitment of time on a regular basis? From time to time members of our Tuesday noon and Wednesday evening packing teams may be away or otherwise not able to pack. If you'd like to be on a "backup packers" list, please see Mary Agostino or UMW Co-Presidents, Diana Crosdale and Yvette Richardson.

As always, UMW is most grateful for your support of Weekenders. Thank you!



Come learn about Jesus & his followers

Join us each Sunday for study, fellowship and prayer. Classes for all ages

Our March 21 **Intergenerational Gathering** of all the children, youth and adult classes filled Locke Hall during the Sunday school time. After sharing breakfast together, we heard the story of Jesus' last week. We also participated in making banners to take home with the message, "He Lives" and decorating foam Palm fronds with the word Hallelujah in anticipation of Palm Sunday, March 28.

There will be no Sunday school classes on Easter, April 4.

Sunday school is open to children, youth & adults of all ages and our Kid's Club is open to children from 1st to 3rd grade. Sunday school meets from 9:15 - 10:15 AM on Sunday mornings. Those children eli-

gible for Kid's Club meet during the 10:30 AM morning worship service.

Our annual **Christian Education Sunday** will be **June 13** and over the next few months all Sunday school classes will be preparing for their role in the 10:30 a.m. worship service that day. Please mark your calendars for this special worship experience.

There is a place in our classrooms waiting for you. Our teachers are ready to help you explore the stories of Old and New Testament people and places of the Bible, and what it means to live as Christians today. Come join us for study and fellowship.

Golden Hill United Methodist Youth Fellowship



**For all youth entering grades 7 through 12!
Mark your calendar to join us.**

The United Methodist Youth Fellowship (UMYF) is open to all young people entering grades 7 through 12. UMYF meets at the church each Sunday evening from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

UMYF officers

President – Daniel Gregorio

Vice President – Matthew Bollaro

Treasurer – Xavier Hardison

Secretary – Aaliyah Dillion

Grade Representatives: 7/8 Domonique Thompson,
9/10 – Akalia Chambers, 11/12 Elizabeth Martin

30 Hour Famine Results The youth group raised over \$1000 from their participation in the 30 hour famine on March 13-14, benefiting Heifer International and the Weekender backpack program. Thanks to all who sponsored the youth in this fundraiser to promote awareness of hunger and to support these worthwhile programs.

Children's Book Corner



Phineas L. MacGuire...Erupts!, by Frances O'Roark Dowell. Grades 2-4. Mac knows that he is an exceptional boy-scientist, but his plans for the fourth grade science fair become a disaster when he is forced to work with the new boy in the class.

The Lacemaker and the Princess, by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley. Grades 4-6. Eleven year old Isabelle works with her mother and grandmother to make lace for the wealthy people near the palace of Versailles in France in the years before the French Revolution. Marie Antoinette meets Isabelle while she is delivering lace to the palace and asks her to be a companion to her daughter.

The Black Girl Next Door, by Jennifer Baszile. Grades 10-adult. This memoir is about a black girl growing up in an affluent white suburb in California. While her parents had to deal with segregation, Baszile's story is one of integration and being the only black child in so many situations. Baszile is currently a history professor at Yale.

Annual Soup and Sandwich Luncheon raises funds for Habitat

A special thanks go to all the members of Golden Hill who supported the annual Soup and Sandwich benefit Luncheon on March 21. The Society and Missions Committee is happy to report that we made over \$753 for our local Habitat for Humanity. Over 50 "take-out" quarts of soup were sold as well! Susan Harrison, a Habitat homeowner, her fiancée and her two daughters attended. Susan lives on Helen Street in the first "green" house Habitat has built. The house has 17 solar panels, double insulation, and other environmentally efficient aspects. Iris Taylor, the Director of Family Services for Habitat, also spoke about the impact owning a home has on families. Golden Hill provided the space for the first Habitat office and has been an integral part of the growth of the program in the past 25 years.

Since 1985 Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County (formerly Greater Bridgeport) has completed 150 houses-130 in Bridgeport and 20 in Stratford. The latest Habitat project has been the renovation of an historic 12 condo unit brick building on Williams Street built in 1889. Habitat will continue to build houses in Bridgeport and Stratford, but is also expanding to build 8 townhouses in Stamford in 2010.

Thanks Golden Hill members for the ongoing support of this important housing ministry in our city. Thank you also to the members of the Society and Missions committee, as well as Tom Perkowski and Opal Crosdale- who donated food, their time, effort, and cooking talents to make the luncheon such a success. - *Phyllis Machledt*

GOLDEN HILL ADMINISTRIVIA

The office phone number is 203-336-0152;
the fax is 203-336-9457

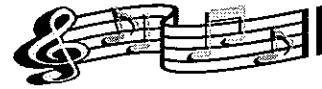
HOW TO REACH US ONLINE!!

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Dan
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The Tower

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Golden Hill Musical Notes



Chancel Choir rehearses on Wednesday Nights at 7:30 p.m.

Handbell Choir rehearses on Wednesdays Nights at 7:05 p.m.

Gospel / Praise Choir rehearses on Sunday mornings at 11:45 a.m.

The Young Glory Singers rehearse every Sunday after the 10:30 a.m. worship service. They are scheduled to sing at worship on Palm Sunday with the Chancel Choir and also Mother's Day. They attended the Choristers Guild Choral Festival at Fairfield University on March 6th. The festival involved youth choirs from all over Central Connecticut who participated in rehearsals and clinics in the morning followed by a combined youth concert in the afternoon.

Steel Drum Workshop

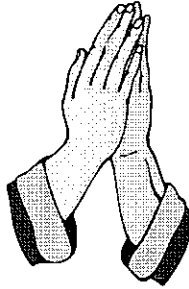
On February 28, Locke Hall was filled with enthusiastic folks who came to listen to, learn about, or try out the steel drums. Our workshop leader was Debbie Teason, band director at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in New Haven.

The energy level was high among aspiring drummers of all ages, and even the audience. At one point during the steel drum instruction, people sang along to the music of Amazing Grace as played on the steel pans by our Golden Hill members. It seemed like nobody wanted the workshop to end.

The schedule for future training/practice/rehearsals for this new addition to our Golden Hill music program will begin Sunday, March 28 at 1:00 pm and 5:00 pm, and continue each Sunday. There will be two groups and you are not limited to a particular group. If you can come at 1:00 p.m. one week, but need to come at 5:00 p.m. another week, that is fine. Mark your calendars if this is the musical activity which appeals to you. Contact Byron Crosdale with any questions about the training/rehearsal/practice schedules.

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT: PRAYER

"Will you be loyal to the United Methodist Church, and uphold it by your prayers, your presence, your gifts and your service? Prayer is both a gift of God and an obligation for Christians. As Christians we must employ the gift of prayer so that we can be the holy people God wants us to be.



Prayer must play a major role in our lives if we wish to draw near to God. John Wesley said, "the absence of prayer in the life of a Christian cannot be replaced; nothing can be more plain than the life of God if the soul does not continue, much less increase unless we use all opportunities of communicating with God and pour out our hearts before him. By becoming a member of Golden Hill or the United Methodist Church and accepting the vows taken, we were entrusted with a stewardship role in the church.

Prayer takes on many forms or dimensions. Private prayers are powerful as we spend time one-on-one with God; in corporate prayers we pray with others, primarily in worship where we share our faith, love, joy, peace and power over sin. "Pray without ceasing. . ." 1 Timothy 5:17.

John Wesley wrote, "there are times when it is appropriate to let the Holy Spirit lead us in prayer." Will you be loyal to the United Methodist Church, and uphold it by your prayers . . . ? As a responsible steward of Golden Hill, I challenge you to begin a prayer ministry using the prayer of your choice: breath prayer, Spirit led, prayer, popcorn prayer, direct prayer, private prayer or corporate prayer. God is waiting, we have work to do!
 - Roena Littlejohn

Youth United, a division of Habitat for Humanity Coastal Fairfield County, is made up of young volunteers ages 5-25 who carry out age appropriate, fundraising activities and home building projects. Youth United brings together young people from different backgrounds, faiths and organizations to do safe and meaningful work in support of Habitat. For more information, contact Phyllis Machledt at 203-521-6630.

CHURCH CALENDAR

- April 1 Foot Washing Service 7:15 pm
Maundy Thursday Service / Holy Communion, 7:30 pm
- April 2 Good Friday Service Noon - 3 pm
Easter Prayer Vigil begins at 3 pm
- April 4 EASTER
6:30 am Sunrise Service
8:30 am Chapel Worship Service
10:30am Sanctuary Worship Service
UMYF 6:30 pm
- April 5 Stewardship meeting at 6:30 pm
Building & Property, 7:30 pm
- April 6 Task Force, Parlor, 7:00 pm
- April 7 Community Supper, 5:00 pm
Taize worship, 6:30 pm
Confirmation, 7:05 pm
- April 11 8:30 am Chapel Worship
10:30 am Sanctuary Worship Service
Congregational meetings after 8:30 am & 10:30 am Worship
UMYF 6:30 pm
- April 14 Community Supper, 5:00 pm
Taize worship, 6:30 pm
Confirmation, 7:05 pm
- April 18 UMW meeting
UMYF 6:30 pm
- April 20 Finance, 7:30 pm
- April 21 Community Supper, 5:00 pm
Taize worship, 6:30 pm
Confirmation, 7:05 pm
- April 25 8:30 am Chapel Worship
10:30 am Sanctuary Worship Service
Congregational meetings after 8:30 am & 10:30 am worship
UMYF 6:30 pm
- April 27 Church Council, 7:30 pm
- April 28 Community Supper, 5:00 pm
Taize worship, 6:30 pm
Confirmation, 7:05 pm

Groups using Golden Hill in April:

- Americore
- UCONN Habitat work group
- Blue Hill Youth Group
- Building with Books

Stewardship Thoughts

Reflections on our membership vows to "covenant faithfully to participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service and our witness."

In *Grace Notes*, Jim Stinson talked about the first of the promises that we make when we join the church: we promise to support the Methodist church (local, national and global) with our prayers. The second of the promises that we make is to support the church with our presence.

What does it mean to support God with our presence? Lately I have been thinking about the concept of being present in many areas of my life. I am very good at multitasking and can keep multiple "balls" up in the air at one time. While this helps me to be a good steward of my time and I can get lots done, I have also been realizing that I do not fully focus on some of the things I am doing. I might sit down to watch a movie with Elizabeth, but would be balancing the checkbook at the same time, or think that I am having breakfast with my family, but looking through the newspaper at the same time. While I still have an unending list of things that need to be done, I am trying to set them aside at least a part of each day in order to be fully present with my family at the times that I say I am spending time with them.

There are times when I multi-task with my spiritual life as well. Some Sundays I come to church not just to worship, but with a list of people I need to talk to or things I need to do. The tasks themselves are not bad and need to be accomplished for various programs in the church, however it can distract me from my worship experience. Just as I needed to make a conscious decision to be fully present with my family, I need to make a conscious decision to be fully present with God especially during worship and my personal devotional time. In not being fully present to God, I am not able to hear the messages God has for me and I will not grow in my spiritual life.

It is not enough to just be physically present in the church pew, being present to God means setting aside the other things that are pulling at our attention so that we can hear God's voice. Practice being fully present to God today.

Becki Anderson,

Member of the Stewardship Committee

Calling all women!
Spring time is here.



Exciting times for United Methodist Women celebrating 140 years of service. Our Purpose: The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

Meeting April 18, 2010 after the 10:30 service in the Parlor. Hope to see many women come and enjoy fellowship and worship. For more information contact the Co-Presidents Yvette Richardson and Diana Crosdale.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CT District Spring Day Gathering
April 10, 2010

** Speaker Ruth Ann Lobo, Rebecca Lobo's mother. (Rebecca was an outstanding UCONN basketball star)

UMW Assembly
April 29-May 2, 2010

St Louis, Missouri
Theme: Faith-Hope-Love in Action

CT District Conference
May 2, 2010

Hartford North UMC, Hartford, CT

School of Mission
July 22-24, 2010

Western CT State University,
Danbury, CT

CT District Fall Gathering
Oct 16, 2010

Meriden First UMC, Meriden CT

NY Conference UMW Annual Meeting
Oct 23, 2010

Golden Hill UMC, Bridgeport, CT

NEWS & NOTES FROM The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport

Bridge Building Ministry (fostering dialogue to build understanding)

The 2010 Annual Youth Conference will be held **Sunday, April 25, 2010 from 1:30 to 5 pm**, University Commons, Sacred Heart University, 5151 Park Avenue, Fairfield. Through facilitated dialogue, senior high school youth will explore the difference between **Want and Need**. Refreshments and pizza supper provided. There is no charge for this event. Additionally, on April 17th, there will be a Facilitator's Training at Fairfield University from 10 am to 2 pm. Contact Richetta Joyner to register or for information at richettaj@ccgb.org.

Project Learn (turning students into scholars)

Project Learn's Annual Concert will be held on **Friday, April 30th, 7 p.m.** at First Presbyterian Church, 2475 Easton Turnpike, Fairfield with St. Luke's Steel Band, New Haven, performing. This group of 25 musicians, many from or with ties to the West Indies, performs an

expansive repertoire of classical, contemporary and seasonal music, in addition to traditional calypso and island rhythms. Under the direction of coach/arranger Debby Teason and assistant director Donna Johnson, St. Luke's Steel Band has earned a reputation as a most talented and exciting performing ensemble. Ticket donations: \$15 for adults, \$10 for seniors and college students with I.D. and \$5.00 for children age 12 and under.

Trumbull Gardens Center's move to Our Lady of Good Counsel in Bridgeport has generated a **"wish list"** of items to help make this center functionally efficient and cozy. Please contact Sean Campbell at 203.334.1121 x 244 or seancampbell@ccgb.org if your congregation can help us out with some of these items:

- (4) Mobile Computer Carts
- (1) five-shelf Bookcase
- (2) Storage cabinet with lock and key
- (4) Bean bag chairs or cozy reading chairs
- Big cup supply organizers
- Puzzles
- Board Games
- Construction Paper
- Art supplies
- Flash Cards



Golden Hill Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday, March 28

8:30 a.m. Palms distributed; Passion Narrative
 10 a.m. Gather in Locke Hall for Procession
 10:30 a.m. Triumphant Entry, Palms will be distributed;
 Passion Narrative

Holy Thursday, April 1

7:15 p.m. Footwashing Service
 7:30 p.m. Worship Service

Good Friday, April 2

10:30 a.m. Walking the Stations of the Cross -
 Gather at Golden Hill
 Noon to 3:00 p.m. Community Good Friday Service

Easter Prayer Vigil, April 2

Prayer vigil will be held from 3 p.m. on Good Friday until 6 a.m. on Easter Day.

Easter Sunday, April 4

6:30 a.m. Sunrise Service at St. Mary's by the Sea (map & directions available through church office)
 8:30 a.m. Celebration of the Resurrection
 10:30 a.m. Celebration of the Resurrection

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, May 1st, First Church of Fairfield will be hosting Battle of the Bands Part II, a fundraiser to support the **Janus Center for Youth in Crisis**. Come support these talented youth as they "rock-out" for area kids in crisis. 7 to 10 pm. Doors open @ 6:30. \$5/ person \$15/family

Sunday, May 2nd Greater Bridgeport CROP Walk, 1:30 – 5 p.m., departing from United Congregational Church, 877 Park Avenue (at State Street), Bridgeport.

Thursday, May 6th CCGB's 65th Annual Meeting, Covenant Church of Easton, 6:45 pm

Thursday, June 17th Plan to join us at 6 p.m. at the Downtown Cabaret Theatre featuring the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical **"The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee."** The 2010 Faith and Community Award will be presented to **Southport Congregational Church** that evening. \$65/person – for more information, email pattyjensen@ccgb.org or call 203.334.1121 x 243

CROP Hunger Walk 2010 in Bridgeport is May 2 Walk to Stomp Out Hunger or sponsor a Golden Hill Walker

Golden Hill United Methodist Church has actively participated with a walking team in the annual CROP Hunger Walk for many years in Bridgeport. On May 2, we will be stepping out again to try to stomp out hunger locally, nationally and internationally.

What is a CROP Hunger Walk?

Neighbors walking together to take a stand against hunger in our world. Together we raise awareness and funds for international relief and development, as well as local hunger-fighting. Twenty-five percent goes to local hunger programs.

CROP Hunger Walks help children and families

worldwide -- and right here in the U.S. -- to have food for today, while building for a better tomorrow. Each year some two million CROP Walkers, volunteers, and sponsors put their hearts and soles in motion, raising over \$16 million per year to help end hunger and poverty around the world -- and in their own communities. And you are part of it!

Mark your calendars for May 2nd and start thinking about who you could ask to sponsor you.

To learn more, go to www.cropwalk.org or visit the website at www.churchworldservice.org and click on the tab labeled CROP Hunger Walk.

HELP STOMP OUT HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME

Come walk with us and celebrate
36 years of hunger relief
Greater Bridgeport Crop Walk

Date: Sunday, May 2, 2010

Time: 1:30 P.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Place: United Congregational Church

877 Park Avenue, Bridgeport 06604

(Corner of State Street and Park Avenue Bridgeport)



For walk information or questions call: (203) 375-1284

Special note: In spite of the rainy weather the day of the 2009 walk, \$42,504.11 was collected. Many thanks to all who walked in the rain and contributed needed donations.