

Keeping In Touch

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

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A Message from Our Pastor

Dear members and friends of Second Congregational Church,

As I write this article and as you are reading it, we are here right near the start of the summer season. It does not seem that long ago when I began having the opportunity to serve here as your Designated Term pastor. Time has gone by quite quickly and it has been a real joy for me to be able to be part of this church community over these last few months.

In looking back at this time, I am grateful for all of the energy and vitality that is present here in this congregation! Sunday mornings are special times as we gather for worship, enjoy the presence of our young people and share in time spent together once worship has ended. I am grateful as well for the increasing number of people who have become part of our worship community as well as those who have participated in the variety of activities and educational opportunities we seek to offer as a church! In addition, I am thankful for the

ways in which our congregation participated in Lenten worship opportunities which culminated in a joyful, well attended celebration of Easter Sunday!

As I look back on this fast moving year, I do so with gratitude for those of you who have done so much to make this church a vibrant and vital community of faith! As we look ahead to the coming summer months, I encourage all of us to continue to share in the worship experiences that are part of a church's life as well as the ongoing activities that are an integral part of this community of faith.

As I write this article, I do so with a sense of gratitude for all of you who have done so much to enhance the experiences we all share as members of this church community. I am hopeful that throughout these upcoming summer months, we continue to have meaningful experiences of worship, fellowship and service. While the summer season changes the pace of many of our lives, the opportunities we will have to take time to be part of the community of this church remain an important and integral part of our lives as people for whom faith is so important!

I also wish to offer thanks to Sarah Roman Greaves who led worship when I was away a few weeks ago and who will be leading worship when Tricia and I will be celebrating our son's wedding in New Jersey in a few weeks. Thank you, Sarah!

As summer moves along, I look forward to seeing you at worship and in those weeks where we may be away, let's all be sure to take some time to build times of prayer into the daily routine of our lives, wherever we may be.

Have a wonderful summer and I look forward to seeing you at worship and other activities over these next few months.

Gratefully,
Pastor Bob

Rev. Dr. Robert R. LaRochelle
Designated Term Pastor

TREASURER'S REPORT

Category	Year-To-Date	Budget-To-Date	Percentage
R21—Freewill	\$ 1,132.00	\$ 500.00	226%
R22—Pledges	\$ 5,669.00	\$ 6,333.33	90%
R23—Contributions	\$ 1,179.00	\$ 1,750.00	67%
R24—Fund Raising	\$ 1,260.27	\$ 3,466.67	36%
Capital Campaign	\$ 916.00	\$ 1,000.00	91%

Thru April 30:

CHURCH COUNCIL

Pastor Reports: Prep for services including sermon preparation, online educational forum, meetings with individuals as requested. I recently met with the Pastoral Relations Committee and we discussed numerous items.

Over the past few weeks Pastor Bob has participated in three baptisms. Bob continues his communication with members and friends sending out three emails per week and also entries on Facebook.

Bob began serving a one year term as our Designated Term Pastor on September 17th—the term ends on that date—we are in talks about what will transpire going forward, more to come when available.

Treasurer Report: All bills are paid and up to date for the year however he has had to transfer funds from invested funds to the checkbook in order to maintain and be able to make payments.

Diaconate Reports: Teresa Raymond is our new Deacon—welcome. Thank you to her for jumping in to help and thanks to Linda Sprague for training her.

Thank you to the young people serving as acolytes.

For those who don't know Sarah is studying to become an ordained minister and has applied for status as a Member in Discernment a step in the process. We wish you well in this endeavor.

Trustees:

- Spring work duties have been or are in process of being completed thanks to all who signed up and helped
 - Tim Sprague completed yearly maintenance on our mowers
 - The Barn will be open June 8 with rain date of June 22. We are also looking for and correcting cause of dirt coming from upper floor of barn to cover the lower left section of the barn causing a lot of extra work cleaning it up.
 - Looking into sealcoating the upper lot in order to keep it longer. We have reached out to companies and are waiting for the last bid to come in.
 - Lisa Ostrowski has put together a "Garden Commission" to revitalize the beds in front of and on the side of the Parish house. Thanks to all who have helped and those who continue to work on this project.
- Sunday School / Christian Ed.
- On April 28th we went to Fenton -Ruby Park in Willington for a hike, we had eight children and twelve adults. Thanks to Michele for suggesting this location
 - Linda found a baby monitor in the barn and tested it to be used to broadcast the service from the sanctuary to the nursery so if someone is manning the nursery they will be able to follow along with the service.
 - Childrens 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 through out the year will be used to re-stock the class rooms
- These are some of the items discussed at our council meeting.

Church Council
Bruce Ladr Moderator

TRUSTEES

Our Spring workday has concluded as all duties have been signed up for. As you complete these roles please check off that they were finished. Thank you to everyone who signed up. We will do another one in the Fall.

Tim Sprague did our yearly maintenance on our mowers including sharpening the blades, oil changes, and changing out the spark plugs/air filters that needed to be changed. Thanks Tim!

We reached out to four companies about sealcoating and paving our upper parking lot. Due to budgets and estimated cost we have decided to hold off on this for now.

Lastly, Lisa put together a Garden Commission after signing up to weed the garden beds. We have dug out all the primrose, and thinned out the Iris and Lilies. We dug out the Yuca and due to a bittersweet infestation we had to remove the spirea. We fertilized and are keeping the two rhododendrons and have put edging and 3 inches of mulch in all finished areas. We are bagging all invasive vines and taking them off the property. We kept the butterfly bush and added two wigelia bushes in place of what had to be dug out. Everything is easy to maintain and are great pollinators. We sadly have to cut down the lilacs and remove all the bittersweet as that is where the problem is coming from. We hope to have that clear and resolved in the coming weeks. With a little persistence each year these gardens should stay maintained and beautiful. All edging and new plants were donated by Lisa, and all mulch was donated by Andrew. Thanks Lisa for your donations and putting this much needed project together. This project did not cost the church any money, and has been volunteer run.

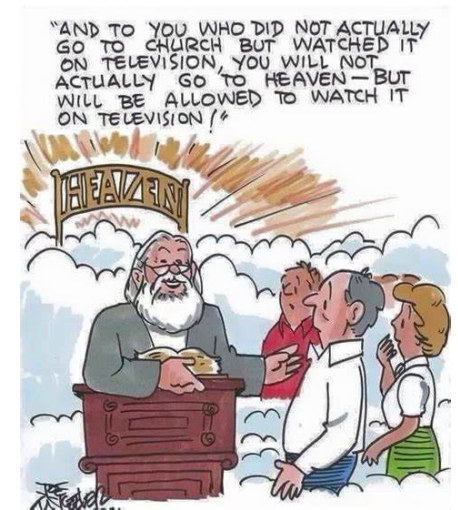
Respectfully submitted, The Board of Trustees

IN AND AROUND THE CHURCH ...

Our Hearts and Prayers reach out to our Brothers and Sisters who have various needs and struggles: prayers for Josh, Kelsi and baby Jameson ... prayers for Ross Kerr recovering from heart surgery ... prayers for my sister Angela battling lung cancer ... continued prayers for Donna, Doris, Lucy and Sarah ... prayers for safe travel for the Talamini's return to Connecticut ... prayers for peace and the unrest in this country ... prayers for families in stress ... prayers for Patrick Gilhuly who is going through chemotherapy ... prayers for Bob Campbell ... prayers for Will who obtained his drivers license ... continuing prayers for Carrie Crawford undergoing cancer treatment ... prayers for the teachers and staff at Enfield Public Schools. May we invest in the future and care well for our teachers ... prayers for Joe and Flo Demars ... prayers for a mother undergoing surgery for bladder cancer ... prayers for peace ... prayers for Gabe's back ... prayers for our mothers ... happy Mother's Day to mom in heaven ... prayers for all mothers who have passed ... prayers for my father recovering in rehab ... prayers for my mother Claire ... prayers for guidance on next steps ... prayers for a family friend Rebecca who recently had a liver transplant ... prayers for my family as we lay my brother to rest ... safe travel for Terry, Sheila and Tom ... prayers for C.B.C. to get their jobs done on time ... blessings for all our volunteers. Many hands make for light(er) work ... for our younger people—patience and peace to them as we approach the end of the school year ... prayers for the Dignazio, Krar and Raynock families ... prayers for all who suffer with mental illness and addiction and their families ... prayers for Frankie who recently passed ... prayers for Wayne who was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer ... prayers for peace on earth—no more wars, shootings, and for all evil to leave this world ... thanking God for the birds and flowers, green grass and trees ... for David, please heal all his health problems ... for our wonderful loving church ... prayers for all of our teachers, especially for Alyssa and Reema ... prayers for Peg Ekenbarger who has a cold ... prayers for the family of Johnny Mocko who passed away ... prayers for strength, courage and a guiding hand to navigate a difficult family situation.

Celebrations: for Ben who celebrated his 15th birthday ... for Andrew and Sarah who celebrated 6 years of marriage.

A LIGHTER MOMENT. . .



MISSIONS

Thank you for bringing your food donations to church last month. The total taken to the Crystal Lake Food Pantry on Tuesday May 21st was 25 pounds. Great job everyone. Let's up the amount to 26 pounds or more for the month of June!

God's Blessings,

Judy, Michele and Linda

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

June Birthdays

1	Raymond Bourque
6	Peg Ekenbarger
10	John DelBene
25	Kim Dickson
26	Rosalie Starvish

June Anniversaries

5	Bruce and Kathy Ladr
10	Kenneth and Linda May
21	John and Judy DelBene
22	Dan and Vi Irish
29	Joe and Florence Demars

DUCK RACE

This year's duck race is scheduled for Saturday July 13th. We will gather near the brook at Noon when there will be a hotdog lunch offered as well as games for the youngsters. The race will begin at 1:00. Tickets, numbered to coincide with the numbered ducks, will be sold for \$5.00 each. Many prizes will be awarded to the winning ticket holders. I will count on you, our church family, to sell tickets to your friends and family members. Also, if you wish, I am collecting prizes valued at at least \$10.00. Gift cards make great prizes. Early in June the tickets will be available for you to take for sale. This is one of our fun events that folks of all ages can enjoy. There are some pictures from past duck races on the bulletin in fellowship hall if you would like to see how it goes. Any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Linda Sprague, Duck Race Coordinator

C H R I S T I A N E D / S U N D A Y S C H O O L

On April 28th we went to Fenton-Ruby Park in Willington. Eight kids and twelve adults attended the hike. It was a beautiful place recommended by Michele and we plan to continue doing at least one hike a year together as a group.

Linda noticed a lightly used baby monitor in the barn and after testing it out, it works great. We will have one monitor in the Sanctuary and one in the nursery for anyone who wants to hear the sermon when we have toddlers in our nursery.

Children's Sunday will be Sunday June 23rd. We will do a quick presentation of goodie bags, and will be handing out two Bibles to a couple of our older kids. This will all take place during the service before we head down to Sunday School in place of a Children's Sermon. Following the service we will have outdoor games and a potluck where all members are invited.

Andrew, Kathy, and Judy

H O L L Y B A Z A A R

The 2024 Holly Bazaar will be held on Saturday, November 16, 2024 from 9am to 2pm. We will have sign-up's available during coffee hour for several positions including kitchen helpers, porter (assisting vendors bringing in and removing their displays), raffle table, white elephant table and cookie table. Having too much help is not a possibility. We count on everyone to help out.

We will also have a sign-up for raffle baskets. If you have a theme for a basket (movie night, pet basket, sport, etc) be thinking about it now and shop early. If you have extra empty baskets that you'd like to donate for use, please bring them in. More information will be available soon. We are currently working with the health department to determine what food selections will be provided.

If you would like a booth or know someone that might, please put them in touch with me by email at kdickson1958@yahoo.com or by phone/text at 413-374-3247. I look forward to another fantastic bazaar this year!

With much gratitude - Kim Dickson - Event Coordinator

D A N I R I S H M E M O R I A L S E R V I C E

A service celebrating the life of Dan Irish will be held on Saturday June 29 at 2:00 PM at Second Congregational Church of Stafford at West Stafford. Please plan to attend.

M E D I C A L E Q U I P M E N T

Second Congregational Church has quite a collection of medical equipment—wheel chairs, shower chairs, commodes, canes, etc. These have been donated to be available for anyone that might need them. Right now they are just sitting there gathering dust. If you know of a person who might need one of these items, please let one of the trustees know of this need.

June 2024

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