



Crossroads

**News from South Congregational Church
United Church of Christ**

45 Maple Street, Springfield, MA 01105

(413) 732-0117 www.sococh.org

November 2009

South Church welcomes the Willie Sordillo Quartet!

COME TO THE FALL JAZZ SUNDAY, NOV. 1ST AT 10 AM

Here's your chance to hear the Willie Sordillo Quartet playing gospel standards as well as the music of Paul Winter and Jeffrey Ames. Enjoy other lively performances by both the South Church Chancel and Children's Choirs.



Stay for refreshments and fellowship after the service.

The spirit is alive at South Congregational Church UCC!

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Return to Standard Time!

Turn your clocks back 1 hour before going to bed Halloween Night! Standard Time begins at 2 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 1.

Mustard Seeds...from the Pastor

Dear Members and Friends of South Church,

Some of you may have seen a beautiful quilt spread out on the piano in the Parish Hall last Sunday (October 25). It is one of the "Freedom Quilts" carefully pieced and sewn together by South Church's Quilting Group, a group of all ages that meets on Wednesday afternoons. Polly Southworth is the lead quilter, but all help with the painstaking work of cutting and sewing the hundreds of pieces together while working within an overall design.

I asked the group to make a "Freedom Quilt" for me because of its beauty and because of its historical meaning. The designs in the quilt are reproductions of symbols that once led escaped slaves to freedom before the Civil War. Each symbol provides directions or just plain encouragement on the journey. There is a key that explains each symbol. The overall effect is stunning – blues and tans and golds and strong greens – and joyous in its message: *You can do this! God is with you!* I am so pleased with the result! Susan and I plan to hang it on the wall where everyone can see it – it belongs in a public place as a witness to all things free!

As I come to my twentieth anniversary celebration on November 15, this quilt feels hopeful and symbolic of my ministry. No one is perfect, least of all me, and no one could have lasted twenty years and all the changes in our church without some dings and dents. But if there is anything I could say that my ministry has been about, it has been about the spiritual journey and the signs that God is with us every step of the way. *We can do this! God is with us!* God never intended us to be perfect, but instead *whole*: healed, forgiven, free and joyous. This has been my message and my prayer.

I look forward to the anniversary celebration as an opportunity to celebrate the recent past and the future. For all of our struggles, South

Church is in a good place right now. We have high caliber worship, a slowly growing children's program, a balanced budget, and most especially an extravagant welcome to all God's people! In our day and age, these are huge gifts.

So – now what? The answer is always: More of God – Deeper into the Journey. Or, as Paul says in my favorite passage from Ephesians: "I pray that (we) may have the power to comprehend with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge so that (we) may be filled with the fullness of God." There is nothing but goodness, gentleness, strength, honor, courage and wisdom that can come from these words when we make true our purpose and our prayer.

In the meantime, I fully expect to get "roasted" on November 15, and I will laugh as much as you do, for we have done so much together, come so far, and God has indeed shown up every step of the way.

We are all so blessed! *Peter*

NOVEMBER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

All services are at 10a.m. in the Sanctuary.

November 1	(FALL JAZZ SUNDAY!) Rev. Heinrichs The Willie Sordillo Quartet
November 8	Rev. Heinrichs
November 15	(ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION FOR REV. PETER HEINRICHS) Rev. Bob Kyte
November 22	(Thanksgiving Sunday) Rev. Heinrichs
November 29	(Advent 1) Rev. G. Marrie Sypher

From the Director of Music Ministries...

Provided this issue reached you before Nov. 1, you are hereby notified!!!! **Come to church this Sunday, Nov. 1 at 10 a.m. for our first Fall Jazz Sunday.** The ensemble will be the Willie Sordillo Quartet (sax, piano, bass and drums), an outstanding group of musicians. Our chancel and youth choirs will be singing, and more importantly, you will be singing, too. The band will play some favorite hymns in a jazz style, **however, one error made it into the electronic publicity that recently went out.** The band will not play at the coffee hour after worship – sorry! Stay anyway, enjoy some great food and talk to the musicians. Singing, clapping, dancing, shouting and hanging from the rafters is encouraged. Be there and bring a guest!

Response to last month's article about singing the Lord's Prayer was minimal, but those who spoke up are clearly passionate about the subject. The "camps," one being those who want to sing it and the other those who don't want to, are fairly evenly divided. Those who don't want to agree that it is difficult to sing and excludes those who don't sing. Those who want to sing it express a sincere love for the music and how it touches their own hearts. Anybody else want to weigh in? For November we will not sing it at our jazz service, but going forward we'll look at possible compromises.

Last November in this space I talked about performance in worship by trained musicians versus participation by everyone in the congregation. One change you may have noticed this year is that every Sunday the introit is done by everyone, not just the choir. While most of you have reacted positively to that innovation I still see reluctance from many of you to join the singing. Then I heard from several people that it is not always easy to hear and follow what I am doing. Oh well, live and learn. Going forward I promise to be better.

Regarding Peter's anniversary celebration on November 15, you might want to be there just to see some of the mystery guest artists from South Church's past who will be participating. I'm not naming any names, but it should be interesting. Meanwhile, some of you have

come to me to express interest in singing with the choir or playing handbells. We're still hoping to see you there, so don't be afraid! We may look mean but we're really a bunch of softies and we love new people in our midst.

The trouble with being the editor of this newsletter is that I'm the one who might have to keep it short in order to fit everyone else in.

Keep singing! – Larry

Introduction to Meditation

Psalms 46:10 says: "Be still, and know that I am God."

Some of the many reasons for meditating include reducing stress and fatigue, letting go of anger, feeling more peaceful, even (for some) reducing blood pressure. But the best reason of all is that it helps us make conscious contact with God. By meditating, we come to know God rather than just know about God.

Don't feel intimidated by the idea of meditation. Entering into the silence within us is everyone's birthright! You don't need to change your lifestyle or be concerned about the chatter in your mind. Just come with a desire to get to know God in a new way.

The sessions will be facilitated by **Susan Lewis**, who has had a regular meditation practice for more than a decade.

When? Mondays, Nov. 9, 16, 30, 5:15 – 6 p.m.
(No meeting Thanksgiving week)

Where? The Great Space (2nd floor)

Notes: Please arrive on time. You may wish to bring a shawl or wrap. Consider that you will find it easier to meditate if you refrain from eating supper until after the session.

Meet a member of South Church!



An interview with Nancy Montagna

Nancy and her husband, Ernie, live in Ludlow. They have two adult children, daughter Danielle and son Alex. Nancy retired from the Post Office on October 31. She enjoys reading and baking.

What brought you to South Church? My parents liked Dr. Driftmier's sermons, and decided to join South Church when I was in sixth grade.

Is there one moment in your time at South Church that has had special meaning for you? My wedding to the boy I met in the Junior Choir.

How long have you been teaching Sunday School? What changes have you seen? I've been teaching Sunday School for 38 years. I've seen the Sunday School enrollment change from white, middle class children to a much smaller, racially and socio-economically diverse group.

What is your favorite hymn? *I Sing A Song of the Saints of God.*

What is the last book you have read? *The Zookeeper's Wife.* Set in Poland during World War II, it is the story of the Director of the Warsaw Zoo and his wife, who helped Jewish people escape Nazi persecution.

Is there anything special going on in your life? My husband and I are adjusting to two big changes in our lives. We have recently become empty nesters, and we both have been forced to take early retirement.

South Church Cooks...

Tuesday, October 13, was a busy day for South Church cooks. We served lunch to 207 guests plus 17 volunteers making a full complement of 224 people. The volunteers were the cooks, community service people, staff and community volunteers who want to give back, because, as one woman expressed it "life has been good to me."

I'm sure the South Church cooks share these sentiments. We served Sloppy Joes on a hamburger bun, pineapple and raisin salad and fudge cake with vanilla frosting. Elliott Stratton said grace and the cooks were Betsy O'Neill (her last time before she files south for the winter), Carolyn Sengle (who wasn't called for jury duty that day), Glen Rossi (who stirred two tasty pots of Sloppy Joes), Karen Kress (who visited her mother, Beryl, in the hospital on the way home after the meal) and Jan and Dick White (who had done the food shopping for the meal and then tackled the cooking. What a pair!).

It was surprising that on this Tuesday there were 70 more people than the day before, the Columbus Day holiday. The day after a holiday might be the answer, but last month we had almost as many diners. Only God knows when hunger is at its peak. We were happy to be there when needed. Our next chance to be in demand will be Tuesday, November 10. Come and share with us in the warm feeling of being needed. Bon Appetit! - **Carol Murphy**

**SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MASS. CONFERENCE, UCC ANNUAL MEETING
OCTOBER 16 & 17, 2009 - *From your delegates, David Carlson and Marisa Brown Ludwig***

Dear South Church Family,

Dave and I are bringing back to you some elements of the 210th annual meeting of the Massachusetts Conference, so important a process in our relationship with the wider church!

The whole weekend was enriched by the presence and leadership of Beverly Prestwood-Taylor, who is increasingly well-known to our congregation! She was our "Discernment-arian" – a totally made-up word for the new role in church business that was debuted last year at the Annual Meeting, and which we've talked about at South – this idea of being intentional to appoint someone at each meeting of the church to watch the process of our workings and call us continually back to prayer, the presence of God, and discernment of God's will for us.

The theme was "Generosity", and our conference president Jim Antal called all of us to look honestly and prayerfully at the ways our churches approach money and giving. He told us New England churches continue to be among the LOWEST givers to charity. We are also among the LEAST LIKELY to attend church and to invite a neighbor to come with us to church. Hmmm – some sobering statistics. He told us inspiring stories of two congregations in our conference who reached a decision that they would not let any of their members lose their homes in this past year, and helped when members lost their jobs. He urged us to radically change the way we view our relationship with money.

Conference Treasurer Andy Gustafson amazed us throughout the weekend with his astonishing ability to respond on his feet to various challenging rounds of "Stump the Steward", in which delegates could stand up and quote a scripture to him and he would turn it spontaneously into a word about a generosity. We laughed, and we were also moved.

Friday evening worship stirred us deeply with the preaching of Rev. Susan Smith who challenged us to never give up in the face of hardship and struggle, for "No matter how long the night lasts, joy comes in the morning, and the morning always comes."

Saturday's keynote was Duke Divinity School president Rev. Gregory Jones continuing the theme of generosity – he suggested that in North America we are most likely to say "Me, My and No" about money, while God continually calls us to say "We, Us and Yes." A highlight for me on Saturday was the celebration of 25 years that the Mass. Conference has been Open and Affirming. There were photos of our own Louis Mitchell and Krysia Villon in the stirring montage of images.

We as a church should please continue to look at our giving and our relationship with money, both in our pledging as individuals, and as the committees that decide what to do with our investing and spending. Please remember and consider the powerful work of Our Church's Wider Mission, which funds local, regional, national and international mission outreach.

Finally, we were asked to bring to our churches a Resolution to Reverse Climate Change and Protect God's Creation, which was passed at the meeting, submitted by the Commission for Mission and Justice Ministries of the MACUCC. It was put forward now to respond to increasing environmental efforts accompanying a global climate protection treaty that world leaders will be meeting to negotiate in Copenhagen in December, 2009.

Already in my field education church, Edwards, discussion about this resolution sparked controversy, as scientists continue to come down on different sides of the concern that human beings are causing

climate changes that will be and are already harming the planet. My prayer is that we at South will look at the issue, discuss ways we can be more intentional and accountable to our "carbon footprint", both as individuals and a community. Even if we don't agree on the science, perhaps we can agree on the need to live in a way that causes less harm, and honors more lovingly God's beautiful creation? Dave has written a piece inviting us to this conversation, after he attended a breakout session on "Greening our Church."

Blessings to you all, Marisa

GOING GREEN by *Dave Carlson*

What might that mean for South Church? It sounds like the right thing to do. It supports our general concern for the environment, a desire to save money, and a commitment to caring for God's creation. But given those ideals, then what? Where do we begin? How much will it cost?

There are many reasons why we should "go green". Clearly we can reduce energy use and costs. We can protect open space and natural habitats. We can reduce our church's contributions to global warming. We can keep our church safe and healthy. We can reduce the use of toxic substances that leach into the environment. And through awareness, we can advance environmental issues. We can bring a green philosophy into our daily lives at home and workplace.

Now, many of the "going green" things a church like ours could do we have already underway. Physical things like our approach to lighting, building tune-up for equipment, replacement of air filters, programmable thermostats- we need to fine tune these items to ensure that our energy systems are working efficiently.

We need to take a look at strategies for reducing energy that make a big difference with little or no investment. For example, reduce heat loss at windows and doors, replace old energy inefficient equipment like refrigerators, replace refrigerator door gaskets, get an "energy audit" for our church. We recently updated our heating system, but we need to evaluate the efficiency of all the pumps and fans that circulate our air.

But beyond energy there are many ways we can prevent waste and reduce impact on the environment: reduce, reuse, and recycle. We need to take a look at how we might reduce waste through document production, printer ink use, reuse of paper from all kinds of church programs. Do we car pool? Do we have a recycling ministry for old electronics, cell phones, batteries?

Perhaps we need to create a Green Sanctuary Plan, starting with a green sanctuary committee that will represent all phases of our congregational life. The role of this committee will be to facilitate planning and provide logistical support to the congregation so that we can move forward with plans to green the church. One of their first actions should be an environmental audit, providing a snap shot of where we as a congregation stand with respect to environmental behaviors. It will be a baseline for moving on.

Out of this will come an action plan to complete activities the congregation has chosen, along with timeline targets. The action plan will be a road map to help us move on to a solid commitment to green South Church.

Student Ministers Corner – Marisa Brown Ludwig & Louis Mitchell - by Marisa Brown Ludwig

Hello to all our South Church friends! We miss you! Louis is having a great time at his field education site, Hadwen Park Church in Worcester. His focus there is in three areas: Children and Youth, Church Administration and a special support group project. Louis is teaching the Confirmation class and going on a Confirmation retreat this fall, as well as participating in the Children's church program there. He's attending committee meetings and events to learn about church administration, and he is developing a support group for Hadwen Park members in recovery.

Louis is thrilled at the growth of **Recovering the Promise**, the new church ministry which Louis is co-leading with Charla Kouadio on the last Saturday of the month in the South Church Chapel. RTP will be celebrating installation into the Fellowship, a non-denominational gathering of churches and ministries that commit to a "radically inclusive" theology, at the service on November 28th at 2:00pm. Louis participated in a MACUCC New Church Start Retreat mid-October in which he told me he felt RTP was validated and celebrated as the kind of organic church bubbling up in the community that the Mass Conference has been praying for. Louis asked me to be sure and say a huge THANK YOU again to South Church and Pastor Peter Heinrichs for believing in RTP and hosting it in our community.

Louis will be participating in Amherst's Trans-gender Day of Remembrance on November 19th at Amherst's Meeting House, and also will join a GLBT panel for a largely Roman Catholic audience of parents of GLBT children at Sacred Heart Church in Springfield. Oh, and in between, he's working two jobs and taking three courses at Andover Newton mid-week!!

Marisa's news: I am at Andover Newton on Mondays and Tuesdays this year, and am very excited to be a co-leader of a monthly interfaith bible study/discussion group between Andover Newton and Hebrew College students

(formed of Christians, Unitarian Universalists, and Jews.) I'm working full time at ServiceNet, (heading up a small mental health clinic for them in Chicopee) and still trying to make it to my kids' baseball games and school events!

I've been getting into all kinds of fun at Edwards Church in Northampton, my field ed site. In late October, I led my first Women's Spirituality and Fellowship evening, part of a project to build a self-sustaining women's ministry opportunity at Edwards. I've already preached twice, and am leading different parts of worship on a regular basis. As to my family: Morgan has already done two mission projects in the Edwards Youth Group (the CROP Walk with me in the pouring rain, and a barn repair for Grace House with my husband Peter, a program that helps young single mothers get into their own apartment.) Conor is getting to know all the children in the Christian Education program at Edwards, and was my personal reviewer for the Children's Message I did last month!

I was glad to see Bert Montagna, Bill Conley, Peter Heinrichs and Jon Rice late September, when they joined me for a Support Team meeting at South and caught me up on South Church news. I will meet with them a couple of times this year so folks at South know what I am doing! I was also delighted to spend a brief time with Dave Carlson catching up while being delegates for South Church at the MACUCC Annual Meeting October 16 & 17. We'll be reporting more to you all about the Mass Conference events in coming weeks.

News from the Benevolence Committee:

The Benevolence Committee would like to congratulate the recipients of the 2009-2010 South Church Scholarships. We hope them the best in their continuing endeavors.

George Bowerman
Christopher Ferrari
Margaret Hannay
Marisa Brown-Ludwig
Louis J. Mitchell
Alex C. Montagna

Healthcare Reform Information Series ends on a high note!

The cool, crisp autumn evening was tempered by the warmth of the candlelight vigil which took place on the front patio of South Church on Tuesday, September 29th. This culmination of our Healthcare Reform Information series remembered and honored the 45,000 Americans who die each year because of lack of health insurance. Peter's powerful and heartfelt words of concern opened the service and were followed by Interfaith Reflections from the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Perspectives on health care as well as (cont. on page 6) silent meditation. Participants were then invited to join in a litany of prayer and candle lighting for the uninsured and under-insured. Committee member Elliott Stratton was interviewed on site by Channel 40 which covered and presented the event during its eleven o'clock news broadcast.

This first initiative of our newly-formed Social Justice Outreach Task Force began with a deep conviction that health care, which is after all a basic human need, is at its core a moral issue—a moral imperative. We felt it unfortunate that this simple, basic truth was obscured by the media's fascination with and continuous coverage of those distorted, angry, and contentious town hall meetings—meetings which served only to unnerve, divide, and frighten people. Our goal was to become better informed as individuals, and as a congregation, so that we might better articulate to the President and our legislators the importance and urgency of a healthcare system that is INCLUSIVE, ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE, AND ACCOUNTABLE. Could a Jesus-centered Church do any less?

And so we began our health reform information series with a showing of the powerful Bill Moyers interview with Wendell Potter, former Cigna Public Relations Chief, now turned whistleblower. This must-see documentary, "Profits before Patients" is so named because Potter has seen for-profit insurers hijack America's healthcare system and put profits before patients. Potter describes in detail the tactics still being used today by self-interested insurers to obstruct and manipulate the government's efforts at healthcare reform.

This was followed by a showing of the Michael Moore 2007 documentary, 'Sicko' —the documentary which Potter says 'hit the nail on the head' and frightened the industry into a massive campaign aimed at discrediting the movie so that Americans would decide to not see the film.

Our last presentation was the PBS Frontline documentary, "Sick Around America" which takes a trip through America's healthcare system showing in personal stories the hard choices it creates.

Fact sheets and other relevant information pointing out myths and misconceptions about the healthcare reform were made available throughout the series. For those who were unable to attend this series, these documentary DVDs are available for viewing in the comfort of your home. Just give us a call and we'll be glad to share them with you.

Though our series has ended, the need for action lives on. As the legislation begins to move through Congress it is important that our voices continue to be heard. To help you speak up we have posted below the addresses and phone numbers of the White House and Congressional leaders. We can make a difference—we must make a difference. It really is a matter of life and death.

Social Justice Outreach Task Force: Sue Rice, Mary Simpson, Elliott Stratton, Janice White

The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20500; Comment line: (202) 456-1111 – TTY/TDD: Comments—(202) 456-6213; **Senator John Kerry**, Springfield Federal Building, 1550 Main St., Suite 304, Spfld.-- 785-4610; Washington office, 218 Russell Bldg, Washington D.C. 20510—(202)224-2742; **Senator Paul Kirk**, 218 Russell Bldg, Washington, D.C. 20510 --(202)224-4543; Congressman **Richard E. Neal**, U.S. House of Representatives, 2208 Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, D.C. 20515-2102, 202-225-5601; District Office: 300 State St., Suite 200, 413-785-0325

NOVEMBER 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal (SA) 10:00 AM Sunday Service (SA) 11:00 AM Coffee Hour (PH) 1:00 PM Morning Star Church* (Chapel)	2	3 5:00 PM AA Meeting* (PH) 7:00 PM Handbell Rehearsal (SA)	4 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry (GR) 4:00 PM Sewing Group (PH) 5:00 PM Youth Music (ML) 6:30 PM Morningstar Church Bible Study* (Chapel)	5 7:15 PM Advanced Round Dance* (PH)	6 Office Closed	7 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes meal* (PH)
8 9:00 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal (SA) 10:00 AM Sunday Service (SA) 11:00 AM Coffee Hour (PH) 1:00 PM Morning Star Church* (Chapel)	9 7:00 PM Finance Committee (GR)	10 10:30 AM South Church Cooks (Christ Church Cathedral) 5:00 PM AA Meeting* (PH) 7:00 PM Handbell Rehearsal (SA)	11 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry (GR) 4:00 PM Sewing Group (PH) 5:00 PM Youth Music (ML) 6:30 PM Morningstar Church Bible Study* (Chapel)	12 7:15 PM Advanced Round Dance* (PH)	13 Office Closed 4:00 PM Social Justice Outreach Task Force (GR)	14 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes meal* (PH)
15 9:00 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal (SA) 10:00 AM Sunday Service (SA) 11:00 AM Anniversary Celebration for Peter Heinrichs (PH) 11:15 AM Benevolence Committee (GR) 1:00 PM Morning Star Church* (Chapel)	16	17 5:00 PM AA Meeting* (PH) 7:00 PM Handbell Rehearsal (SA)	18 4:00 PM Sewing Group (PH) 5:00 PM Youth Music (ML) 6:30 PM Morningstar Church Bible Study* (Chapel) 7:30 PM Chancel Choir (SA)	19 7:15 PM Advanced Round Dance* (PH)	20 Office Closed	21 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes meal* (PH)
22 9:00 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal (SA) 10:00 AM Sunday Service (SA) 11:00 AM Coffee Hour (PH) 1:00 PM Morning Star Church* (Chapel)	23	24 5:00 PM AA Meeting* (PH) 7:00 PM Handbell Rehearsal (SA)	25 4:00 PM Sewing Group (PH) 6:30 PM Morningstar Church Bible Study* (Chapel)	26 7:15 PM Advanced Round Dance* (PH)	27 Office Closed	28 2:00 PM Recovering the Promise (Chapel) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes meal* (PH)
29 9:00 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal (SA) 10:00 AM Sunday Service (SA) 11:00 AM Coffee Hour (PH) 1:00 PM Morning Star Church* (Chapel)	30	1 5:00 PM AA Meeting* (PH) 7:00 PM Handbell Rehearsal (SA)	2 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry (GR) 4:00 PM Sewing Group (PH) 5:00 PM Youth Music (ML) 6:30 PM Morningstar Church Bible Study* (Chapel)	3 7:00 PM Advisory Committee (GR) 7:15 PM Advanced Round Dance* (PH)	4 Office Closed	5 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes meal* (PH)

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Rev. Peter Heinrichs	Senior Minister
Larry Picard	Director of Music Ministries
Shalawnda Carr	Administrative Secretary
Melissa Gladu	Bookkeeper
Alax Siqueira	Security
Polly Southworth	Sunday School Superintendent
Marrie Sypher	Licensed Minister

Crossroads is the newsletter of South Congregational Church, United Church of Christ in Springfield, Massachusetts. Stories and items of Church interest are welcome and are due by the 20th of the month for the next month's issue. Submissions should be sent to Larry Picard at lpicard@sococh.org or by snail mail to his attention at the church address.

*South Congregational Church UCC
A Jesus-centered, Open & Affirming Community*

God is still
speaking,

