

# THE TOWER

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE GOLDEN HILL  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

An Open and Affirming Congregation

**February 2011 Volume 48 Number 2**

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. - *Matthew 22:37-39*

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. - *John 15:12*

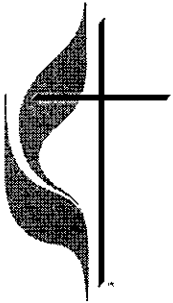
One thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve. - *Albert Schweitzer*

Please check out the February activities, ministries and opportunities at Golden Hill listed in this issue of the Tower newsletter and discover ways to share God's love in our church and community. Happy Valentine's Day!



## **The mission of the Golden Hill United Methodist Church,**

*a unique, diverse and dynamic Christian community, is to serve Christ in the city and the world through members who are ambassadors for Christ.*



**GOLDEN HILL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

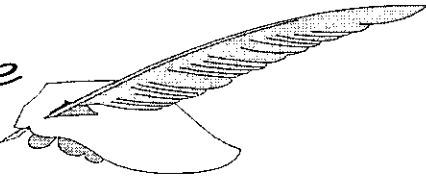
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*From the  
Pastor*



*Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,*

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

A recent Gallop Poll showed that most Americans suffer today from loneliness and lack of community. This comes as little surprise. Our mobile society separates persons from their families, their friends, and the neighborhoods where they grew up. In some communities, the average "stay" in an area is five years, as companies train by transfer their management-level employees.

Of course, there are some who find this mobility adventuresome and stimulating. But most feel isolated, lonely without friends to confide in or call on. About the best most get are parties, which if not community, is at least companionship and activity.

I sometimes find myself considering why people don't turn to the church when they want community. Of course, a great many people do turn to the church for community, but what they get is different from what they want or expect.

Why? Why don't people feel the sense of belonging in church? The answer to that question is probably not one answer, but several.



One answer, for instance, may be that a given church is closed to all but the most outgoing newcomers. Outgoing persons, of course, rarely need the church for their community or they easily find welcoming communities wherever they go.

Ironically, the shy person, the person who lives alone, the person from a broken family, these people are the ones most likely to find little in the church that offers them community. Churches have not geared their activities for these persons. Churches, for instance, do a miserable job of recruitment for the work of the church, thereby making involvement extremely difficult for those too shy or unsure of themselves to volunteer.



Another answer is in the behavior of the community-seekers. I have found in the last ten or so years in the ministry that most newcomers enter church life cautiously. Many persons worship with us for months before they will give us a phone number or an address. I am warned by persons taking new member classes that they don't really want to get too involved. I am cautioned by innumerable persons that they want to be "pew-sitters" – please don't ask them to take responsibility for anything.

These persons are not necessarily lazy; often they will help with one-day events. But they don't want to commit. They don't want to be responsible, because something more interesting or compelling might come along. People want their freedom to choose.

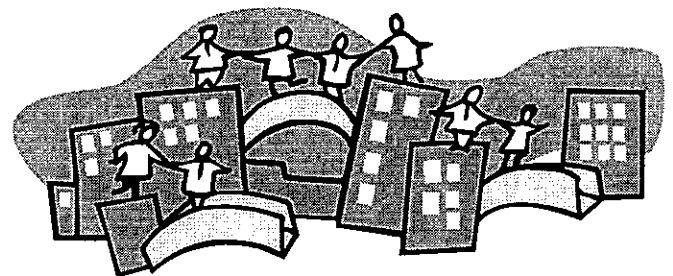
Unfortunately, it is difficult for anyone to find community in any place where he or she is casually committed. (I'm not even sure there is such a thing as "casual commitment." Seems to me, one is either casual, or one is committed.)

The fact of the matter is that there is a difference – a BIG difference – between being a member of some group, and belonging to the group. Even the once-committed have a hard time hanging on to the sense of belonging and community if they pull away from commitment.

So when you are asked to do something for the church, consider it an invitation to community. Consider it a compliment; IT IS!!! The invitation means that we want you to become us!!!

Blessings!

*Taka*



## *Weekenders Backpack Update UMW outreach continues in 2011*

First, special thanks from the United Methodist Women and the Weekenders Program! In recent weeks we have received extremely generous donations from:



1. The Confirmation Class at Notre Dame of Easton Roman Catholic Church, who gathered food and backpacks, and made "Snowman Soup" kits (cocoa and marshmallows in wintery pattern hot cups.) There were enough of the Snowman cups that we sent them in backpacks for Christmas vacation and Three Kings Day, and also distributed some to children at one of our Community Suppers!

2. Our Savior's Lutheran Church, who came to work at Community Suppers on a recent Wednesday evening, bearing an abundance of food items for backpacks.

3. And the Royal Order of South Dakota Buffalo, whose generous food drive benefited Christmas Baskets, Weekenders, Community Suppers and the food bank. This is an annual event in memory of a member of the Order, who was a regular at Community Suppers.

So we start the new year with gratitude for this extra support and wonder at how Golden Hill's ministries are living and spreading in the community.

We continue to appreciate your ongoing involvement in the Weekenders program, and all the ways you support it. We'll continue to post shopping needs around the church and on our Web site, [www.goldenhill.org](http://www.goldenhill.org). If you spot a good sale on backpacks, we are having to replace some due to wear and tear. Should you have an idea of an item that would benefit the children, like fresh fruit for one week, or pencils or crayons, etc., please speak to Melodye or to Mary Agostino to arrange. We are steady at 51 students enrolled in the program. Fresh food items can be kept cold until Longfellow School staff come on Friday to pick up the backpacks. They are then distributed at the school as the students take their bags on the way home.

*So, thank you so much for all that you do, and a Happy New Year from Golden Hill's United Methodist Women!*

*This is the day that  
the Lord has made.  
Let us rejoice and  
be glad in it!*

## High School Seniors Headed to College Apply for Scholarship by Feb 28

Golden Hill scholarship applications are being received until February 28, 2011.

High school seniors who are planning to further their education may submit applications for scholarship consideration. Requests should include:

- Basic biographical information
- Anticipated school for Fall of 2011
- Anticipated course of study
- Current GPA
- Overview of church activities

Requests are due **no later than February 28, 2011**. They may be submitted through the church office, marked Attn: Scholarship Committee.

### Children's Book Corner



Our book recommendations are provided by Becki Anderson, a Golden Hill member and school librarian.

**Louie!**, by Will Hillenbrand. Grades K-2. This is a fictionalized story of the author and illustrator of the Madeline books. A fun way to learn about how a person becomes an author and an illustrator. Great paired with the Madeline books.

**Binky, The Space Cat**, by Ashley Spires. Grades 2-4. Although to others Binky may appear as a regular house cat, he knows that he is a space cat necessary to protect his humans from aliens. This graphic novel combines a great story with illustrations that expand it.

**Faith, Hope and Ivy June**, by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor. Grades 4-6. Ivy June and Catherine both live in Kentucky and while they are not physically too far apart, their lives are worlds apart. Ivy June lives in the mountains with few amenities we would expect and Catherine lives in the city. The two participate in an exchange program and each spends two weeks living in the other's world.

## CHURCH CALENDAR

- Feb 1 Education/Worship Task Force, 7:30 pm  
Confirmation 6:30 pm  
Investment Committee, 7:30 pm
- Feb 2 Community Supper 5:00 pm, Locke Hall  
Taize worship, 6:30 pm, Chapel
- Feb 3 Investment Committee, 7:30 pm, Parlor
- Feb 6 Worship 8:30 Chapel & 10:30 AM Sanctuary
- Feb 7 Stewardship Committee, 6:30 p.m
- Feb 8 Confirmation 6:30 pm  
Investment Committee, 7:30 pm
- Feb 9 Community Supper 5:00 pm, Locke Hall  
Taize worship, 6:30 pm, Chapel
- Feb 13 Worship 8:30 Chapel & 10:30 AM Sanctuary
- Feb 14 Happy Valentine's Day
- Feb 15 Confirmation 6:30 pm
- Feb 16 Community Supper 5:00 pm, Locke Hall  
Taize worship, 6:30 pm, Chapel
- Feb 17 Trustees, 7:30 pm
- Feb 20 Worship 8:30 Chapel & 10:30 AM Sanctuary
- Feb 22 Confirmation 6:30 pm  
Church Council, 7:30 pm
- Feb 23 Community Supper 5:00 pm, Locke Hall  
Taize worship, 6:30 pm, Chapel
- Feb 27 Worship 8:30 Chapel & 10:30 AM Sanctuary
- Souper Bowl of Caring Food Drive**, February 6th  
Society & Mission sponsored **Soup & Sandwich luncheon** on March 6th .
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper**
- Lenten Study , Palm Sunday (April 17) & Easter (April 24)** at Golden Hill
- Music Ministry production of **Godspell**
- Intergenerational **Sunday School** event April 17

## UMW and UMYF collaborate to bake cookies & deliver Valentines

The UMW members will bake 18 dozen cookies around **Valentines' Day**. Members, Ruth Hurd and Evelyn Ostberg organize and deliver cookies to Golden Hill members



who are shut in. Our **UMYF youth** will assist by making cards and also delivering the cookies. Special thanks to those who offered to bake and deliver the cookies.

In March, we will be hosting **Shrove Tuesday pancake supper**. This is a fun-filled, family night getting "fat" together before the Lenten season begins! We will also **assemble Health Kits** for the homeless who attend Community Supper every Wednesday night. Pat Longway has graciously offered her services to this cause over the years but will be unable to lead this effort this year. Please consider taking an active part in this event by participating in any way you can. You can help us in the preparation of the food, shopping for ingredients, cooking, etc. Additional details will be forthcoming in the next few weeks in the Grace Notes. If you're willing to help, please contact Yvette Richardson, co-president of the UMW.

The **Weekenders** Program is very successful due in large part to everyone at Golden Hill and in the community who have so generously contributed to the program. We recently received sizeable donations as a result of a food drive from the confirmation class of Notre Dame of Fairfield and Saviors Lutheran Church. Thanks be to God that we are able to feed 51 children at Longfellow school in Bridgeport, CT! Thanks to all those who have helped to count, pack, and organize the delivery of the food to the school over the years.

The **CT District UMW Winter Gathering** will be held on February 12th at Westport UMC. Registration deadline is Feb. 5th. Our next UMW meeting will be held on Sunday, April 10, 2011 at Noon. Please consider joining us in worship and planning at either meeting.

News & Notes from the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport

**Hunger Outreach** ~ coordinating area feeding initiatives

The Hunger Outreach Network, coordinated by The Council of Churches, is a point of contact for food donations and volunteer service to 37 area feeding programs. If you are interested in organizing a non-perishable food drive, call 203.334.1121 and ask to receive a list of the registered programs with contact information.

**Project Learn** ~ turning students into scholars

Project Learn has been chosen as one of three community programs to benefit from the funds raised by

**Fabrics and Fabrications** – a Quilt Exhibit at Southport Congregational Church, which will take place from March 3 to March 5th, with a Preview Party on Thursday, March 3 from 6 to 8 pm. Quilts will be displayed in the Sanctuary and Chapel. There will also be a Fabrications Boutique offering handmade needlepoint, quilted and knitted treasures for sale. For more information, visit [www.fabricsandfabrications.org](http://www.fabricsandfabrications.org). Come enjoy the exhibit and support Project Learn at the same time!

**Janus Center for Youth in Crisis** ~ caring for Youth in Crisis

Janus Center is happy to announce, in an effort to enhance services to youth, the creation of a Poetry Workshop. This eight-week session starting mid February will be facilitated by Janus Center's Host Home parent Robert Jefferson, who just happens to be a published poet. This workshop is designed to give youth a creative outlet to express themselves and also a chance to be connected to positive activities. If you have unique talents that you feel would benefit youth, please contact Program Director, Dale Holder at (203) 334-1121 or email him at [daleholder@ccgb.org](mailto:daleholder@ccgb.org).

**CO-OP Center** ~ creating second chances

The Council's CO-OP Center program presents its 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Art from Prison Auction/Exhibit, Monday, March 21 through Friday, March 25 at the 305 K Gallery at 305 Knowlton St, Bridgeport. Exhibit viewing times to be announced. Artists in the Community Partners in Action's Prison Arts Program donate their art work for this exhibit. Proceeds

from the sale of this art support the CO-OP Center scholarship fund set up at Housatonic Community College to give our clients partial scholarships to start on their college career. If you would like to help with this event, or for more information, contact Dan Braccio at [danbraccio@ccgb.org](mailto:danbraccio@ccgb.org).



**Please Save These Dates:**

**Sunday, April 3, 2011** – The 2011 Annual Youth Conference, designed to engage members of your senior high youth groups ~ through facilitated dialogue, the teens will explore the various aspects of "Identity." – details to follow.

**Thursday, April 7, 2011** ~ CCGB's **Spring Fling** fundraiser, at the Downtown Cabaret Theatre featuring highly acclaimed and very funny **Nunset Boulevard**. As part of the evening's program, **Nichols United Methodist Church** will be honored with The Council of Churches' **2011 Faith and Community Award**. Ticket will cost the same as last year at \$65 per person. A reception with hearty appetizers and beverages precedes the program and play. Please plan to join us!

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## ♪ Golden Hill Music Notes ♪

Join us Wednesday nights for **Chancel Choir** rehearsal at 7:45 p.m.

**Starting Sunday January 23rd** there will be a **Music Reading Class** given from 12:00-12:30 on Sundays.



February is Black History Month and during that month we will be sharing Spirituals during worship by the Chancel Choir, Sandra Neubert, the Handbell Choir and many more. See details below about February 13th.

**Sunday February 13th** at the 10:30 a.m. we will **Celebrate Black History Month** through the offering of spirituals by guest singers Jocelyn O'Toole, mezzo soprano (sang in the Mozart Concert and on Christmas Eve) and Aaron Reeder, Baritone (sang in the Mozart Concert) joined by Golden Hillers Roena Littlejohn, Jane Wakeman, Reginald Roberts, the Golden Hill Steel Band and the Young Glory Singers.

**Central Connecticut Choristers Guild** will be holding a workshop and Concert here at Golden Hill UMC on Saturday March 12th most of the day with a closing concert at 2 p.m. The concert includes songs for the entire church year for **Youth Choir** starting with advent through Easter. These songs will be performed by a combined children's choir of over 100 singers, Golden Hill's Steel Band, Handbell Choir, and Liturgical Dancers. For more information see Polly Torrence.

- *Dan Pettit*, Music Director

### GOLDEN HILL ADMINISTRIVIA

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

HOW TO REACH US ONLINE!!

<b>Pastor</b>	ISHll@goldenhill.org
<b>Melodye</b>	outreach@goldenhill.org
<b>Dan</b>	music@goldenhill.org
<b>Church Office</b>	office@goldenhill.org
<b>The Tower</b>	tower@goldenhill.org



Join us at Sunday School  
Classes for all ages  
9:15-10:15 AM

We invite you to join us at Sunday school each Sunday morning to learn the stories of the Bible and hear the message Jesus taught to his disciples on how to love and serve others. We encourage parents and students alike to continue attending Sunday School and its events as much as they can.

Our next intergenerational event is Palm Sunday, April 17th. Mark your calendar now, plan to attend and invite others.

*Sonya Green*, Church School Superintendant

## UMYF

**All youth entering  
grades 7 through 12!!!!**



The past few Sundays the youth have been taking orders for Sub sandwiches for Super Bowl Sunday, February 6 as a fundraiser to support their program activities.

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. for worship, fellowship, service, games and all around fun. Activities and fundraisers are planned throughout the year and include day trips, overnight excursions and service activities. If you've never come down, plan to join us soon; if you've been to every meeting since your first, just mark your calendar. To learn more, speak with Melodye Merola, current UMYF President Akalia Chambers or Vice President Sean Carnegie.

### MARCH "TOWER" DEADLINE

Our submission deadline for March issue of *The Tower* newsletter will be February 15. Please include your name and committee or organization with your submission. Please submit your articles via email to: [tower@goldenhill.org](mailto:tower@goldenhill.org) or place in the blue folder in the church office.

## Bring in SOUP & canned goods for "Souper Bowl" Sunday Feb 6

While many Americans will be watching football teams at the **Super Bowl** on Sunday, **February 6**, others will participate in the "**Souper Bowl of Caring**", a national food collection for those in need and an opportunity to raise awareness about hunger. Often after the holidays, food pantry cupboards are bare. In the winter some folks have to choose between heat and food.



On Sunday, February 6, (and the Sundays before), please remember to bring in canned goods or make a monetary donation, as Golden Hill supports the Souper Bowl of Caring. Donation boxes for the non-perishable goods will be in the narthex and outside the chapel that day. If you are

planning a party, ask your guests to bring canned goods to donate. Last year the Golden Hill congregation donated \$167.



The canned goods and money this year will go toward food for Community Supper, St. Luke's Food Pantry, and Golden Hill's Weekenders Backpack program. Since the need is even greater this year, let's see if we can at least double that amount. For more information on this national food drive, talk to Elizabeth Martin, the chairperson, or go to [www.souperbowl.org](http://www.souperbowl.org). Nationally, the *Souper Bowl* raised over \$10 million to alleviate hunger in 2010.

## New York Annual Conference Continues to Send Volunteer in Mission teams Ongoing Need in Haiti for Rebuilding/Recovery Assistance

At the anniversary of the terrible earthquake in Haiti, it is obvious from the photos and reports that there is still much to be done to rebuild the country. **Marilyn Dillion's cousin** is stationed there and recently sent her photos of Port-au-Prince, which she is willing to share with the congregation. It is disheartening to see the piles of rubble and tattered tent cities. However, much was done to alleviate the immediate suffering of the Haitian people.

During 2010, UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) committed more than \$16 million from the Haiti Relief Fund, to which Golden Hill members contributed generously. The NY Annual Conference has made Haiti a priority and has sent many VIM (Volunteers in Mission) teams to help. Eighty-two United Methodist teams from all over the country served in Haiti in 2010; an additional 135 are scheduled for 2011.

Haiti is now eager to move to stage two: recovery. Tasks include:

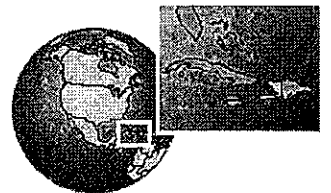
- rubble removal,
- rebuilding schools and churches
- promoting sustainable agriculture
- giving microloans for economic development
- providing ongoing medical programs and contin-

ued provision of food, water and sanitation.

Health kits are still needed especially in areas where there has been an outbreak of cholera.

There are two options for involvement in helping the people of Haiti.

One way is to **sign up to go on one of the VIM trips to Haiti**. A group of approximately 12 people leaves every month from the NY Annual Conference. The cost is \$1,100. For more information, please contact Phyllis Machledt (203-268-8737) or go to the website [www.nyac.com](http://www.nyac.com) and click on Mission, then Haiti.



The second choice is to **make a donation in the month of February to UMCOR in Haiti**. Make a check out to "Golden Hill UMC", with "**Haiti Emergency Advance #418325**" in the memo. Both helping hands and money are needed to rebuild Haiti and help the people break the cycle of poverty with long-term development. Let us all continue to share our blessings with the survivors of the earthquake in Haiti.

# Soup and Sandwich Fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity CFC

Sunday, March 6 at 12 noon  
in Locke Hall, Golden Hill UMC

Enjoy a nourishing meal while supporting a great local mission!

Simple, decent food for simple, decent housing! Enjoy 5 kinds of delicious homemade soup, plus sandwiches, Jamaican patties and desserts.

Enjoy **GREAT food and fellowship** after church on Sunday, March 6. Invite your friends or a newcomer. A Habitat homeowner and Habitat representatives will speak about the current program to build affordable housing locally for hardworking families. The **cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under 12 (same prices as 2007!)** Can't attend on March 6? Buy a **"take-out" quart of soup for \$7!** It freezes well for one of those "busy evening" suppers.

**Please make reservations or order "take-out" by March 3.** Please fill out the following reservation form and turn it in to the Golden Hill office, 210 Elm St, Bridgeport, CT 06604. We ask that you please order in advance so the cooks know how much soup to make! *Checks should be made out to "Golden Hill UMC" with "Soup'n Sandwich" in memo.*

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**SOUP AND SANDWICH RESERVATIONS for Sunday, March 6**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone or email \_\_\_\_\_

I / We plan to attend the luncheon on March 6.

\_\_\_\_\_ number of adults @\$10

\_\_\_\_\_ number of children under 12 @\$5

I would like to order at **\$7 per quart:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Jamaican beef      \_\_\_\_\_ beef vegetable      \_\_\_\_\_ chicken noodle

\_\_\_\_\_ lentil (vegetarian)      \_\_\_\_\_ minestrone

Please turn in **by March 3** to the Golden Hill office or call 203-336-0152.