

THE TOWER

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE GOLDEN HILL
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

An Open and Affirming Congregation

July/August 2011 Volume 48 Number 7

Summer Schedule Highlights: July 3rd, Pastor Barton's first Sunday with us, begins our summer worship schedule. Chapel worship will remain at 8:30 a.m. and the **Sanctuary worship service will begin at 10:00 a.m.** The Staff Parish Relations Committee invites you to attend worship and wear your name tag to help Pastor Barton get to know each of us. Join us for a time of fellowship outdoors with hot dogs, pastry and lemonade to welcome Pastor Barton on July 3rd after the 10:00 worship service. Then bring yourself & others on **July 10th** for worship and the **Church Picnic**. We have a place waiting for you!

Join us at **Vacation Bible School evenings from August 1st—5th**, as we experience "Jesus Truth Seekers: Mission Possible." This is an intergenerational event for *God's children* of all ages: children, youth and the young at heart who won't let us tell their age (children & adults). An evening meal is provided prior to the activities each night, which lets you eat out with your church family that week.

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
210 Elm Street, Bridgeport, CT 06604
<http://www.goldenhill.org>

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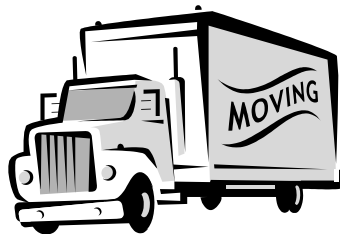
From the PC of Pastor B



A Psalm of Comfort "My Cup Runneth Over"

"Never settle for less when God intends more"
Psalm 23

The estimated time of arrival was between 8:00 - 8:30 am. I was getting prepared when the movers rang the doorbell at 7:30 am to pack and move me to my new Bridgeport home. Needless to say, I wasn't ready for them, yet they were more than ready to begin. The truck was packed by 4:00 pm. My sister and I left Brooklyn at 7:00 for Bridgeport to meet the movers the following day at the new parsonage.



Moving as many of you know can cause quite a bit of stress. Some say it's like being caught between two worlds: what is soon to become the past while moving into a very present reality. Yet a change of address can do wonders for the soul.

A Bishop once told me..." Walter, you always blossom wherever you are planted". Looking at my career it has always been by God's grace. I am excited and happy to be your new pastor. It is my prayer that we blossom together at Golden Hill. It is my prayer that we grow together in spirit mind and body. It is my prayer that we put into practice the five principles of fruitful congregations, passionate worship, extravagant generosity, risk taking and mission, intentional I faith development and radical hospitality.

"Come let us reason together..."

Grace and Peace,

Pastor B



UMW sponsors 2 youth attendees for Christian School of Mission

Several faithful women met on May 22nd to discuss events for the upcoming year for the UMW. Coming soon is the Christian School of Mission which will be held on July 28th through July 30th. We are grateful for the opportunity to sponsor two youths, Samantha Nelson and Elizabeth Gregorio to attend this year's event. The purpose of the School of Christian Mission is to provide opportunities for youth and adults to grow in understanding of the mission of the church in the current world context. The 2011 youth study is on "Forgiveness and Reconciliation."



The opportunities for the UMW are endless. We hope to have a Bible study trivia with the women at Nichols United Methodist Church some time this year. We are also planning a UMW drive in September with the focus on the Backpack program as well as a day of service at a future date.

Thank you for your support during the year, particularly with the Weekenders Backpack program. We look forward to seeing you at our **next meeting on August 21st**. Your ideas and participation are welcome.

Enjoy the summer!

UMW Co-Presidents,
Yvette Richardson and Diana Crosdale

IN THIS ISSUE...

Pastor's Column	2
CROP WALK Results	3
Stewardship in Action	4
Children's Book Corner.....	6
Church Calendar.....	7
Taka Retires	8
Rose Window Stewardship Campaign.....	9
Church Picnic	11
Music News & Notes	12

Donate to Help Others with Christmas in July Food Drive!

With the difficult economy and the closing of St. Charles' Food Pantry on the East Side, St. Luke's Food Pantry in Bridgeport has seen a huge increase in requests for food and has even had to close on some days recently because they ran out of food. The Society and Missions Committee is doing a Food Drive called "**Christmas in July**", starting **June 26 and continuing through the month of July**. According to St. Luke's, July is usually the month with the fewest donations, so **they really need our help**.

Please bring canned goods or make a donation for St. Luke's when you come to church.

Items that are needed are: tuna fish, rice, canned beans, cereal, pasta and pasta sauce, peanut butter, jam, canned meats, soup, macaroni and cheese, canned fruit and juice. You may

2011 CROP WALK Results

Many thanks to the 14 Golden Hill members who walked in the 2011 CROP Walk, and all the people who sponsored them. This year we raised \$760 to help feed people in Bridgeport, in the rest of the United States and around the world. Thank you for walking and raising money for hunger issues. Great things happen when we all work together! - *Elizabeth Gregorio*

Save your Labels & Boxtops

Please continue to save and bring in **Labels for Education** (Campbell's products) and **Boxtops for Education** (off many popular products) for Crossnore School, a school for children of troubled families in North Carolina. The labels help the school buy much needed educational supplies.

There is a collection can for the labels on the table at the back of the Sanctuary, as well as an envelope on the bulletin board next to the church office. For more information on the school, please contact Carole Clauss, who is very familiar with their programs.

leave the non-perishable items in the narthex in the designated "Christmas in July" box or in a similar box by the chapel.

Monetary donations are also very welcome, especially since St. Luke's has made arrangements to buy frozen meat at discounted prices. If you write a check, make it out to "Golden Hill United Methodist Church", with "St. Luke's Food Drive" in the memo.



Thanks for remembering that the spirit of Christmas is needed all year long!

Reminder from the Finance Committee

Golden Hill does great work all year round; whether it's hot or cold, day or night, on the weekend or during the week, something good is always happening at church!



So please remember to include your financial commitment to Golden Hill in your summer plans.

You may be away from Golden Hill for a few Sunday's this summer on a relaxing vacation, but I guarantee that your contribution will be working hard - even if you're not!

Golden Hill United Methodist Youth Fellowship



For all youth entering grades 7 through 12!
Watch the *Grace Notes* for the date and details on the **UMYF summer picnic** which is an opportunity to say goodbye to graduating high school seniors and to welcome the rising 7th graders.

Be on the lookout for information on UMYF activities this summer and fall.

Stewardship in Action at Golden Hill

Office Volunteer: *Sandi Ericson*

I was asked to write a “blurb” regarding working in our church office as a volunteer. What to say? Being a church volunteer (in any capacity) is educational, to say the least.

When I was first asked to “help out” in the office, I thought ... I’ve already put in my time working for Golden Hill. Another thought quickly followed ... if I don’t help, who will? So, I said “yes, I’ll be happy to”; and so I am.

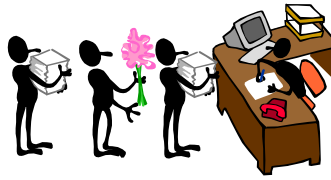
I was taught as a child, that being a member of the Methodist Church meant that the promise I made at confirmation to support the church with my prayers, my presence, my gifts, and my service, was a promise to be taken seriously; and I do.

Working in the church office one afternoon a week has provided some insight to our church staff, and to other volunteers. I’ve learned how frequently various committee chairs and members stop by to fulfill the duties of their posts, and how committed they are to the tasks at hand. I’ve also seen how diligently our staff works to fulfill the spiritual (and other) needs of our congregation, as well as the needs of our neighbors in this community. However, paid staff alone cannot keep a church viable; the Church requires help from every member, and so I help.

I’m not sure volunteering makes me a better person, but I do know it makes me a person who is more aware of the needs and concerns of others. I am grateful that I’ve gotten to know and interact with church family members on a level different from merely greeting folks on Sunday morning.

There is a huge bonus in being at Golden Hill on Wednesdays ... that is being present for (and helping if needed) Community Suppers! I’ve learned how appreciative community supper clients are to those who provide the meal, and more importantly, how appreciative the volunteers who cook and serve are for the opportunity to do that. I am truly amazed that so many of our congregation, various churches and other organizations, and **especially** our young people, are willing, no - **happy**, to serve the community.

Muhammed Ali was quoted as saying, “Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth.” Hopefully, I’m current in my rent payments.



Choir: *Phyllis Jackson*

When I became a member of Golden Hill the pastor at that time was Rev. Richard Yerington. The moment I walked through the portals of this blessed place, I knew for certain that the Lord directed me to my church home. My spirit was at peace and I was happy just to be able to worship here.

My plan was to worship anonymously and quietly, but lo and behold; I was asked by Rev. Yerrington to participate in a workshop, which I did, and between each session we sang hymns. Dick heard me singing, and after the workshop was over, he asked if I would join the choir. I promptly said NO!

I did not think that my voice was good enough for that finely tuned choir, and secondly I do not read music. But he never gave up, Dick was very persistent. He convinced me that my voice was good enough and that I was not required to have the ability to read music. So finally I said YES and joined the choir. I was very apprehensive, and thought that it was too daunting a task. I felt inadequate because I was embarking on something I have never done before, and there were times when I wanted to quit.

Then God sent Jodie, who was one of our section leaders then. I expressed my feelings to her and she took me under her wings and helped me to become the chorister that I am today. I have also had other music directors who have also helped me on this journey. One was Michael and our beloved Charles; and now Dan has brought me to a new level.

I would like to thank you Daniel for the dynamic diversity in music you bring us, and for making it so much fun to come to choir practice on Wednesdays and Sundays, even when I’m tired. It is a distinct pleasure and honor to sing with the individuals of the chancel choir. I regard them as my friends and family. I praise and thank the Lord for giving me the gift of singing and the opportunity to praise him with that talent. I would ask myself what is my purpose in life? I no longer ask that question, because I know with confidence that my purpose is to be exactly where I am today...at Golden Hill. Amen.

New York Annual Conference Highlights

Eighteen retiring clergy were recognized at the 212th session of the New York Annual Conference (NYAC), at Hofstra University June 8-11, 2011 and included Golden Hill's pastor Taka Ishii and his wife, NY/CT District Superintendent, Jeannette Bassinger-Ishii, as well as Rev. Jane Sibley, most recently at Great Hill UMC. Photo galleries and videos of the retirement and other conference happenings are available on the NYAC website at www.nyac.com/pages/detail/1641. Click on the links displayed for the topics that interest you.

Golden Hill's website has a link to the conference news, *The Vision*, on the upper right corner of the home page *The Vision*, NYAC conference monthly news publication, produced digital editions daily during the annual conference session. Look for the photos of those you know and check out those conference memories captured in videos and photo galleries.

Dick Deible, Roena Littlejohn, Melodye Merola, Phyllis Machledt, Jim & Barbara Stinson were Golden Hill members who attended the sessions. Dick Deible and Roena Littlejohn are our Golden Hill delegates to annual conference and are eligible to vote during conference sessions. This year's conference agenda also included election of representatives to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences of the United Methodist Church.

The Vision newsletter reported that Taka Ishii and his wife Jeannette Bassinger-Ishii exchanged "high fives" during the retirement celebration.

"In Spanish, the word for retirement is *Jubilacion*, a word that does not speak of retreating or being set aside, but rather speaks of life and joy." according to the Rev. Luisa Martinez at the retirement festivities.

Four District Superintendents and a clergy husband and wife (Taka and Jeanette) were among those retiring in 2011.

George and Carolyn Engelhardt received the Dale & Gwen White Award at the Methodist Fed-

eration for Social Action chapter dinner. George Engelhardt is a retired District Superintendent who presided over many years of annual church conferences at Golden Hill.

Nine new pastors were ordained during the 212th session of the NYAC and included the Rev. Vicki Flippin, who credits Taka Ishii with being a mentor to her, from their first meeting while Taka was at First & Summerfield UMC in New Haven, CT. At Taka's retirement celebration on June 26 at Golden Hill, Vicki spoke of his influence on her life and ministry.

Two new congregations were chartered: Broken Builders UMC and Morningside UMC.

NYAC Conference Session By the Numbers

Member attendance:

447 Clergy

516 Laity

85 Spouses & Guests

Health Kits Shipped: 6,055

Special Offerings

\$5,166 to Anchor House

\$4,019 Black College Fund

\$4,985 Ministerial Education Fund

Link into Golden Hill Prayer Chain

The church receives prayer chain requests; sometimes on the yellow pew cards, sometimes on the phone, sometimes through an email message, sometimes by personal contact.

The request is relayed to our prayer chain members. These are people who: have made a commitment to pray every day for the requests received, have made a commitment to keep the request confidential and will keep a concern in prayer for two weeks following receipt

New prayer team members are always welcome, so please speak to Melodye Merola if this is a ministry to which you are called or if you have any questions.

Children's Book Corner

The Great Nursery Rhyme Disaster, by David Conway. Grades kindergarten-2. Little Miss Muffet is bored with being in the same old nursery rhyme so she sets off in search of a new rhyme to be in.

Stanley's Little Sister, by Linda Bailey. Grades kindergarten-2. When Stanley's people bring home a cat, Stanley knows he is supposed to be nice to her, but nobody asked him if he wanted to have a sibling.

Dirk Bones and the Mystery of the Missing Books, by Doug Cushman. Grades kindergarten-2. In this beginning reader, the detective Dirk Bones sets off to solve the mystery of who is stealing books in the town.

Joey Fly Guy, Private Eye in Creepy Crawly Crime, by Aaron Reynolds. In this graphic novel mystery, Joey Fly Guy sets off to solve the case of the stolen diamond pencil box.

You Read to Me, I'll Read to You: Very Short Fairy Tales to Read Together, by Mary Ann Hoberman. Grades 2-6. This poetry book is meant to be read together with a friend. The different parts are color coded to help the readers.

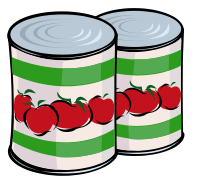
Extra Credit, by Andrew Clements. Grades 4-6. Abby is in danger of having to repeat six grade unless she can prove she can be a good student. As part of doing this, she volunteers to do an extra credit project by having a pen pal in Afghanistan. The letters she received change how she sees herself and the world.

43 Old Cemetery Road: Dying to Meet You, by Kate Klise. Grades 4-6. When the author Ignatius Grumpy moves into an old mansion for the summer hoping to find a quiet place to write, he instead finds an eleven-year-old boy named Seymour and an irritable ghost named Olive.

The Dressmaker of Khair Khana, by Gayle Tzemach Lemmon. (Grade 10-Adult) This true story of a young woman in Afghanistan who found a way to earn money to financially support her family and friends, all the while living within the strict rules the Taliban decreed when they took over her home city of Kabul. A truly inspiring book that you will want to share with others when you are finished.

CHURCH CALENDAR

REMINDERS



"CHRISTMAS IN JULY" FOOD DRIVE Please bring in non-perishable food for **St. Luke's Food Pantry**. Donations can be made to "Golden Hill UMC", with "St. Luke's" in the memo. July is the month when they need donations the most. Help feed hungry people in our community.

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE – Sunday, July 3rd, Pastor Barton's first Sunday will begin our summer worship schedule. The Sanctuary worship service will **begin at 10:00 a.m.** Chapel service remains at 8:30 a.m.

GOLDEN HILL CHURCH PICNIC July 10th at Beardsley Park, see information on page 11.

JOIN US FROM AUGUST 1st TO 5th for Vacation Bible School for all ages, Preschool through Adults, every evening 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., includes a light dinner. More information and sign up to follow. Speak to Lisa Nelson if you're willing to help out with meal preparation or teaching.

WEEKENDERS – June 17th was the last day for sending home Back Packs for this school year. To all those who contributed to this ministry, we are very grateful. We hope your response continues to be faithful for the 2011-2012 school year. Please watch the *Grace Notes* for needed items in September.



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 at: www.goldenhill.org listed under Publications.
 Editor: *Jenny McLachlan*
 Contributors to this issue: *Mary Agostino, Becki Anderson, Pastor Walter Barton, Diana Crosdale, Opal Crosdale, Dick Dmochowski, Geri Floyd, Elizabeth Gregorio, Phyllis Jackson, Phyllis Machledt, Melodye Merola, Daniel Pettit*

CHURCH CALENDAR



- July 1 Pastor Barton's first day at Golden Hill
- July 3 **SUMMER WORSHIP HOURS BEGIN**
8:30 am (Chapel) and
10:00 AM (Sanctuary)
- July 4 **INDEPENDENCE DAY**
(Church Office Closed)
- July 6 Community Supper

Taize worship
- July 10 **SUMMER WORSHIP SERVICES**
8:30 am (Chapel) and
10:00 AM (Sanctuary)

CHURCH PICNIC (Beardsley Park), Noon
- July 12 Building & Property, 7:30 pm

SPRC, 7:30 pm
- July 13 Community Supper

Taize worship
- July 17 **SUMMER WORSHIP SERVICES**
8:30 am (Chapel) and
10:00 AM (Sanctuary)
- July 19 Finance, 7:30 pm
- July 20 Community Supper

Taize worship
- July 21 Trustees, 7:30 pm
- July 24 **SUMMER WORSHIP SERVICES**
8:30 am (Chapel) and
10:00 AM (Sanctuary)
- July 26 Church Council, 7:30 pm
- July 27 Community Supper

Taize worship
- July 31 **SUMMER WORSHIP SERVICES**
8:30 am (Chapel) and
10:00 AM (Sanctuary)



- August 1 - 5 **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL,**
5:30—8 pm
- August 3 Community Supper

Taize worship
- August 4 Bluefish Baseball Game
(UM Cluster sponsored to benefit
Habitat for Humanity)
- August 7 **SUMMER WORSHIP SERVICES**
8:30 am (Chapel) and
10:00 AM (Sanctuary)
- August 10 Community Supper

Taize worship
- August 14 **SUMMER WORSHIP SERVICES**
8:30 am (Chapel) and
10:00 AM (Sanctuary)
- August 16 Finance, 7:30 pm
- August 17 Community Supper

Taize worship
- August 18 Trustees, 7:30 pm
- August 21 **SUMMER WORSHIP SERVICES**
8:30 am (Chapel) and
10:00 AM (Sanctuary)

UMW Meeting, 11:15 am (following
the 10 am worship)
- August 24 Community Supper

Taize worship
- August 28 **SUMMER WORSHIP SERVICES**
8:30 am (Chapel) and
10:00 AM (Sanctuary)
- August 31 Community Supper

Taize worship

Visit our online church calendar at
www.goldenhill.org

Rev. Taka Ishii retires:

celebrating 37 years of Ministry



The Rose Window Stewardship Campaign for 2012

The Rose Window Stewardship Campaign for 2012 got off to an aggressive start. The month of May's contribution exceeded \$7500.00. This was an outstanding kick off month for the campaign. Again the Golden Hill congregation has proven to be grand stewards. The Rose Window campaign has another 19 months and it looks like we are on the fast track to reaching our goal and even more. These funds will financially assist in the Church's renovation project by funding the Rose Window restoration in the second phase of the Golden Hill UMC stained glass window restoration in 2012.



The theme for the Rose Window is Praise, showing the Lamb of God as the central motif. In the center of the rose are eight circular medallions showing the figure of angels playing musical instruments, significant of Praise. The medallions are joined together by a pattern suggesting vines and foliage. The collection of pure rich colors suggest different flowers, typifying the term, Rose window, created by Wilbur H. Burnham. This church has joined together like the vines of the Rose Window and giving our praises to the Lord, a great example of our devoted stewards.

We know it is not necessary but feel it's a good incentive to recognize individual contributions by having the names of the contributors to this campaign by having their name placed on a plaque in the specified category determined by the amount of the 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 also determined by the amount of the gift. Remember to look for the envelopes with the symbol of the Rose Window behind the pews provided for your Rose Window Campaign donation.

There will be a monthly update in the Tower where you can track the monthly totals on the Rose Window Campaign board in the Narthex. We ask that you continue to gracefully prepare your hearts as we join together as a church to aid and support this campaign in bringing Golden Hill UMC back to its original state and condition. Please remember the Rose window campaign is in addition to our normal tithes and offering pledges.

Allen Corry, Stewardship Chair

Fellowship & Learning for all ages Join us evenings for Vacation Bible School August 1st - 5th

Golden Hill offers an evening Vacation Bible School (VBS) this summer for all ages: children through adults. The dates are August 1 through 5 at 5:30 to 8:00 pm. We will serve a light dinner from 5:30 until 6:15 then we will have age appropriate VBS until 8:00 pm. Walk ins are welcome.

Our VBS theme "Jesus Truth Seekers: Mission Possible" is family-oriented (but you don't have to have your family to attend). Please bring yourself, family and friends to join with your church family for this fellowship experience.

In addition, we will be going to the Bluefish Baseball game that Thursday night with other area United Methodists to benefit Habitat for Humanity!

If you have any questions, or you would like to be a teacher or volunteer to help with food preparation or in other areas, please contact Lisa Nelson.

To help us plan for the meals and activities, please let the church office know you plan to participate in Vacation Bible School in August.

**Jesus Truth Seekers:
Mission Possible
August 1– 5, 2011 VBS theme**

Pastor Walter Barton joins our church family July 3rd

As members and friends of Golden Hill United Methodist Church, we are excited and pleased to welcome the Reverend Walter C. Barton, Jr. as our new pastor. He was appointed as pastor of Golden Hill by Bishop Jeremiah J. Park early this year, after serving for 5 years as the Senior Pastor of Newman United Methodist Church in Brooklyn.

Rev. Barton is a native of Boston, Massachusetts and a lifetime member of the National Black Methodists for Church Renewal; he has served on boards and agencies throughout the church and community. Rev. Barton has travelled internationally to Europe (England and France), the Middle East (Jordan and Israel), and the Caribbean.

The Bishop appointed Rev. Barton because he is projected to be a great fit for Golden Hill. He is an excellent preacher with strong leadership skills that is most vital as we move forward with the major renovations of our church. He has a deep interest in our outreach programs, especially the community supper program that is in line with the Food Pantry program that he was heavily involved with at his former church. The response to his visit on May 3rd was overwhelmingly positive, he was engaging and seemed at that time to be quite at home at Golden Hill.

Rev. Barton's first Sunday with us will be July 3rd. The Staff Parish Relations Committee expects that you will be in attendance at worship to give him a warm and friendly Golden Hill welcome. After the worship service we will have a time of fellowship outdoors with hot dogs, pastry and lemonade, this will give Rev. Barton the opportunity to start forming relationships with us. The following Sunday, July 10th will be our annual summer picnic at Beardsley, so do not miss out on that event.



One cannot help thinking that this is yet another pastoral change in four years. Instead, let us be positive and think of it as a new beginning with an opportunity for growth and new possibilities. Look to the future with much hope, faith and aspiration for Golden Hill, as we embark on yet another new chapter. We must remain firm and resolute in our faith, trust in the Lord always and pray for guidance in our journey together. We look to Proverbs 3: 5-6 for inspiration and hope for our congregation. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways trust in Him, and he will direct your paths."

We are thankful for Rev. Barton's appointment and pray for God's blessings upon him that he will lead us on our faith journey, and help us continue the Lord's ministry for this church and the community.

Opal M. Crosdale and the Staff Parish Relations Committee

Golden Hill Church Picnic

Beardsley Park, Ball Field #2

July 10th, 2011

12:00 Noon

(immediately after worship)



Please join us and invite your relatives, friends, neighbors and anyone that you always wanted to invite to worship and fellowship at Golden Hill. Let us know how many people will be in your party, so that we can plan the food menu accordingly. We promise lots of enjoyment for everyone, including delicious food & beverages and games for people of all ages.

Hot dogs & burgers provided. Please register on form below that you plan to attend and for what tasks you would like to volunteer.

Don't miss this great opportunity to enjoy a summer day in fellowship!



Reservation Form for Golden Hill Church Picnic, Sunday, July 10th

Name: _____

Number Attending: _____ Phone: _____

Yes, I will help with:

____ Games ____ Paper Goods ____ Beverages

____ Coolers & Ice ____ Grilling

____ I'll bring a dish to share: _____



Please drop this flyer into the collection plate, or bring it to the church office.
You may also call the office at (203) 336-0152.

♪♪ Golden Hill Music Notes ♪♪

From your Music Director:

Prelude (from Webster's dictionary online)

1. an introductory performance, action, or event preceding and preparing for the principal or a more important matter
2. a musical section or movement introducing the theme or chief subject (as of a fugue or suite) or serving as an introduction to an opera or oratorio

I know, I know, here we go again, could EVERYONE please be quiet during the prelude. How many times have you or I heard that? I have heard it in every church I have served as the music director. Every time I have heard it, it had a different meaning for me as my faith and my circumstances changed.

The first time, I thought of it as an ego thing: *"How dare they talk during my prelude? They are insulting me as a musician."*

The next time, *"I have worked so hard on this music and no one is hearing it, it's a waste of my time to even prepare a prelude"* Again my ego was coming into play.

Then, *"it is disturbing to other people who are trying to pray and have quiet time before worship"*. It became an idea of mission, other focused. I did not understand what these other people were doing but I knew all the noise was disruptive to them.

As I sat in Worship committee and was asked to write an article for *The Tower* about the prelude, I was wondering where my mind and my spirit might be now. Then it came to me as I was doing my morning devotions.

I myself, have gone through a huge spiritual change in the last few months and have become much more disciplined and open to my relationship with God. I am starting each day with a devotional, a time of meditation, and

some sort of reading that helps me start on the right foot each day. As per the definitions above, my early morning routine has become a prelude to the day. This has made a huge difference in my life. This has given me much peace and a positive outlook on my life and others. I am not saying that my life does not have its share of problems, but now I know how to calm myself down and get back to that early morning place when I feel myself going out of balance.

Part of my morning routine is meditation and I use music for meditation. Currently I am using Sandi Patty's album "The Edge of Divine" for most of my musical meditation. I sit quietly and listen to the words of a particular song and then I usually listen to it again and sing along. Musical Meditation has been a powerful force to start my day.

I wonder how our personal worship would change on Sunday mornings if we took that 5 minutes from 10:25 – 10:30 (or 9:55-10:00 in the summer) to quiet our minds and open our hearts and souls to God? Try it and you may find as I did, your worship and your life transformed.

In order to help facilitate this time of quiet reflection, the ushers will be shutting the Narthex doors before the prelude starts. If you would like to greet a friend or have a conversation, please respect this time of reflection or musical meditation by taking your conversations to the Narthex behind the closed doors.

In God's Service, *Dan Pettit*

