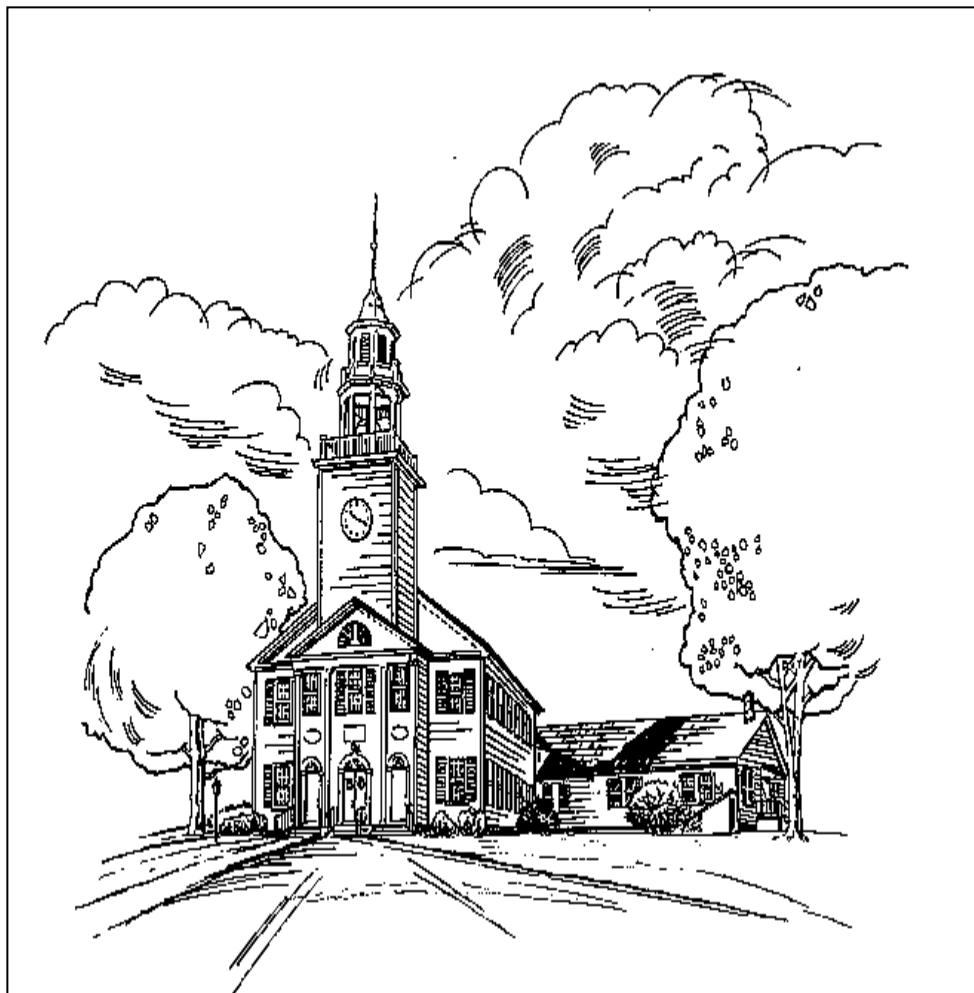


*North Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
Woodbury, Connecticut*



*May 2014 Newsletter*

## KOENIG'S

## ORNER



*"Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing."*

*Mother Teresa*

I've been smiling a lot, lately. I can't help it! How wonderful it is to begin a new ministry here at North Church! It's been less than a month, but we've already celebrated Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter together. Spring is finally here after a long, cold winter...signs of new growth are everywhere. It is springtime at North Church, too. I sense that our congregation is poised for renewal, the rebirth of our shared call to service in this place, for this generation! How lucky we are to build on such a wonderful foundation. How blessed we are with resources that will allow us to accomplish much! Yes, I've been smiling a lot, lately!

Do you remember that little stick figure with the sunglasses, black beret and huge Cheshire cat grin, and the signature phrase "Life is Good!"? His name is Jake! (Bet you didn't know that!) And he's become big business. Forty-eight tee shirts at a 1994 Boston street fair launched him, and now Jake has taken the world by storm and can be found on all sorts of merchandise in fourteen countries! The two young men who created him enjoy the company designations of Chief Executive Optimist and Chief Creative Optimist.

Now, there is more to life than a simple "Life is Good" philosophy. But that simple phrase embodies a foundation, an outlook or worldview, a powerful starting point for engaging the world every day. (We do, by the way, have the option to live by the polar opposite, the also trademarked slogan "Life is C\*\*p." But how sad for those who make that choice.) As I think about Jake, I can't help but remember the first chapter of the Book of Genesis, the story of creation in the Bible. At the end of each "day" of God's creative process, the scene is surveyed by the divine creative presence and pronounced "Good!"

Yes, there is much to smile about here at North Church! God is indeed GOOD!

We've just celebrated Easter, the central proclamation of our faith, that even the worst, even death itself, is redeemed, renewed, and re-created. It is the

GOSPEL message, the GOOD NEWS of resurrection! If *that* doesn't make one smile, well...

Every time we smile, every time we draw someone into our sphere with love, every time we share the gift of love, we affirm the life-giving truth that LOVE is in our midst, that LOVE brings hope, that LOVE triumphs, that LOVE will always remain!

It's time for all of us to smile...and time to get back to work serving the Risen Christ!

Have a Blessed Spring!  
Pastor Koenig



## The Diaconate

by Judi Lewis & Pat Gage

The Diaconate is always exploring new ways to make our family of faith feel warmly welcomed. One way to do this is to make it possible to call each other by name. We are considering the use of name tags, as is successfully done at many churches. These name tags would be computer generated, and placed at the handicap entrance where they can be conveniently picked up and replaced before you go home. We are looking for your opinion on this idea. Let any deacon know what you think.

We are all excited about receiving seven new young people as members of North Church. Pastor Sandy is currently meeting with them in preparation for their confirmation on June 1. The members of this class include: Mikela Caruso, Francesca Geraci, Hannah Northey, Sean Patrick Quinlan, David Schmalter, John Schmalter and Justin Varecka.

I am extremely excited to tell you I now have a co-chair helping me with the many tasks the deacon chair is required to do. Pat Gage has been so helpful to me as vice-chair, working with me all the way. It just made sense to give her the title, as she was already doing the work of a co-chair. She has in so many ways made my job lighter... and more fun! Thank you, Pat. Blessings to all.



# Music Notes

By John Wick

"A rising tide lifts all boats." That phrase may seem to describe the music program at North Church being lifted by the excitement of new leadership and renewed attendance on Sundays. However, there should be a better metaphor. The growth and enthusiasm of the chancel choir has been slowly gaining momentum over the past several months. It is true that the arrival of Pastor Sandy and Susan to the church and to the choir is making a huge difference; but Mark's return to a mid-week rehearsal (and the choir's commitment to show up) will also make a difference. It will allow us to tackle more challenging music, which we hope will add a stronger spiritual dimension to Sunday services. Perhaps the music program will help to pull the freight train, instead of simply rising with the tide.

We hope that anyone in the congregation who enjoys singing will consider putting an hour aside on Wednesday evenings, and join the excitement on Sundays. Get on board!



## What is a Prayer Partner?

It's simple...a Prayer Partner is someone who is matched up with a student at the Nambale Magnet School (NMS) in Kenya. In the fall, you will receive a photo of that student and **all you have to do is pray.**

One year ago, NCC joined a Prayer Partner Program with 17 new students at NMS. This year, there are 18 new Prayer Partners. In January 2015, another school year begins in Kenya, and there will be more students in the Prayer Partner Program.

**If you would like more information on the NMS - Outreach Mission of NCC**, please view the bulletin board in the office hallway, contact Linda Leidel at 203-405-1220 (home), or [linda.leidel@gmail.com](mailto:linda.leidel@gmail.com).



## Women's Fellowship

### May Luncheon

The Annual Luncheon of Women's Fellowship will be Thursday, May 15, 12:00 p.m. at the Curtis House in Woodbury. The program will feature singing by a group of women, led by Claudia Hughes. Menu choices are Yankee pot roast, grilled salmon, or roasted chicken - all lunch entrees come with vegetables, garden salad and dessert. Tickets are \$25 per person with a deadline of May 8. Please reserve your seat by calling Isabelle Aquilar at 1-860-274-0437. ***We hope to see you there!***

**PLEASE NOTE:** The final meeting of Women's Fellowship will be held June 5 at **11:00 a.m.** A brief board meeting will be followed by the Old-Board/New-Board pot luck luncheon. A sign-up sheet will be available at the May board meeting.

### May Ladies of The Evening - "Veinte de Mayo"!

You are invited to attend a Mexican Fiesta hosted by the "Senoras of the Evening" on Tuesday, May 20, 6:00 p.m. at Beverly Carlone's casa, 618 Upper Grassy Hill Road, Woodbury, CT. Grab your sombrero and bring your favorite tortilla filling/topping and join a fiesta of fun and fellowship while we discuss our next mission project. Sign-up sheets are located on the "Senoras of the Evening" bulletin board. We hope to see you there!



## Property Update

By George Kleros

With the restoration of the parsonage project completed, we may now focus on our beloved church structure and grounds. There are several projects that will require a lot of volunteers with basic skills who are able to dedicate time. With spring finally here, most of these projects will be outside and consist of shrub trimming, wood replacement, prep work for painting and painting the exterior. All are encouraged to participate: the project dates will be announced over the next several weeks in the Sunday bulletin.

# North Church

- 5/4                    Celebration of Worship  
                          Communion Sunday
- 5/11                   Celebration of Worship  
                          Mother's Day Sunday  
                          Blanket Sunday
- 5/18                   Celebration of Worship  
                          Congregational Election Sunday
- 5/25                   Celebration of Worship  
                          Memorial Day Sunday

## Committee Meetings

- |                    |              |            |
|--------------------|--------------|------------|
| Diaconate Meeting  | Thurs., 5/1  | 7:00 p.m.  |
|                    | Thurs., 5/29 | 6:00 p.m.  |
| Women's Fellowship | Thurs., 5/1  | 10:00 a.m. |

## Music Rehearsals

- |               |                      |             |
|---------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Chancel Choir | Sun. 5/4, 11, 18, 25 | 8:30 a.m.   |
|               | Wed. 5/7, 14, 21, 28 | 7-8:00 p.m. |

## **JUNE MEETING TO BE SCHEDULED**

**"Hear ye, hear ye"...**Announcing the commencement of the North Church Bicentennial Planning Committee. All those interested in bringing a little history and nostalgia to life in honor of the 200 birthday we will celebrate in 2016 are invited to join us. Our first meeting will take place in June, date TBD. We'll meet briefly to form our group, choose a chair and decide on our meeting schedule to begin in the fall. If History is your thing, then we need You!! Join us, won't you? Please speak with David Strong or Cathy McMullin.

# May Calendar

## Other Meetings

Monday 5/5, 5/12 & 5/19, 26 (*no meetings 5/26):	
*Dr. Westerberg	12:00 p.m.
*Men's Bible Study	7:00 p.m.
Wdbry/Bthlm Parents Connection	7:30 p.m.
*Boy Scouts	7:30 p.m.
Tuesday 5/6, 13, 20 & 27:	
NA	7:30 p.m.
Tuesday 5/13 & 5/27:	
Women's Bible Study	7:00 p.m.
Kathrine Rutledge's Home	
41 Owl Ridge, Woodbury	
Tuesday 5/27:	
Woodbury Hill Condo	7:00 p.m.
Thursday 5/8 & 5/22:	
Knitting	10:00 a.m.
Thursday 5/15:	
Women's Fellowship	12:00 p.m.
Annual Luncheon—Curtis House	
Friday 5/2, 9, 16, 23 & 30:	
AA	8:00 p.m.
Saturday 5/3, 10, 17, 24 & 31	
Young Peoples AA	7:30 p.m.





# Outreach Committee

by Cathy Kleros

SO MANY THANKS TO GO AROUND!! We wish to heartily thank the congregation for all the ways in which you contributed to make our Outreach efforts successful. This first part of 2014 has been a busy one. The monthly food offerings have become popular and truly help to keep the shelves stocked at Woodbury's Food Bank. Our confirmands have happily been doing this special collection and we pray they will continue to help us in the future.

April 29, the **Last Tuesday** of the month, was our turn to provide the hot meal at **Loaves and Fishes**. We had volunteers ready to help us that month, but we would like to encourage you to sign up for any of the following dates: July 29, September 30, and December 30. Please do so on the Outreach Bulletin Board. You'll never feel so rewarded – guaranteed!!

In March we celebrated the 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the Nambale Magnet School in Kenya with a visit from Rev. Evalyn and enjoyed special festivities in her honor. She had interesting information and updates about the school and how far they have come along in their growth. Astounding! After the Children's Sermon, Rev. Evalyn was escorted by the Sunday School children to the youth room where she shared more stories of interest about the school children at NMS. A beautiful reception complete with balloons and birthday cake rounded out our special morning with everyone feeling blessed to be a part of this connection we hold with NMS and Rev. Evalyn. **PS:** A grand total of \$847.00 was collected from the loose offering and jewelry sales and presented as our annual contribution. Thank you again, everyone!

Our \$5 donation drive for "OWNFRONT" lunches has been very popular and we'll continue to receive any donations you wish to make. Healthy lunches will be provided to all the "OWNFRONT" workers during these warmer months as we tackle all of the outdoor projects the trustees have lined up for us. To break bread together at the end of a hard morning of work is a wonderful way to give thanks for the friendships being made and the work being accomplished.



Finally, please look forward to Cindi Hughes' friendly tap on the shoulder when she asks for volunteers to fill those Fridays in June at the Woodbury Food Bank.

Watch for the summer "July/August" newsletter for our lineup of fundraising events beginning in August on into the fall and holiday months.

Many thanks to all at North Church,

Cathy McMullin  
Cindi Hughes

Cathy Kleros  
Peg Tester

Linda Leidel  
Marge Hubbard



## Connecticut Choral Society Spring Concert

The Connecticut Choral Society, under the direction of Eric Dale Knapp, is pleased to announce our upcoming spring concert, aptly entitled "***Music of Celebration***" at **Walnut Hill Community Church**, 165 Walnut Hill Rd., Bethel on **Saturday, May 17, at 8:00 p.m.** Begun as a group of singers in our very own North Congregational Church in 1980, the group continues to travel around the world, but is always happy to share our love of music with friends and family close to home.

This year's concert is an eclectic mix of music spanning classics such as Johann Sebastian Bach's *Hunting Cantata* to John Rutter's *Birthday Madrigals*, which includes settings of poems written by William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe. We will have something for everyone to enjoy, including settings of an anthem written in honor of Nelson Mandella, *Bridge Over Troubled Water* and *What A Wonderful World*. Covering everything from Baroque to Pop music, poetry and prose, the concert will also feature dancers and perhaps even a few surprises. Please feel free to ask Connecticut Choral Society members Jamie Monckton, Hal Wylie or Bonnie Stephens if you have any questions regarding the concert. We hope to see you there!

Tickets are \$25 – Adults; \$20 – Seniors; and \$15 - Youth, and are available online at [www.ctchoralsociety.org](http://www.ctchoralsociety.org) or by phone at 1-888-927-2933. Family Ticket Packages are also available.



# Sunday School

by Lorna Eckman

***"THERE IS ALWAYS ONE MOMENT IN CHILDHOOD  
WHEN THE DOOR OPENS AND LETS THE FUTURE IN."***

The door is about to open for several of our young people when they will step through and graduate from Sunday School and become members of North Church. Several of these young people started Sunday School in the Pre-K 3 & 4 year old class when I was teaching. They have grown into a very special group of young people and will join the adults and become the KEEPERS of the church. I believe that the children are the future of the church and I hope that this group of young people will continue to be part of our church family to see North Church into the future. There will be openings for teaching also.

Since we took some extra time on the lesson of King Solomon last month, the workshop rotation will now start the lesson on the Meaning of Lent. There will be a craft and in the kitchen we will make resurrection cookies.

The K-2 class will learn about the night Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and they will make a bowl. They will also learn about Paul and his long sermon, and they will make a crown.

The pre-K class will read the story "Dear God, Thanks for Thinking Up Love," and they will make a family tree. They will learn how God made them special and they will learn how a little girl named Katy learned to mind her mother. There will be crafts for each lesson.

**Please note that there will be no Sunday School on May 25, Memorial Day weekend.** Thank You and God Bless!

## THANK YOU...

Thanks to everyone who helped make our 16th Annual Flea Market a success...for your donations, unpacking, sorting, pricing, advertising, baking and, of course, buying! All profits will be distributed to our list of charities. - Judy Sonnemann





## Board of Trustees

by Wayne Anderson

The fund balances for the Operations of North Church in the first quarter of 2014 are listed below. Beginning with a net deficit of **(\$8,716)** on January first; **\$59,549 of Income** were received. **Expenses** for that period totaled **\$53,270** resulting in the current deficit of **(\$2,437)**. While this is the best financial picture for North Church in several years for the first fiscal quarter, it must be noted that several members were able to contribute their pledges for the entire year early which has helped immensely. It will take the regular contributions from the rest of us now to keep North Church on a solid foundation.

The Parsonage Project is completed and Pastor Sandy and Susan are settled in. The final cost is a little more than **\$78,000**, well within the revised budget of **\$80,000**. However, the trustees approved a cash flow advance of **\$15,000** to this project so that the work could continue ahead of contributions which are being received on a more regular basis. So far, **\$3,000** has been repaid and the balance will be repaid as further donations are received. Each contribution is important no matter the amount. Please, if you are able to contribute to this project, it will be appreciated so the **\$12,000** balance can be returned to Trusts & Investments. Thank you.

### Parish Administrator: Kathie Logan

Office Hours: Mon./Tues. 9:00 a.m. — 1:00 p.m.

Thurs./Fri. 9:00 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.

Phone: (203) 263-2410 Fax: (203) 263-2488

Email: [nchurchct@snet.net](mailto:nchurchct@snet.net)

Website: [www.northchurchwoodbury.org](http://www.northchurchwoodbury.org)

Newsletter submissions can be put in the Parish Administrator slot or emailed to the Church Office

by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

North Congregational Church  
P.O. Box 473  
Woodbury, CT 06798  
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