



THE PROSPECT TOWER

Prospect United Methodist Church
A Growing Christian Community of Faith in Action

February 2013

Vol. 74, No. 2

Pastor's Report

"If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,' and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself." James 2:15-17



I would like to tell you about a new ministry at Prospect United Methodist Church. It began in October 2011, during the snow storm that knocked out the power to all of our homes. Somehow, the power remained on in our church, along with some much needed heat. It got some of us thinking about opening up our church, for our members and the larger community, in times of need. Since we are all good United Methodists, we talked about it in committees and in our church council. It became clear, during these discussions, in the spirit of the book of James, that we would open our church to our neighbors. So, we contacted the City of Bristol Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and invited them to our church and discussed using the building as a warming center. That is where we left it in 2011.

Jump ahead to 2013. A cold arctic air mass descends on Southern New England. Wind chill factors are below zero, and the Governor declares a state of emergency. The Mayor of Bristol consults with CERT, and then contacts our church. The weather is endangering the lives of people who are homeless, or sleeping in cars, or people whose furnaces have suddenly died. Could our church be used as a warming shelter? Now, I will be honest, this situation was not the situation we talked about at Church Council — it didn't even enter my mind. But, there was a clear need and lives were at stake. We opened our doors to the city and to our neighbors.

I will share with you that I was very impressed with the City and the volunteers from the City of Bristol Community Emergency Response Team. They were here the entire time making sure that things were under control. There were regular visits from the police, just to check up on the shelter. The Bristol Fire Department came by to drop off cots for people to sleep on. Even Dunkin Donuts, from down the



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hill, donated coffee to help warm our guests. It is inspiring when the whole community comes together during an emergency. For almost one week, our dining room became a lifeboat for our neighbors.

There was some involvement from our church, mostly opening up doors and helping the CERT team find light switches. We learned a few things along the way and we will be better prepared when emergencies crop up in the future. It is a bit of a challenge when you help people out for the first time. How do you prepare for an unforeseen emergency? Sometime in the near future, we will be inviting other congregations in the Bristol area to Prospect for a discussion about emergency situations.

We hold our church in trust — I'm not talking about the New York Annual Conference — we hold our church in trust for Jesus. Our mission, and our entire ministry, is for our Lord and the people He cares for. When an emergency arises we need to ask that important question, "What would Jesus do?" And, if we have some idea about the answer to that question, we have to do it. For about a week, we were answering that question by simply opening our doors for our neighbors.

Grace and Peace,
Bob Sorozan

■ Mayor Thanks Church

Mayor Art Ward of Bristol thanked Prospect U.M. Church for opening its doors to the homeless and to those with heating problems at a meeting of Bristol Cares, a group of non-profits and service departments, on February 6th. As reported in the Bristol Press, Ward said, "Everyone stepped up to the plate. It's gratifying to know that people are willing to help and fill the need."

The downstairs kitchen was opened to those in need for a week in January when a state of emergency was declared by Gov. Dannel Malloy as temperatures dipped into the single digits. At least two volunteers staffed the shelter at all times, and Police and Fire Department personnel stopped in from time to time. From three to five people stayed at the shelter each night.

■ Ash Wednesday

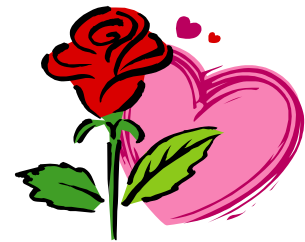
The Christian year is moving along very quickly this year at Prospect. Ash Wednesday will be observed on February 13th during two services. We will hold a simple service of prayers, scripture readings and the imposition of ashes at noon in the Chapel. At 7 p.m., we will have our traditional Ash Wednesday Service. This will mark the beginning of the season of Lent, a time of introspection and spiritual growth. According to the United Methodist Book of Worship, "Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy

Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten*, which means spring. The season is a preparation for celebrating Easter. Historically, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by converts and then became a time for penance by all Christians."

■ Palm Sunday Music

Please plan to attend our Palm Sunday service on March 24th at 10 a.m. to hear the Senior Choir perform "The Rose of Calvary," this year's special Lenten season musical event. Each year the choir, under the direction of Heidi Flower, presents a large-scale musical depiction of the life and passion of Jesus.

Joseph Martin, composer of "The Rose of Cavalry," notes: "The image of a divine rose from heaven's own



garden blooming in the shadows of our world is a portrait of hope and comfort. When translated into music, it becomes a song that speaks to our deepest needs for restoration and redemption. It sings to us of gardens lost to sin and despair. It reveals to us a lonely garden where ancient olive trees stand silent witness to the suffering of the Savior. It is God's tender love song reminding us all that we are children of the garden. Finally, at its heart, it is the music of one truly perfect Rose, which choosing grace, died for his beloved thorns."

MISSION MOMENTS



Haiti was endorsed by the Connecticut District and then the New York Annual Conference as a mission priority in 2004.

Furcy is a remote village area high in the Haitian mountains. Mountains of Hope for Haiti, (started under another name), encourages, supports and assists the local church and community leaders in their efforts, and works to empower the community in improving the quality of life for

the people of Furcy. Through the Conference Volunteers in Mission program, people have the opportunity to be a part of a team that travels to Furcy for a week.

Lisa Limeburner, Joyce Rioux, and Jill Wilson from Prospect joined such a team in November, 2012. Other members of the team included two pastors from our Conference, Roy Grubb and Anne Brackett, two members from Wethersfield UMC, Deb Draizen and Jude Exantus, two without Methodist affiliation, Laurel Reagan and Nick Franco, and a seamstress from Maryland, Becky Hein. Friendships form quickly as teams strive to support the people in Furcy, helping them move forward by listening and acting.



The following are some reflections on what being a Volunteer in Mission is like:

"Recently traveling with a group to the mountainous village of Furcy, Haiti, I was reminded of my grandmother's crazy quilts. Similar to the scraps of fabric, our group was comprised of precious individuals brought together to create a serviceable quilt. One pastor commented that we did not choose to travel to Furcy but we were sent by God to have us love each other, work together, and discover how wonderful helping can be.

"Rounding the last bend in the road to Furcy, a welcoming crowd was there to greet us. The smiles and sense of excitement was overwhelming. Were we worthy of such a glorious greeting? Would we be able to offer enough? Without skipping a beat, helping hands joined together to take our 20 or more overweight suitcases down the steep path to the church where we would stay. A wondrous site to behold as a sea of suitcases balanced on the heads of men, women, and children showed the way."

“Our days were filled with liberation—days to let go of trivial matters, days to appreciate simple gifts, days to welcome the tasks before us. Tasks consisted of teaching women how to sew using the four treadle sewing machines, repairing the farmers’ store roof that was damaged during Storm Sandy, working in the clinic, hosting a vacation Bible school, providing a Holy spa day for the women, organizing a game day for the children, and serving over 500 hot meals.

“Our week was packed with emotions. We laughed heartily at the silliest of things and invited others to join in our fun. We cried as the Spirit moved us and comforted those in need. There were smiles of recognition and friendships that grew. We received many gifts during our stay — gifts of song, hugs, stories, and a community that opened their hearts and opened ours.

“While watching the women learn to sew on the treadle machines, I thought of an analogy to our mission trip. As we have all witnessed, it takes great patience and perseverance to make the wheel spin in the right direction. Our work in Furcy reminds me of this wheel. Each mission team helps that wheel take a few more turns. All tasks, large or small, keep that momentum going forward. There are obstacles, such as the damage experienced from Hurricane Sandy, which temporarily stops the wheel or makes it take a few turns in the wrong direction. This stop of the wheel becomes only a minor setback. With God’s help, the wheel starts slowly moving forward again. As we leave Furcy, I am proud of our accomplishments and know that we helped to advance the wheel.”

Read the whole diary on our website at <http://www.anewprospect.org/haiti.html>.



■ Hurricane Relief Effort for Storm Sandy

Storm Sandy left a path of destruction along the East Coast. Many are still trying to recover four months later.

United Methodists are continuing to contribute both money and volunteer time to the denomination’s relief efforts for those affected by Hurricane Sandy.

In January, Jill Wilson, Susan Lee, Sue Powers, Terry Sorozan and Jeanette Baker spent two days in Long Island helping homeowners in the recovery process. One day was spent cleaning up an assortment of debris deposited by the ocean in one family’s yard. Another day was spent helping a family go through its basement to sort and pack what could be saved. It was hard to see so many parts of a family’s life having to be put out to the curb for trash pick-up but encouraging to see volunteers from as far away as South Carolina coming to help.

The greatest resource The United Methodist Church has is its people, so as recovery moves forward, please consider being a one of the many volunteers assisting with community rebuilding efforts.

PROSPECT IN EARLIER DAYS

Music Vital To Lenten Season - Kathy Dube

A glance at the March 1943 Tower shows how music was wholly integrated into the Lenten season. The front page of the Tower announced that Leonard Seeber, an "eminent pianist," would give a recital at the church on the afternoon of March 14. "All members and friends of Prospect Church, all lovers of good music, are cordially invited to be present," the Tower states. According to the notice, the concert was to be Mr. Seeber's last recital before being inducted into military service, so a large crowd was anticipated.



The Tower also announced that two Lenten Vesper Services featuring an organ recital by Virginia (Mountser) DuBois, Prospect's organist and wife of Prospect's pastor, the Rev. Paul DuBois, would be presented on March 21 and March 28.

The March 21 concert featured: "Sinfonia" by J.S. Bach, "Bells of Arcadia" by Couperin, "Pastorale," Traditional, "Andante" by Stamitz, "Rondo from Concerto for Flute" by Rinck, "Paradise" by Fibich, "Clair de Lune" by Karg-Elert, and "Pilgrim's Chorus" by Wagner.

The March 28 concert features: two pieces by J.A. Bach, "Prelude and Fugue in F" and "Aria in D," Soeur Monique" by Couperin, "The Fifers" by d'Andrieu. "Marriage Mass" by Dubois, and "Finlandia" by Sibelius.

The Tower also included a brief informational paragraph about Lent: "The word 'Lent' mean 'spring.' It is a seasonal term. In the Christian calendar Lent continues from Ash Wednesday through Easter. The period is counted backwards from the date of Easter. Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon, after the spring equinox, March 21-22. Therefore, Easter cannot be earlier than March 23 or later than April 25. Not until after the year 2,000 will Easter again be as late as it is in 1943. The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday which is forty days before Easter, not counting Sundays."

The March Tower will have more about Lent as observed in March 1943.

Order Your Easter Plants

Memorial Easter Plants will surround the Altar on Easter Sunday, March 31. Please return this form to the offering plate or church office by Wednesday, March 20th. Cost per plant is \$10 for each plant. Proceeds will be donated to the Prospect Organ Fund. Payment must accompany order. Feel free to take your plant(s) after the 10 a.m. Easter service.



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| In Honor of | |
| In Memory of | |
| Number of Plants | |
| Given by | |
| Amount Enclosed | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leaving Plant or <input type="checkbox"/> Taking Plant | |

Thanks

Dear Pastors, Finance Chairs, Admin Council Chairs and Treasurers:

I would like to take this opportunity to say thanks for your tremendous commitment in honoring the work of our connectional church. As a former UM church treasurer, finance chair and stewardship chair, I am intimately aware of what it means for a church to pay its conference apportionments. It is not a trivial accomplishment, especially in these economic times when many are unemployed, underemployed or just struggling to stay afloat.

I want to thank all of you who have paid your 2012 apportionments whether partially or in full. I hope you will agree that it is money well spent.

*Sincerely,
Ross E. Williams, Treasurer and Director of
Administrative Services, Office of Finance &
Administration, New York Annual Conference]*

■ Kids Praise God

Our newly formed children's musical group, Kids Praise God, meets each week after worship service in Room 208. Kids Praise God will sing a song during the 10 a.m. service on the fourth Sunday of each month!

■ Book Club

Prospect's book club will meet on February 28th at 7 in the parlor. We will be talking about *The Happiness Project* by Gretchen Rubin. Gretchen Rubin had an epiphany one rainy afternoon. She realized that time was passing, and she was not focusing on the things that really matter. She decided to dedicate a year to her happiness project. All are welcome to come and discuss the book.

**PROSPECT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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