

THE TOWER

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

January 2012 Volume 49 Number 1

As we ring in the New Year of 2012, let us remember the blessings we have already received in our lives, and work toward ways to continue to be blessings to our family, friends & community. Thank you for all the ways you helped our church and community in 2011, and for the action you take in the days ahead.

WORSHIP SERVICE TIME CHANGE On January 8, the 10:30 a.m. worship service will be moving to a 10:45 a.m. start time. The Chapel service time will remain the same at 8:30 a.m. We're making the change to give the pastor, Melodye and Dan a more comfortable transition time from the Chapel service to the Sanctuary service.

CHARGE CONFERENCE is January 22 following the 10:30 am worship service. Please plan to attend this important church meeting. Look for more details in Grace Notes.

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.



Sanctuary Decorated For Advent

The worship committee was challenged to creatively decorate for Advent 2011 due to the black drape which covered the interior scaffolding for the work activity of the church building renovation project.

From the PC of Pastor B



"Pursue the things you love doing, and do them so well that people can't take their eyes off you. All other tangible rewards will come as a result." Maya Angelou

It's a new year full of promise. My hopes and expectations for us are high as a community of faith called to make disciples on behalf of Jesus Christ. There is building to do and ministries to unfold. It's a new year full of promise.

Our challenge is to do a new thing in this place called Golden Hill United Methodist Church. I am sure that the Lord will continue to bless us with all sorts of possibilities. All we have to do is step to the "here I am" mode of thinking. Let us not grow weary and well doing but remember the words of our founder John Wesley.

"Do all you can...do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can"

Happy New Year...may the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ surround you with indestructible joy.

Love,
Pastor B



Pastor Barton with Maya Angelou



Happy New Year!

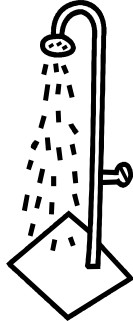
Shown at left are Pastor Barton with the UMYF and others who enjoyed pizza at the parsonage on December 11 following their afternoon of Christmas caroling in our community. 🎵🎵🎵🎵

Shower Ministry at Golden Hill

There are some folks in our community who don't have easy access to bathing facilities. Golden Hill is now open every Wednesday for those folks who find themselves without access to a shower for bathing.

There are many ways and opportunities to be part of this new and much needed endeavor. Please talk to Melodye about ways you can lend a hand.

Please call 203-336-0152 or email outreach@goldenhill.org



GOLDEN HILL ADMINISTRIVIA
 The office phone number is **203-336-0152**
 the fax is **203-336-9457**
HOW TO REACH US ONLINE!!

Pastor Barton pastorb@goldenhill.org
Melodye outreach@goldenhill.org
Dan music@goldenhill.org
Church Office office@goldenhill.org
The Tower tower@goldenhill.org



FEBRUARY "TOWER" DEADLINE

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

The Tower is a monthly newsletter of the Golden Hill United Methodist Church, 210 Elm Street, Bridgeport, CT. Submission deadline for articles is the 15th day of the month. *The Tower* can also be viewed on our church website under Publications at: www.goldenhill.org listed.

Editor: *Jenny McLachlan*

Contributors to this issue: *Mary Agostino, Becki Anderson, Pastor Walter C. Barton Jr., Janice Brown, Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport, Allen Corry, Geri Floyd, Phyllis Machledt, Melodye Merola, Daniel Pettit*

Christmas Baskets 2011 Wrap Up

Once again the great team of Golden Hill United Methodist Church and Sacred Heart University was able to help bring Christmas Joy to 129 families in the Bridgeport area.

To list the names of all who made this possible would fill the whole Tower. Instead let's look at so many ways in which people were Christmas angels:



- Serving as coordinator at a school, hospital or agency, contacting families and preparing the referrals.
- Donating gifts and food items
- Donating cash and gift cards, which support the Christmas Basket program
- Encouraging friends and co-workers to donate as well
- Grocery shopping the week before delivery day
- Wrapping gifts
- Arranging food items for packing
- Packing the boxes
- Donating and/or offering a home for chickens and turkeys, to leave space available in the Golden Hill freezers for the "birds" we bought.
- Giving time on December 18 to make follow-up phone calls when there were last minute questions about some of the families
- Delivering baskets to the families
- Helping when deliveries can't be made on Sunday, to be sure folks get their baskets during the week.

The Christmas Basket Program is one of Golden Hill's favorite ministries. It takes all of us in the congregation, with help from many other people, to make it happen. When we are able to share Christmas with other families, everyone's joy increases astronomically!

For all your help,
 the Christmas Basket Committee
 says THANK YOU!
Happy New Year!

Weekenders Continue in 2012

Happy New Year from Weekenders!

We are especially grateful for your support in many ways during the holiday season. In the December Tower you read about the evening of music and guest musicians that Dave Gregorio and Becki Anderson hosted in Locke Hall. It was a fun evening of fellowship and music. Besides sharing their many talents, the participants brought with them donations of cash and food items. Lisa Nelson and friends had a party to which they brought



food items. These also supported Weekenders and Golden Hill's Community Supper Program. A really great thing about your contributions of food, is that they all help someone - be it through Weekenders, Community Suppers, or a local food pantry.

Every week one of Golden Hill's two teams of volunteer packers meets to set out food and fill fifty backpacks. Every week Pat Booker makes two trips from Longfellow School to Golden Hill, on Tuesdays to bring back the prior weekend's backpacks, and again on Fridays to bring the filled packs back to the children. The kids are so appreciative of the backpacks and the food items within.

We thank you, one and all!

If you'd like to shop or pack backpacks for Weekenders, please let Mary Agostino know.

**May you have good health
and many blessings in 2012!**

Please check out the list of current needed items for Weekenders on the church bulletin boards and website at www.goldenhill.org



Have You Hugged A Methodist Today?

The Stewardship Committee is sponsoring the sale of aprons as a mini-fundraiser to support our Rose Window Campaign.

We offer this fundraiser with a two-fold purpose:

1. To make available for purchase this specialized apron as an excellent gift for you, friends and family.
2. To provide you another way you can contribute to reducing the cost of restoring the Rose Window.

The aprons come in five different colors: Black, Dark Green, Red, Blue and Natural. The aprons are priced to sell for \$15.00 each.

Please make checks payable to:
Golden Hill United Methodist Church.

Please write *Apron Sale* on the *memo* line of your check.



The committee began taking orders after both worship services on December 18, 2011. Sales will continue until January 15, 2012.

Many of you have commented about liking this apron when you saw Geri Floyd wearing it at our church luncheons. Pastor Barton wore one at his Christmas Open House at the parsonage. Now you can own one of these aprons for yourself and give one or more as a gift. Thank you for your support. Please direct your questions to Geri Floyd at 203-268-4899 or send email to jfloyd01@snet.net

Join the Golden Hill UMC Knitting Group Meeting on Sunday Evenings

Our "beginners" knitting group meets Sunday evenings from 6 PM to 8 PM in the Elm Street lounge. We range in age from 6 to 76 (maybe more)! We welcome women and girls and could certainly use a fellow or two as well. Of course if you are better than a beginner, that is fine as well. Just expect that we will be asking you questions. Those who crochet and embroider are welcome too!



If you are a brand new knitter and left handed, please let us know you will be coming, since only Elizabeth can teach lefties. We have needles and yarn for beginning projects, and you are welcome to come and go as you wish -- you don't have to

stay two hours! We also serve light refreshments. We are glad to work with youngsters 6 and older. It is good to plan to stay with them the first time, in case they find knitting is more challenging than they anticipated. Please also be sure to arrange pickup no later than 8:00 PM.

We do not meet when the UMYF is not meeting. Please call Janice Brown at 384-6232 with any questions.

Society & Mission to host Volunteer in Mission Speaker

Golden Hill has a unique connection to the recent United Methodist Volunteer in Mission (VIM) trip in 2011 to Mozambique. Two used but refurbished laptop computers were donated on behalf of Golden Hill to the VIM team to take with them to Mozambique and to leave for use in the mission there. One laptop belonged to a church member, but had also been used with our Place of Grace contemporary worship and church slide presentation in past years. Additional new and refurbished laptops were donated by other churches for transport to Mozambique with the VIM team to be used as tools in ministry where needed.

On Sunday, January 29 between the end of the 8:30 am chapel service and the start of the 10:30 am sanctuary worship, Annette Griffith, of Monroe United Methodist Church will be at Golden Hill to share her experience as a member of that Volunteer in Mission team who were in Mozambique during August 2011.

Watch Grace Notes for additional details of this event sponsored by Golden Hill UMC's Society & Missions committee. Please plan to attend and hear more about the United Methodist work in missions in Mozambique.

Stewardship 2012 at Golden Hill Rose Window Campaign

The Stewardship Committee wishes everyone a Happy and Blessed New Year. The Rose Window Campaign is still going strong with over \$16,000.00 to date. We are almost half way there with eleven (11) months to go to reach our goal of \$40,000.00.

We are asking for donations with the hope the church will remember that our financial gifts reflect a measure of the grace and blessings God has shared with us. So let us all gracefully prepare our hearts and work together as a church to aid and support this campaign in bringing Golden Hill UMC back to its original state and condition.

Remember there will be individual recognition for the contribution levels to this campaign. The contributor will be recognized by having their name placed on a plaque in a specified category determined by the amount of their gift. The plaque will be installed in the Narthex. The donation categories will be Bronze \$350, Silver \$750 (2 names), Gold \$1500 (3 names) and Platinum \$3000 and up (5 names). The number of names inscribed on the plaque are determined by the amount of the gift. Envelopes will be provided with the symbol of the Rose window for your donation.

Please remember the Rose window campaign is in addition to our normal tithes and offering pledges and we depend a great deal on your generosity.

Allen Corry, Stewardship Chair

News & Notes from the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity ecumenical worship ~ January 22, St. John's Episcopal Church, 768 Fairfield Avenue, Bridgeport 06604 at 7 pm. This year's theme is "**We will all be changed by the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ**" (cf. 1 Cor 15:51-58). Please contact Rev. Dr. Brian R. Bodt at brianbodt@ccgb.org or 203.334.1121, ext. 233 for more information.

CCGB's Spring Fling FUNdraiser, Friday, March 2, 2012 ~ at the Downtown Cabaret Theatre: **Face to Face – A Tribute to Billy Joel and Elton John**. Tribute artists **Joey Riedel** and **Michael John** join forces to capture both legends in a high energy, interactive show, with a killer Rock N Roll band. The **2012 Faith and Community Award** will be presented to St. John's Episcopal Church, Bridgeport. Tickets at \$65 per person include sumptuous appetizers, wine, beer and other beverages during the reception preceding the performance. People are encouraged to bring their own picnic-style dinner to enjoy during the show. Invitations will be mailed at the end of January and posted at www.ccgb.org. Hope you will join us for a really FUN evening!

Project Learn (turning students into scholars)

Project Learn has once again 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 1 thru March 3, with a Preview Party on Thursday, March 1 from 6 to 8 pm. Celebrating their 10th anniversary, this year's theme is **Reuse, Recycle and Rejoice**. 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.com. Come enjoy the exhibit and support Project Learn at the same time!

CO-OP Center

CO-OP Center announces its sixth annual Arts from Prison Auction to be held in March (details to follow) at the 305 Knowlton Street gallery in Bridgeport. All artwork is donated by inmates participating

in the Community Partners in Action's Prison Arts Program. All proceeds will go toward the CO-OP Center Scholarship Foundation which provides partial scholarships to Housatonic Community College for ex-offenders. For more information, contact danbraccio@ccgb.org.

The Janus Center for Youth in Crisis

is currently seeking community Host Homes. A Host Home is a family, household or individual who voluntarily opens its home for a youth between the ages of 11-17 years old who is in need of temporary shelter, board and care. They offer the youth a stable and caring environment and provide him/her with a constructive and consistent living situation, while Janus Center staff helps to foster reconciliation between youth and their family. If you have the heart to help youth in need, please contact Dale Holder at daleholder@ccgb.org or 203.334.1121, ext. 221 for more information.



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, please call 203.334.1121 and ask to receive a list of the registered programs with contact information.

Please save these dates:

The **2012 Annual Youth Conference ~ Sunday, March 25, 2012 at Sacred Heart University** from 1:30 to 6 pm ~ designed to engage members of your senior high youth groups ~ through facilitated dialogue, the teens will explore a "hot topic" – details to follow. **Contact Larri Mazon**, lwamazon@gmail.com or 203.334.1121, ext. 255 or 203.710.7342 (cell)

GOOD FRIDAY COMMUNITY SERVICE , Friday, April 6, 2012 Noon to 3 p.m. Golden Hill United Methodist Church, 210 Elm Street, Bridgeport, CT 06604 Contact Brian Bodt at or 203.334.1121, ext. 233 for more information.

UMYF

All youth entering grades 7 through 12!!!!



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 or current UMYF officers.

UMYF OFFICERS & GRADE REPRESENTATIVES:

President – Elizabeth Gregorio
 Vice President – Domonique Thompson
 Treasurer – Mario Beckford
 Secretary – Akailia Chambers
 11 & 12 – Aaliyah Dillion
 9 & 10 – Olivia Markes
 7 & 8 – Lawrence Carter

Gingerbread House Auction Raises \$315 for Habitat for Humanity



Eleven gingerbread houses enthusiastically constructed by youth from the Golden Hill UMYF were on view in the church parlor for a silent auction on December 11 & 18. Winning bidders took home their gingerbread house on December 18 after coffee hour. The youth raised \$315 for Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County. Thank you to all who participated in this project.

Christmas Caroling

Wearing Santa hats and bundled up to keep warm in cold temperatures, Golden Hill youth and adults loaded up several cars and vans to go caroling on December 11 in Fairfield, Stratford and Bridgeport to visit several church members.



Youth Activity Possibilities for 2012 may include attending IGNITE, a weekend youth event for all

teenagers in the New York Annual Conference! The event offers opportunity to meet youth groups from all across the Conference to participate in:

- ◆ Exciting Worship!
- ◆ Engaging Speakers!
- ◆ Amazing Performances!
- ◆ Relevant Workshops!
- ◆ and some free time to relax and enjoy.

Presented by the New York Annual Conference Council on Youth Ministries

IGNITE 2012

Raising the Belief

Children's Book Corner

Our monthly book recommendations are contributed by Becki Anderson, a Golden Hill member who is a school librarian.



Goldie and the Three Hares, by Margie Palatini. Grades kindergarten-2. When Goldilocks falls down the rabbit hole after being chased by the three bears, the rabbits find their peaceful world very disrupted.

Storyteller, by Patricia Reilly Giff. Grades 4-6. While Elizabeth is staying with her aunt, she discovers an ancestor known as Zee whose life was turned upside down by the Revolutionary War. The story moves back and forth between Elizabeth learning about Zee and the life that Zee actually lived.

Prayers for Sale, by Sandra Dallas. Grade 10-Adult. Set in 1936 up in a Colorado mining town, Hennie is being pressured by her daughter to leave the home she has lived in for over 50 years and move in with her in Iowa. In what might be her last summer in the mountains, she meets young Nit Spindle who reminds her of herself long ago and who needs her help in many ways.