

Keeping In Touch

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF STAFFORD
PASTOR: REV. DR. ROBERT R. LAROCHELLE

A Message from Our Pastor

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Dear Members and Friends of Second Congregational Church,
Just a few days before this newsletter went to press, our congregation here at Second Church voted to call me to be your Settled Pastor. I am very grateful for this opportunity you have given me!

As you well know, when we first had the chance to meet each other, I had been on the schedule to do supply preaching at our church. I had recently retired after several years serving in ordained ministry in several churches over the years, dating as far back as to when I was first ordained as a clergyperson back in June of 1989. It was not my intention at that time to serve as a pastor.

However, as time moved along and as I came to meet the wonderful members of this congregation, I came to the realization that I would really enjoy serving as pastor here if folks were willing to consider that possibility! I am deeply grateful that you were and it is with great joy that I have accepted my ministry here as your Settled Pastor.

These words come to you from a heart filled with gratitude and with thanks for giving me this opportunity.

I am fairly sure that in these several months since last September, you have gotten a sense of how I seek to engage in church ministry. In these months ahead, I want you to know that I will do my best to be available if you wish to be in touch with me! You can reach me at 860 670 6461 and at rpbksl@cox.net.

In addition, I know that many of you are familiar with the ongoing emails I send on a regular basis. If you are not on that email list, I encourage you to reach me at rpbksl@cox.net and I will place you on that list. In addition, my Facebook page (Robert LaRochelle) contains ongoing updated information about a variety of church related topics. If you DO NOT access my Facebook page or the Facebook page of our church, please know that I will make printed handouts available to you when you come to church for worship.

Over these past few months, we have enjoyed considerable vitality in this congregation! It is my hope that we will continue to do so in the days and months ahead. I encourage you to consider inviting folks you may know to come and join in our worship services and our educational opportunities!

Once again, I want you to know how deeply grateful I am that you have given me the opportunity to serve as your pastor. With this congregation's enthusiasm and spirit, I look forward to the days ahead .

May this wonderful church community stay forever young!

In Jesus always,

Pastor Bob

Rev. Dr. Robert R. LaRochelle, Pastor

860 670 6461

rpbksl@cox.net

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- * Native of Putnam, Connecticut
- * Graduate of Marianapolis Preparatory School & College of the Holy Cross with a major in Religious Studies
- * Master's in Counseling (Central Connecticut) and Master's in Religious Education (Boston College)
- * Doctoral degree in preaching (Chicago Theological Seminary)
- * Married to Patricia Coppinger LaRochelle, August 23, 1980
- * Parents of 3 children and two granddaughters
- * Former high school Head Baseball and Basketball coach, teacher and counselor

T R E A S U R E R ' S R E P O R T

Category	Year-To-Date	Budget-To-Date	Percentage
R21—Freewill	\$ 1,479.00	\$ 625.00	237%
R22—Pledges	\$ 7,777.00	\$ 7,916.67	98%
R23—Contributions	\$ 1,329.00	\$ 2,187.50	61%
R24—Fund Raising	\$ 2,621.53	\$ 4,333.33	60%
Capital Campaign	\$ 1,063.00	\$ 1,250.00	85%

Thru May 31:

C H U R C H C O U N C I L

Pastor Reports: Prep for services including sermon preparation, online educational forum. meetings with individuals as requested. Bob continues his communication with members and friends sending out three emails per week and also on Facebook. Bob began serving a one year term as our Designated Term Pastor on September 17th the term ends on that date we were in talks about what will transpire going forward and Pastor Bob has agreed, depending on church vote, to become our Settled Pastor.

Treasurer Report: All bills are paid and up to date. The good news is we took in \$1300.00 more than we expended. With fund raisers in June, July and August there is hope we will be able to avoid the transfer of funds from savings to checking in order to pay the bills.

Diaconate Reports: That they have deacons scheduled for Sunday services going. They say “Thank you” to the young people serving as acolytes.

Trustees:

- Looking into seal coating the upper lot in order to keep it longer. We have reached out to companies for bids and are waiting for the last one to come in. Unfortunately, due to high costs and budget restrictions we have decided to put this project on hold for the time being.
- Lisa Ostrowski has put together a “Garden Commission” to revitalize the beds in front of and on the side of the Parish house. They have been hard at work digging out the garden beds, planting and mulching. This work will continue as there is always weeding and other maintenance to attend to. Thanks to all who have helped and those who continue to work on this project.
- Two boards have been replaced on the stairs going to Parish house, it is anticipated four more will be replaced as well while the remainder of steps will be getting new screws to hold them firmly in place. They will be power washed and stained.
- Trustees are looking for suggestions on how to get paint to stick to the Little Shop door instead of repeatedly chipping off.

Sunday School / Christian Ed.:

- Children’s Day will be Sunday June 23rd . There will be a presentation of goodie bags and the two older students will be presented with Bibles. After the service there will be outdoor games and potluck meal. Everyone is invited to participate.
- The monies collected from the children throughout the year will be used to re-stock the class rooms.
- Rally Day will be Sunday September 8,2024 REMEMBER THE DATE.
- Our Nursery still has yet to be used but it is ready to go! I see this possibly changing in September or perhaps even this summer. If anyone would be interested in taking a turn manning the Nursery please see Andrew.
- Sarah has prepared a bulletin with activities that line up with the liturgical lesson for children who come to church service this summer. Crayons will also be supplied so the children are able to enjoy doing the activities during service.

These are some highlights of June’s Council Meeting.

Church Council
Bruce Ladr Moderator

TRUSTEES REPORT

The Garden Commission has finished digging out the garden beds, planting and mulching. We are keeping this very basic so we can keep the weeds under control and the maintenance low. We sadly had to cut down the lilacs so we could work on removing all the bittersweet. Bittersweet is extremely invasive and has been banned from selling or transplanting in CT since 2004. It climbs the lilacs at a very fast pace and we have been drying it out as we pull it. It chokes out our lilacs yearly, and has led to a lot of yearly maintenance. It has been decided the only way we can contain this issue, protect our investment, and make this hard work worth it is to backhoe that whole area. The neighbor has a backhoe and will take care of this. After that we keep low growing perennials there that die back allowing us to pull and contain this invasive weed. We have extra edging so we are discussing using it to put circles around each sign so we can keep grass out, and let the Iris and/or daffodils grow. We will transplant some around our sign in front of the church as well or plant our extra marigolds. With a lot of persistence, and weeding, these beds should stay beautiful for a long time. We have a dedicated team on this project but ask everyone if you are walking by and see a weed pull it.

The Trustees replaced two boards on the stairs going down to the Parish House from the upper lot. 4 more will be replaced and the rest will have new woodscrews put into spots that are missing them. After this is done the stairs will be power washed and stained using the clear stain purchased last year that was not used on the deck since it was painted white instead. We continue to have trouble with our doors chipping and the Trustees will try sanding, priming, and painting the Little Shop door again.

As we begin to plant more, discuss power washing and use our hose more it was noticed that the inside of our spigot was broken and is very difficult to turn on and off. The plastic piece inside is broken and breaks more every time we go to turn it on. Joe took a look and will replace the spigot, and leave us with a key to turn it on and off.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Greaves, Board of Trustees Chair

IN AND AROUND THE CHURCH ...

Our Hearts and Prayers reach out to our Brothers and Sisters who have various needs and struggles: prayers for baby Jameson ... prayers for my sister Angela battling lung cancer ... continued prayers for Donna, Doris, Lucy and Sarah ... prayers for peace and the unrest in this country ... prayers for families in stress ... continuing prayers for Carrie Crawford undergoing cancer treatment ... prayers for Joe and Flo Demars ... prayers for peace ... prayers for our mothers ... prayers for all mothers who have passed ... prayers for a family friend Rebecca who recently had a liver transplant ... prayers for the Dignazio, Krar and Raynock families ... prayers for all who suffer with mental illness and addiction and their families ... prayers for peace on earth—no more wars ... prayers for strength, courage and a guiding hand to navigate a difficult family situation ... prayers for Anne to solve her breathing issues ... prayers for Reema and Alyssa wherever they end up going to work ... prayers for the family of Grace Bradway ... prayers for mom ... bless those in Texas and other states that have experienced severe storms ... prayers for the family of Jamie Wallace on his passing ... prayers for Dan Irish's family as they return home.

Celebrations: Bruce and Kathy celebrated their 48th wedding anniversary ... Samantha graduating from Academy of Computer Science and Engineering ... John celebrated a birthday ... Charlee Fay's seventh birthday ... Noah celebrating his 11th birthday ... Alex graduating from Cheney Tech.

LIGHTING OF THE CROSS

In loving memory of **Warren Bradway** by his family

In loving memory of **Barbara Kellem** by her family

In loving memory of **Mary** and **Al Kazokas Sr.** and **Claire** and **Jack Richens** by their families

A LIGHTER MOMENT. . .

A kindergarten teacher was walking around observing her classroom of children while they were drawing pictures. As she got to one girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was.

The girl replied, "I'm drawing God."

The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like."

Without looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, "They will in a minute."

* * * *

A Sunday school teacher asked the children just before she dismissed them to go to church, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?"

Annie replied, "Because people are sleeping"

* * * *

At Sunday School they were learning how God created everything, including human beings. Johnny was especially intent when the teacher told him how Eve was created out of one of Adam's ribs.

Later in the week his mother noticed him lying down as though he were ill, and said, "Johnny, what is the matter?"

Johnny responded, "I have pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

July Birthdays

9	Shawn Depault
12	Stephen Lingley
13	Kenneth May
16	Vi Irish
17	Lisa Ostrowski
18	Aaron Ladr
21	Linda May
23	Margaret Salisbury

July Anniversaries

12	Ed and Dorraine Parker
22	Bruce and Peg Ekenbarger
31	Jason and Heather Hatch

DUCK RACE

The annual fun-filled event is just around the corner. On Saturday, July 13th we will gather near the barn, by the brook where at 1 pm the ducks will be dumped into the water where they will meander toward the orange fence used to capture them. As usual prizes will be awarded. First duck to reach the fence and last duck to reach the fence as well numerous ducks chosen at random to equal the number of prizes available. Starting at Noon, we will have a hot dog lunch available for purchase and several games set up for the youngsters to play while we wait for the race to begin. Tickets are for sale at \$5 each. Please plan to join us for this happy event. Rain or shine-the ducks don't care if they get wet! Of course, if there's a thunder storm, we will postpone until the storm has passed.

Need tickets to sell or have questions? Please call me Linda Sprague 860-684-5689

MISSIONS

Thank you all for your generous donations for the Crystal Lake Food Pantry. A super sized 67 pounds of food was taken to the food pantry on June 18th. good job everyone. A delivery will be made for the month of July on the 23rd as well as a delivery on August 20th. Thank you in advance. There were 5 Sundays in June so a special collection was taken during the offertory which was given to SafeNet Ministries on your behalf to help them continue their ongoing support to the residents of our community who are in need of help. Again, thank you all for your generosity where our missions support is concerned.

The Lord's Blessings on all, your
Missions Committee: Michele, Judy and Linda

FALL FLEA MARKET

The flea market is planned for September 6th and 7th with a rain date of the following weekend. Set up will occur on the Thursday before the sale. We will have the baked goods table and the hot dog lunch. As in the past, I will count on all of you to pitch in so that the sale will be a success. We need people to bake, we need people to volunteer for set up, take down and help during the sale. Please mark your calendars now to SAVE THE DATE-Sept. 6th and 7th.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.
Linda Sprague Flea Market Coordinator 860-684-5689

SUNDAY SCHOOL / CHRISTIAN ED

Children's Sunday was Sunday June 23rd. We had a nice celebration and potluck. The students also got to hold and pet baby goats during our lesson. Thank you Becky for bringing them! Sunday School will start back up again on Rally Day on September 8th.

I want to thank all of our teachers. We had tremendous growth in our Sunday School this year each of you were so important to this year's success. I also want to thank all the parents and guardians again. You are all very involved and always willing to volunteer and get together. I look forward to getting together with all of you for many years to come. Our students were amazing and very helpful to one another. They learned a lot, especially how to use a lot of glitter and glue. Our future looks very bright.

Next school year we will have new lessons. We also plan on two movie nights this time and of course another hike. Pastor Bob will visit our class again and I hope we can have a lot of fun and educational classes. Guardians and parents of our 11 and up kids we are going to explore a Youth Group so think about that. If anyone brings their kids to a service this summer, Sarah has prepared bulletins with activities that line up with the lectionary. I hope to see everyone at the Duck Race, or at some of our services before September and have a great Summer!

Andrew, Kathy, and Judy

July 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6 Little Shop - 10 - 2
7 Worship Service 9:30 AM	8	9	10	11	12	13 Little Shop - 10 - 2 DUCK RACE
14 Worship Service 9:30 AM	15	16	17	18	19	20 Little Shop - 10 - 2
21 Worship Service 9:30 AM Food Bank Sunday	22	23	24	25	26	27 Little Shop - 10 - 2
28 Worship Service 9:30 AM	29	30	31			Little Shop - 10 - 2

August 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 Little Shop - 10 - 2	
4 Worship Service 9:30 AM	5	6	7	8	9	10 Little Shop - 10 - 2
11 Worship Service 9:30 AM	12	13	14	15	16	17 Little Shop - 10 - 2
18 Worship Service 9:30 AM Food Bank Sunday	19	20	21	22	23	24 Little Shop - 10 - 2
25 Worship Service 9:30 AM	26	27	28	29	30	31