

THE TOWER

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE GOLDEN HILL
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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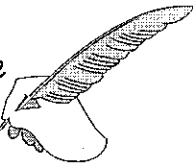
Summer officially arrives June 21st and Golden Hill has opportunities to help you spend the days and serve others. Our church representatives will be attending the **NY Annual Conference** session at Hofstra University on June 9-12 and the Bishop has invited everyone to attend a special day at Annual Conference on June 12. Children, youth & adult Sunday school classes will participate in leading both worship services on June 13 for **Christian Education Sunday**. Graduates will also be honored June 13, so please provide those names to the church office by June 6. Sunday school classes and choirs soon will be taking a summer break. Our Society & Missions committee invites you to help with a **Christmas in July Food Drive** to stock St. Luke's food pantry, and to become more aware of Immigration Reform issues. **Church picnic at Wheeler Park** following worship on June 27th. **Summer Worship** hours of 8:30 and 10:00 a.m. will begin on June 27th and conclude on Labor Day weekend, September 5th when we will return to 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.

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.

Dear Sisters and
Brothers in Christ,

From the
Pastor



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

Life has its frustrations, doesn't it? One of mine is a strongly held conviction among ever so many Christians that summer time represents vacation time...from CHURCH!!

I could respond to that conviction with the usual pat answers, such as for instance, that GOD never goes on vacation, does she/he?!!

Oh, how tempting it is sometimes to answer that way. And even though I might "nail" a summer time church vacationer with that one, it probably wouldn't produce any change. Alas and alack, our generations have lost the fine art of feeling guilty, or at least, of changing behavior as the result of well founded guilt.

So let me try something else – something which is not just a gimmick because, as a matter of fact, I believe it. What I believe is that Sabbath time is just what the doctor ordered for some of the ills that afflict us today.

Sabbath time is something most of us rarely take. Sabbath time is more than a day away from the office or the classroom. Sabbath time is time to be quiet.

Sabbath time is not sleep time. Sabbath time is time to be fully awake, so that we might be aware of the bounty of life. That awareness, of course, leads

to a direct and profound awareness of the Provider of that bounty.

I am not good at remembering where I've read things, so I am terrible at quoting my sources. That's why I can't tell you where I read the following, but can only tell you that it speaks to me about why we need our Sabbaths.

What I read was a defense for belief in the existence of an intentional, directive God. The defender challenges a non-believer to keep a straight face, while maintaining that the eye and all the delicate connections that link it to the brain were an evolutionary coincidence. A person does not have to forsake belief in the theory of evolution to find it preposterous to think that the eye could have developed accidentally!

What has all that to do with Sabbath? Sabbath allows us the quiet moments to wonder at the extraordinarily ordinary miracles of life. And once we marvel at the extraordinarily ordinary miracles that fill up our lives intricate eyes, that enable us to see the Spring come in glorious bursts of pink and white – moments of time to taste and feel and use to add to our contentment – triumphs of family members (graduations, promotions, daily kindness) that leave us misty-eyed with pride – then we find joy that cannot be taken from us by nagging worries over what we do not have!



Bottom line – when we make Sabbath a weekly routine, we notice miracles; and when we notice miracles, we become very happy!

Here's to a happy summer!!!
"Remember the Sabbath, and keep it Holy!"

Grace and Peace!
Taka

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.

Jenny McLachlan, Editor

Contributors to this issue: Mary Agostino, Becki Anderson, Shannon Dihmes, Dick Dmochowski, Sonya Green, Pastor Takayuki Ishii, Phyllis Machledt, Melodye Merola, Daniel Pettit, Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport

CAPITAL RENOVATION COMMITTEE CALL

We are truly embarking on the journey to rejuvenate our church building. Your Board of Trustees has the responsibility to design and effect the actual work to best accomplish the renovation and we are doing just that.

We do not want to overlook any resource within our congregation and therefore are asking anyone who may be experienced, interested and enthusiastic about being directly involved in planning, organizing and controlling this work to contact Dick Deible or Dick Dmochowski to join us.

Stop & Shop Card Fund Raiser

This Current Expense Fund Raiser needs YOU. Are you shopping for graduation events or summertime cookouts & picnics? Many of us bring our check books each week and "shop" each Sunday by buying a Stop & Shop Card.

We average about \$800 in sales each week. You get full value of the card and your church gets 5% from Stop & Shop. Please help us grow this fund-raising effort – at no cost to you!

Should you have questions about this program, stop by and ask us – better yet, ask one of your friends who are doing it – they are all around you! It's easy! Cards are sold after chapel and before the 10:30 AM service each Sunday. Melodye also has a limited number of cards available during the week.

Golden Hill to host Mission Academy

Do you know someone looking for an opportunity for hands on mission experiences that gives the tools to be in mission in their local community?

We're offering two Mission Academy sessions this summer at Golden Hill in week-long and weekend programs open to groups aged High School through Adult. Session dates are July 10-15 and a shorter one on August 12-15.

Details can be found on the church website at: www.goldenhill.org/MissionAcademy or speak to Melodye Merola.



2010 CROP WALK: Many thanks to the 22 Golden Hill members who walked in the 2010 CROP Hunger Walk, and all the people who sponsored them. Details will be announced later on how much money was raised this year.

For those of you who walked in the Crop Walk, please turn in your sponsorship forms to Dan Gregorio with the money once you have collected it. In this way we will be able to keep track of how much is raised by people from Golden Hill. Thank you for walking and raising money for hunger issues.

Weekenders Update!

Thanks to all who support the Weekenders project! School is scheduled to end on June 16, with the "absolute last day" on June 23. With half of June to go, this will be a list of items that are always useful and appreciated!

Individual servings of:

- Cereal (hot or cold)
- Juice boxes
- Crystal Light or comparable
- Pudding, fruit cups, applesauce
- Raisins
- Fruit snacks or fruit roll-ups
- Popcorn
- Vienna sausage
- Pasta with tomato sauce, like Chef Boyardee ravioli, Spaghettio's, etc.
- Mac and cheese
- Tuna
- Canned chicken
- Cheese and crackers
- Peanut butter and crackers
- Ramen noodles
- Chili
- Hash



Basically anything that is packaged in individual servings, and is easy for kids to use, works well.

If you have questions about Weekenders, or would like to participate, please see any UMW member, or talk with Melodye Merola, Mary Agostino, Yvette Richardson or Diana Crosdale.

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Some Simple Suggestions for Immigration Reform

The West Indian American Association of Greater Bridgeport and Housatonic Community College put on an Immigration Forum on May 1, which Golden Hill supported by providing the breakfast. The immigration lawyers there presented some relatively simple reforms, which would greatly help the current situation.

The **DREAM ACT** for students who are in the United States in undocumented status.

Children were brought here by their parents, and many have been here for a long time. When they are ready to graduate from high school, they can't get a social security number, a driver's license or work legally, nor can they go to college except as international students. The US House had proposed giving legal status under certain conditions to children who have graduated from the public school system. It would not give status to their parents or their families, just the children. It stalled in the Senate. A similar "DREAM ACT" passed the CT legislature several years ago, but was vetoed by Gov. Rell.

Registry. This section of the immigration law allows people who have been in the US for lengthy periods of time to obtain permanent residency or green cards. The law was last updated in 1986. If a person had been in the US since before 1972 (at least 14 years), had put down roots, paid taxes and established himself, he could obtain permanent residency. This law has not been updated since 1986 and still says that an individual needs to have been in the US prior to 1972. The lawyers suggested that simply revising the date requirements would help people who have been here 15-20 years take advantage of the existing immigration laws.

Section 245(i). This section of the law allows an individual, under certain circumstances, to pay a penalty of \$1000 if they are in the U.S. illegally, to obtain permanent residency through a close relative. This section expired in 2001. It has caused hardship for many people, especially spouses and children of

U.S. citizens and permanent residents. If this section of the law could be reinstated it would assist people who want to regularize their immigration status, because of a close family member who is an American citizen or a green card holder. It would also help keep families intact.

For information on these suggestions for immigration reform, please contact the International Institute of CT (203-336-0141) or Ximena Varas (xvaras@gmail.com) and Hector Laporta (hlapo8@hotmail.com), co-chairmen of the New York Annual Conference Task Force on Immigration.

Please consider contacting Sen. Joseph Lieberman, Sen. Chris Dodd, and Congressman Jim Himes to support these changes in the immigration laws.

Sunday School is open to people of all ages and our Kid's Club is open to children from 1st to 3rd grade. We have wonderful teachers who are ready to share with you the people and stories of the Bible! Those children eligible for Kid's Club meet during the 10:30 A.M. morning service.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SUNDAY

This year, we will celebrate our Christian Education Sunday on June 13, 2010. All of our Sunday School attendees (children, youth & adults) will be conducting and participating in both the 8:30 A.M. worship service and the 10:30 A.M. worship service. Help us prepare for this by having your child in attendance at Sunday school during the weeks preceding June 13, so they can learn and practice their part of the worship. Please consider this a personal invitation to all to come and worship with us!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION REMINDER

To all Sunday School teachers and students: Please remember that there will be no more Sunday School classes after June 13, 2010 until fall. To the teachers, please remember to wrap up all your studies by the end of May, 2010. We will be rehearsing promptly at 9:30 A.M. on June 6, 2010 for the following Sunday. Please remind all your children of this each Sunday. Mark your calendars and plan accordingly. Thanks for a good year! - Sonya Green

NEWS & NOTES FROM The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport

Thursday, June 17th ~ Come on down and play at The Downtown Cabaret!! Plan to join us at 5:30 p.m. for a reception featuring delectable hors d'oeuvres and beverages. The 2010 Faith and Community Award will be presented to Southport Congregational Church at 6:30, followed at 7:30 by with the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee. \$65/person – Bring your own picnic-style supper and drinks to enjoy during the show. For more information, email pattyjensen@ccgb.org or call 203.334.1121 x 243. Reserve your place early ~ seating is limited.

Janus Center (Caring for Youth in Crisis)

Janus Center's program director Dale Holder was recently elected to serve a two-year term on RHYTTAC (Runaway Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Center) Advisory Board. RHYTTAC serves a centralized national resource for Federal Youth Service Bureau funded Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) grantees. Training and Technical Assistance Services are directed at assisting RHY grantees to engage in continuous quality improvement of their services and to build their capacity to effectively serve runaway and homeless youth. With his input into formulating best-practices, Dale will be able to broaden and enhance the scope of youth in crisis services not only in the Greater Bridgeport area, but on a national level.

Project Learn (Turning students into scholars)

Project Learn will offer summer programming at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Summerfield United Methodist Church, and Marina Village. Once again, the summer program will provide academic enrichment, recreational and cultural activities for 120 children. If anyone is interested in providing recreational supplies and/or volunteering please contact Sean Campbell at 203-334-1121 ext. 244 or seancampbell@ccgb.org.

CO-OP Center (Creating second chances) hopes to enlist at least four congregations during the month of June to collect one of the four hygiene items listed below. Please contact Dan Braccio, CO-OP Center Program Director, at 203 367-8441 Extension 231 or send email to: danbraccio@ccgb.org , to coordinate the collection of these items:

- Soap/washcloth
- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Deodorant/Feminine Hygiene pads
- Toothbrush/toothpaste

Hunger Outreach (coordinating area feeding initiatives) Regrettably, hunger never takes a vacation! Please consider renewed efforts in collecting non-perishable food items ~ and emphasize that hunger is not a seasonal problem that crops up only at Thanksgiving and Christmas ~ it is a huge problem all year long, particularly during the summer months. If you'd like information on what kinds of food to collect or a list of feeding programs, call Byron Crossdale 334.1121 x 249. To those who serve in community suppers and pantries all year long, our hearty thanks.



♪ Golden Hill Musical Notes ♪

Our **Steel Drum Band** made its debut in worship on May 9th. The Steel Band Practice Schedule continues the training and practice sessions for the steel pans on Sundays at 5:00 p.m. and will be ministering through music again on June 20th during the 10:30 service.

The Young Glory Singers sang on May 9th at the 10:30 Worship Service for their final time until fall.

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.



We're offering a Vacation Bible School (VBS) this summer at Golden Hill for all ages: children through adults. The dates are August 2 through 6 at 5:30 to 8:00 pm with a light supper. Mark your calendars and plan to bring family & friends to participate.

Watch for news in *Grace Notes* as to when we begin accepting registrations. Lisa Nelson will be the contact person.

Grace-Rachel Circle of UMW says THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

The Grace-Rachel Circle of the UMW thanks all who donated clothing, shoes and other items for our Rummage Sale on May 7 and 8. And we thank the many people who took time out of their busy lives to help us set up the sale so it was attractive and inviting to our customers!

As in years past, we will donate a goodly portion of our proceeds to the UMW of our Conference. We also donate to the Methodist Youth Fellowship and the Community Suppers program at Golden Hill; Janus House for troubled teenagers and the Greater Bridgeport Council of Churches. In addition, we donate leftover clothing to the Bridgeport Rescue Mission, Salvation Army, Goodwill Industries, and disaster relief efforts across the nation. At the Rummage Sales, we see many people in need and offer good, used clothing at extremely reasonable prices and a kind word to our customers.

We sponsor the Samaritan's Purse organization's Operation Christmas Child, seeking donations from all church members of Christmas-decorated shoe boxes full of toys, books, clothing and gift items. We bring the shoe boxes to the local collection point (Calvary Evangelical Free Church in Trumbull) to be sent to the national distribution center, which sends the boxes all over the country and the world. We pay for the postage for all boxes.

Our activities for the Lord would not be possible without all your help and witness, and we praise you and give thanksgiving for you!

Lil Harcarik, Julie Lewis & Dianne Severance

GOLDEN HILL ADMINISTRIVIA

The office phone number is 203-336-0152;
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HOW TO REACH US ONLINE!!

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CHURCH CALENDAR

- June 1 Worship Committee, 6:00 pm Oak Room
- June 2 Community Supper 5:00 pm, Locke Hall
Taize worship, 6:30 pm, Chapel
- June 6 8:30 am Worship, Chapel
9:45 am Sunday School for all ages
10:30 am Worship, Sanctuary
Christian Education - VBS group, Noon
UMYF 6:30 pm
- June 7 Stewardship 6:30 pm, Parlor
Building & Property 7:30 pm, Oak Room
- June 8 SPRC 7:30 pm, Parlor
- June 9 Community Supper 5:00 pm, Locke Hall
Taize worship, 6:30 pm, Chapel
- June 9-12 NY Annual Conference, Hofstra Univ.
- June 13 Christian Education Sunday
8:30 am Worship, Chapel
9:45 am Sunday School for all ages
10:30 am Worship, Sanctuary
UMYF 6:30 pm
- June 15 Finance 7:30 pm, Oak Room
- June 16 Community Supper 5:00 pm, Locke Hall
Taize worship, 6:30 pm, Chapel
- June 17 Trustees 7:30 pm, Oak Room
- June 20 8:30 am Worship, Chapel
10:30 am Worship, Sanctuary
Japanese Special Ministries, 3-5 pm,
Oak Room
- June 22 Church Council 7:30 pm, Parlor
- June 23 Community Supper 5:00 pm, Locke Hall
Taize worship, 6:30 pm, Chapel
- June 27 BEGIN 8:30 and 10:00 AM worship for
summer
Church Picnic at Beardsley Park
- June 30 Community Supper 5:00 pm, Locke Hall
Taize worship, 6:30 pm, Chapel

NOTE: Summer worship hours start June 27 with 8:30 am and 10:00 am services.

Stewardship at Golden Hill: For The Long Run

Do we as a congregation want to continue to have and conduct the ministry that Golden Hill have been doing for years? The Task Force has attempted to explain its financial situation and the condition of the church we as a church body are facing.

The Stewardship committee is a small committee but we feel with the help of God and the congregation's willingness to work together, we can begin to move in the positive direction and maintain what Golden Hill has accomplished over so many years. The title we've come up with for this plan is "FOR THE LONG RUN". This plan is going to take some time to accomplish over the long haul but initially we have a more immediate goal to reach by the end of this year.

Now that the information is out what can we do and when do we start? One answer is dig deeper as was mentioned by the Task Force last month. And the second answer is we start now. The Stewardship Committee agreed on a plan for the remainder of this year of how we could contribute \$30,000 to the church fund. The "For the Long Run" plan entails giving an additional \$1000 a week as a church body above our regular tithes.

If 100 groups consisting of individuals, couples, friends, etc, contribute \$10 each week in addition to the regular tithes we can reach this goal of \$30,000 by the end of December. This will only work if we consistently contribute this amount above our regular tithes. If we deduct it from our regular tithes it will not accomplish the goal what we set out to achieve.

Is saving the ministry, outreach, staff support and mission of Golden Hill worth one pizza, one less cup of coffee, one less movie ticket each week to reach this total weekly goal of \$1000 per week?

We need to create a strong sense of spirituality and a shared vision for the life of our church and deepen our financial commitment to our annual giving. I encourage the church members to pray about stewardship along with the pastor to help us reach the goals that have been set to acquire the projected funds.

If we as a congregation can raise \$1000.00 per week above our normal offering from June to December 2010 we'll have a beginning balance on January 1st of at least \$30,000.00 in our current expense fund.

I ask that you to please remember your membership vows to support the church with your prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. Special "FOR THE LONG RUN" envelopes and commitment cards will be available so this special offering does not get confused with your regular offerings.

The Stewardship Committee is working on a longer range plan for the upcoming years and pray we can reach our financial goals so we can maintain what Golden Hill has accomplished for years.

Allen Corry, Stewardship Chair

Children's Book Corner



Each month this suggested reading list for children is provided by Becki Anderson.

Doug-Dennis and the Flyaway Fib, by Darren Farrell. Grades K-2. A sheep by the name of Doug-Dennis discovers what happens when a small fib keeps growing until it actually carries him away.

The Graveyard Book, by Neil Gaiman. Grades 5-8. Nobody Owens is a normal boy who has been raised by ghosts in a graveyard. Now the man who murdered his family when he was a baby is trying to complete the job by murdering him. Newbery Award winner.

JULY/AUGUST "TOWER" DEADLINE

Our submission deadline for the summer issue will be on June 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