Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“Summer time and the living is easy…” The wonderful lyrics of DuBose Heyward, set to the music of George and Ira Gershwin in their opera *Porgy and Bess* are integral to our national consciousness, aren’t they? They express the great hope of resting during the lazy, hazy, hot and humid days of July and August.

I love going to the beach, standing in the cool water… watching the clouds… sitting on the porch, reading a good book without having to watch the time… concerts and plays… long lingering dinners with corn on the cob. Yes, the “living is easy,” but not for all of us.

Some of us have to work all season long, often at two or more jobs, trying to make ends meet.

Others face the grinding forces of poverty and social dislocation and prejudice.

Some of us fear a knock on the door, that deportation may be around the corner.

Some are caught in a broken justice system, subject to mass incarceration and inhumane conditions in our prisons.

Some of us are veterans who have been forgotten by our nation, mistreated or un-treated, and left to die.

Some of us are caught in the immigration system, suffering at the border and elsewhere.

Some of us are caught on the reservation in a dysfunctional system that has abused generations of Native people.

Some of us are caught in the unending cycle of violence in our neighborhoods.

In times like this, when the “living is not easy,” I turn to the wisdom and faith of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, German theologian and martyr. It is hard to believe, but so important to remember, that in 1933 the Protestant German Churches had affirmed and endorsed the leadership of Hitler and the Nazi Party.

In response, the “Confessing Church” spoke out in opposition to the Nazis and declared that it was “divine obedience” to resist the church’s unconscionable compromise and complicity with the evil that was unfolding. In helping to prepare their principles in the Barmen Declaration of 1934, Bonhoeffer wrote, “Silence in the face of evil is itself evil. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act.”

It is important to rest our bodies and renew our spirits in summer vacations and retreats. But we must never forget those who are suffering. If we claim to be followers of Jesus, we must become informed, we must speak out, we must organize, and we must act.

Courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
The **Women's Spirituality** will start up again on September 25th at 6:30 in the Elliot Library. We will use the Neu- ma series of short videos which we will view and discuss each evening. No pre-meeting reading will be required and all women welcome. This is a series of videos that addresses faith and spiritual issues in an everyday setting - sometimes with a clever twist!

The **Sunday Morning Bible study** will begin on September 15th - check with David. We will begin a new book of the Bible - to be determined. This is a unique learning experience for those interested in the Bible. David mixes verses with a solid knowledge of Biblical and early church history and culture. A 'not to miss" program. The group is casual, fun and not anxious about racing through a book.

**One Book, One Congregation** The Work for Racial Justice team is sponsoring a congregation wide reading program, “One Book, One Congregation,” modeled on the Fairfield Public Library program. This fall we will all read *Growing Up White: And Finding Myself in the Story of Race* by Debby Irving. Small discussion groups will be held the week of October 21 and Debby Irving will visit us for a presentation and discussion on Saturday, November 2 at 7:30 pm. Pick up your copy of the book this summer for only $12 ($19.99 in bookstores) and save November 2!
Vacation Bible School 2019
Soup Kitchen Saints

On break for July and August back in action on September 11!

Help Needed for delivery of our Soup Kitchen Saints Meals

Each month volunteers shop, chop, sauté and bake meals for the Merton House in Bridgeport. They help to feed 250 people each month.

We need help delivering these meals one day each month. Can you help us drive these meals to the Merton house one month? Maybe two?

Please consider supporting this vital mission of our church.

Please contact Suzanne Minatti-Lathbury 203 257 3029 or slm224@hotmail.com

opportunities to serve

LifeBridge Community Services (LifeBridge) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to empower people in the Greater Bridgeport area to build a brighter future. We are our clients’ champion. We listen to them, we teach them to change, we hold them accountable, and we campaign on their behalf. Our goal is to move them from crisis to stability, and to greater levels of self-sufficiency. They define the need. LifeBridge delivers the programs to meet the need.

First Church will receive the LifeBridge offering and celebrate the Joy of Sharing Sunday, July 21st

LifeBridge Community Services

The School Volunteer Association of Bridgeport, Inc. is a non-profit organization that provides volunteer services to the students of the Bridgeport Public Schools. The organization recruits, trains and places volunteers and also raises funds to support programs for city students. The School Volunteer Association sponsors an annual, citywide Read Aloud Day each fall during which over 600 volunteers are recruited to read enjoyable children’s books to every pre-kindergarten through sixth grade class in the Bridgeport Public Schools. Many of these participants join us as ongoing volunteers reading books to classes and tutoring or mentoring individual students throughout the remainder of the school year.

First Church will receive the School Volunteer Association offering and celebrate the Joy of Sharing Sunday, August 18th

School Volunteer Association

The Herald page 4 Summer 2019

IMPACT
Minute for Missions

Don't forget to bring non-perishable items for Operation Hope’s Food Pantry - this month they particularly need juice, canned fruit, pasta sauce, peanut butter, jelly, honey, and rice (white or brown). Put donations in the grocery carts outside the Sanctuary.

Help Keep Operation Hope’s Pantry Full!

Operation Hope

LifeBridge

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Help Keep Operation Hope’s Pantry Full!
30th Annual TAG SALE !

Volunteers are needed (8/12/19 thru 8/21/19)

To Signup go to: www.OperationHopeCt.org/events

Assist with the "Set-up" & "Sales" & "Clean Up" !!

General list of duties: Set Up (Organize and Receive donations) duties:
- Assist with unloading and receiving donations
- Sort, move and organize donations,
- Prepare and assist with pricing merchandise Sales (Assist Tag Sale Customers) duties:
  • Greeting and assisting shoppers,
  • Keep merchandise organized,
  • Deliver items to cars.

Clean Up (After Sale Wrap up) duties:
  • Assist with clean up
  • Distribute assorted items to charities. Thank you for supporting Operation Hope

The Chancel Choir will gather at 9:15 am on Sunday, September 8th, to sing the first service of the season. We will sing "If you believe and I believe" (Introit) and "With a Voice of Singing (Anthem).

All choir members, past and present are invited to help us kick off the year in grand style.

The first regular rehearsal will be on Thursday, September 12th, at 7:30, in the Sanctuary. If you've considered singing with the Chancel Choir, we would welcome you with open arms and hearts.

See you all in September!

Paul Jacobson
Minister of Music & Organist
pjacobson@firstchurchfairfield.org

Parish Notes
Wedding
6/8  Richard Miller and Elizabeth Browne
Baptism
6/16  Henry Thomas Florio

SAVE THE DATE!

Three Kings Bazaar
This year's 3KB will take place Friday 5:30-8:30 PM evening Dec 6 and Saturday Dec 7th 10:00 AM-3:00 PM and will be co-chaired by Maria Ferrante and Charlotte Dyslin. It will be here before you know it and we are already looking for volunteers to help make the event a special one again this year! Please save the date and look for future announcements and ways in which you can help with this important and fun all-church fundraiser!
Middle Schoolers - The Middle Road

Melissa Hain and Wendy Muschett are looking forward to gathering together with all of the 6-8 graders on Sunday mornings during our Middle Road time. We look forward to welcoming our newest 6th graders and seeing familiar faces. When dismissed from 10:15 worship, make your way to the Loft above Wakeman Hall where we will be waiting to greet you! This is our gathering spot.

Youth Service Sundays are the only Sundays you do not start out in the sanctuary. On those days, we will meet at 10:15 in Wakeman Hall.

Like last year, each Sunday will have a different focus, but we have made a few changes. Here are the 4 components: Faith in Film, Bible Fun, Youth Service Sundays, and the Joining the Generations Project.

We have lots of ideas to share and look forward to another exciting year of learning, growing, and laughing together!

Check out the September Herald for upcoming activities!

Questions???
Contact Wendy wendymuschett@optonline.net or Melissa melhain@aol.com

Youth Group Be on the lookout for... Youth in Action!

Have a great Summer and see you in the Fall!!

Kick off Cookout at the Beach
Sunday, September 15th 5:00PM

The Loft Community

The Loft is a safe space and loving community for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning teens and their friends.

On summer break July and August

Starts again September 6th
The Loft meets Fridays at 4:30 pm in the Memorial Room at the Fairfield Public Library

For more information contact Liane Nelson—liane.nelson@gmail.com
Rev. Vern Swett—vswett@firstchurchfairfield.org
Summer Fellowship Ministry

You can help on Sunday mornings by hosting fellowship hour in the Eliot Library after the 10:15 worship. It’s easy! Just set out cups, napkins, mix the lemonade, provide a snack and greet those coming for fellowship. A quick clean up when all have departed and you’re done!

Please look for the sign-up or e-mail: Marilyn Cosme mcosme51@yahoo.com

Deadline for September Herald
August 9th
Send all submissions to Cheri Evan cevan@firstchurchfairfield.org