

THE PROSPECT TOWER

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

March 2014

Vol. 75, No. 3

Pastor's Page

What do we need to do to get you to invite someone to church on Sunday morning? We've had our meeting with "Mister Big" — I mean the District Superintendent. It was a very productive meeting. In fact, it was so productive we had to take a little time to process it. The meeting lasted late into the evening and so we carried it on to our Church Council meeting the following week.



The "Genesis" of the meeting is very easy to understand. Our congregation is aging and we have lost some very special and very important people this past year. We have some very good signs of life: our Sunday School is growing, our Steven's Ministry has just graduated its first class of students and we have some very good volunteers doing important work around our church. But, looking at where our congregation will be 10 years from now, will our participation slowly evaporate away? The trend for mainline congregations is alarming — will Prospect United Methodist Church be a part of the alarming mainline statistics?



Invite a Neighbor to Church

One way or another, change has to come to our congregation. We have to work hard to make sure that the change will be positive. Our District Superintendent, who has much experience in revitalizing congregations, is encouraging us to grow. It is easy to give up and say "what will be, will be." Instead, he is encouraging us all to do the challenging work of evangelism.

What do we need to do to attract new members? One of the suggestions is to create "blended" worship services where the music and structure of the service will speak to a new generation of worshippers. I will admit that this was a little hard to for me to hear — I am the one who puts together our services and select the music. I confess that after doing this for 32 years, I like the old hymns — they feel comfortable. But, in the interest of reaching a new generation of people, maybe we all could try a few new praise hymns. Please

(Cont. to Page 2)

Prospect United Methodist Church

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(Cont. from Page 1)

remember that Charles Wesley set many of his most cherished hymns to the tune of tavern, drinking, songs. If Charles Wesley could be flexible with his music in reaching out to the un-churched, so can we!

Related to this, I admit that I get used to things really quickly — this is one of the beneficial side effects of the Methodist itinerating system. So, I quickly find the location of the bathrooms, the nursery and the church office. Since I write up the services every week, I know the location of the hymns in the hymn book, where the prayers are located in the bulletin and when to stand up. We all know about books of the Bible and where to find the “Book of Hebrews.” But, what about people who have never stepped foot in a church their entire life — would they feel comfortable in our church? Would you feel comfortable inviting them? Many of the things we take for granted are deep mysteries to the un-churched.

Change will inevitably come to Prospect United Methodist Church. Will the change take the form of the gradual loss of members and constantly increasing financial difficulties? Will the change take the form of new and innovative programs that reach out to people who have no church home? The time to choose is now!

Grace and Peace,
Bob Sorozan

■ PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

An exciting movement is happening at PUMC. On Sunday mornings before the 10 a.m. service, members are gathering in Sessions Hall to knit or crochet prayer shawls. Once the shawls are completed, they are placed on the altar rail and blessed by Pastor Bob.



Anyone can take a shawl and bless someone with it. In the past two months over 30 shawls have been given away, blessing many with God's love, comfort and healing power. If anyone would like information on how to knit a shawl, contribute yarn or request a prayer shawl, please contact Diane Ashworth, who heads up the ministry, at Diash@comcast.net or call (860) 583-9520.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry originated in 1998, with Janet Severi Bristow and Victoria Galo, two graduates of the 1997 Women's Leadership Institute at The Hartford Seminary in Hartford. They developed the ministry from their experiences in the program of Applied Spiritual Ministry under the direction of Professor M. Therese Winter, MMS.

They combined compassion and the love of knitting/crocheting into a prayerful ministry and spiritual practice that reaches out to those in need of comfort and solace, as well as in celebration and joy. Many blessings are prayed into every stitch.

Whether they are called Prayer Shawls, Comfort Shawls, Peace Shawls, or Mantles, etc., the shawl maker begins with prayers and blessings for the recipient. The intentions are continued throughout the creation of the shawl. Upon completion, a cross is sewn onto one corner and a final blessing is offered before the shawl is sent on its way.

Some recipients have continued the kindness by making a shawl and passing it onto someone in need. Thus, the blessing ripples from person-to-person, with both the giver and receiver feeling the unconditional embrace of a sheltering, mothering God! The shawls can also be crocheted, quilted, woven or machine knitted as well!

History Corner

PROSPECT IN EARLIER DAYS

Lenten Season In 1954 - Kathy Dube



Prospect Church continued its journey through the 1954 Lenten season as highlighted in the March 26th Tower edition, continuing a review begun in our February Tower.

Mid-week Lenten services were largely attended, according to page 3 of the Tower. The series was entitled "Living Our Discipleship." Various speakers chose one of the 12 Apostles to highlight, comparing discipleship in the day of Jesus to what discipleship meant in 1954. The remaining speakers were Rev. Matthew Gates of Naugatuck Methodist Church and Rev. Frank Hoadley of Bristol Baptist Church. On another date worshippers got to watch a movie, *I Am With You*. Each program was preceded by a supper prepared by different units of the Women's Club.

Members of Prospect also participated in the remaining Lenten services sponsored by the Bristol Council of Churches. These services were held on Sunday evenings, at Trinity Episcopal Church, Bristol Baptist Church, and Prospect Church. A three-hour service was planned for Good Friday from Noon to 3 p.m. at Lebanon Lutheran Church.

A large class of adults and a class of 30 young people were to be received into membership at the church as part of the Palm Sunday morning service in April. In addition, the church would host combined Protestant choirs of the Bristol Council of Churches under the direction of Edward Graham, with Lois Dunn Clark playing the organ, Palm Sunday evening to sing the cantata "The Holy City" by Gaul.

Stewardship Corner

How Safe is Electronic Giving?

It is safer than writing checks or carrying cash to church. Secure donation services are provided by Vanco Services, LLC. Vanco processes electronic donations for more than 10,000 churches and non-profit organizations.

What if I Need to Cancel or Temporarily Place my Donation on Hold?

You can cancel or suspend donations by notifying the church. (If you signed up online, you may have the option to go online to cancel or suspend your own donations.)

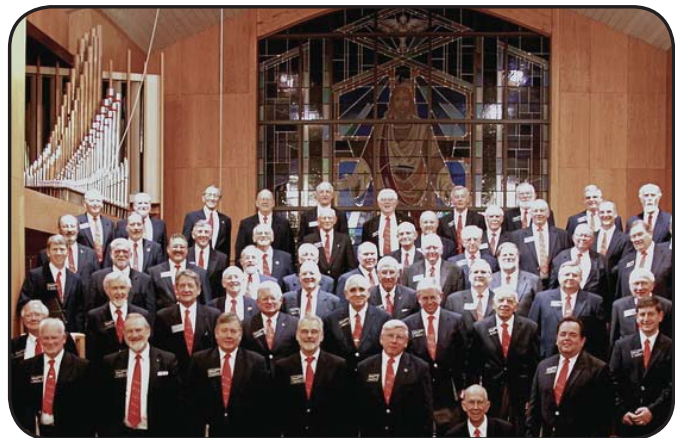
Music Corner

■ PALM SUNDAY CHOIR NEWS

The Senior Choir, Sunday School children and others will take us on a musical “Walk Through Holy Week” on April 13th at the 10 a.m. Palm Sunday/Passion Sunday service. The choirs invite all who attend to share our faith in the Holy Week journey through the eyes of Jesus and His Disciples as we experience the celebrations and tragedy that occurred during what we now know as “Holy Week.”

■ BARNSTORMERS ARE RETURNING

The Barnstormers, a four-part male choral group that has been entertaining audiences and spreading the joy of music for 65 years, will return to Prospect at 7 p.m. on April 26th. The group gets together three times a year to perform free concerts throughout New England, PA and NY. The music is a mixture of spiritual, gospel and patriotic music. There is no admission charge for the concert, but a free-will offering will be taken to support the Barnstormers.



■ SPRING FLING!

A free concert presented by the Bristol Brass and Wind Ensemble, Sunday March 23 at 6 p.m. at Prospect United Methodist Church. The Bristol Brass and Wind Ensemble under the direction of Richard Theriault, will headline and host guest ensembles, The Southington Brass directed by Tim Johnson, 5 Metal Chemistry Brass Quintet, and Gary and Luisa Gladu.



The mood is a Pops concert with music from “The Sound of Music,” “The Invincible Eagle March,” “The Irish Washerwoman,” and other popular selections.

Call Jayne Marra 860-584-5112 or visit their website <http://www.bbandwe.org> for more information.

Notes of Interest

■ WOLF PACK OUTING

The Men's Fellowship is sponsoring an outing to the Wolf Pack hockey game in Hartford on Friday, March 21st, at 7 p.m. The Wolf Pack play the St. John's Ice Caps. Tickets are \$15, but children are admitted free if they can sit on a parent's lap. Hot dogs will be sold for \$1 apiece. All attendees will be given team posters free of charge. Those who want to attend can turn in their checks made out to William Thibodeau by March 9th or pick them up at the Will Call Window at the Excel Center by March 20th. For more information, contact Bill Thibodeau or Tonya Almeida.

■ HELP WANTED

Several jobs need filling to keep Prospect Church functioning properly. Please see Carol Rivard for more information.

■ SAVE THE DATES

The annual Renaissance Dinners will take place on the first two Saturdays in May, the 3rd and the 10th. This year's theme has a Scottish flair. To volunteer or for more information, please see Luisa Gladu.

■ MILESTONES

Baptism

Feb. 23 – Alessandra Betsy-Ann Jefferson

Order Your Easter Plants

Memorial Easter Plants will surround the Altar on Easter Sunday, April 20th. Please return this form to the offering plate or church office by Sunday, April 13th. Cost per plant is \$10. 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.



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

Youth Corner

■ MYF FOOD DRIVE

The MYF is collecting dog and cat food for the Humane Society. The drive started in February and will last through March.

■ CONFIRMATION CLASS

Confirmation classes for students in the 8th grade and higher started on Monday, March 3rd. For more information, please contact Pastor Bob.

■ CHILDREN'S LENTEN PROGRAM

Lenten programs for children, led by Christa Zaldivar, will be held each Thursday starting March 13th, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Please see Christa to sign up.

■ CAMPERSHIPS AVAILABLE

The Roberts Fund is again offering camperships for children and youths from PUMC who would like to attend a Methodist summer camp this year. Please see Beth Provost or Matti Verzino for more information

■ GRINDER SALE SUCCESS

The PUMC Scholarship Committee thanks everyone who supported the Superbowl grinder fundraiser and all who worked so hard to make it a success. The event netted a profit of \$1,050.

Butterfly Pretzels

Celebrate being a new creation by making this fun spring snack.



What you need:

- 45 miniature twist pretzels (to make 20 butterflies)
- Cookie sheet covered with parchment paper
- Light cocoa and multi-colored Candy Melts (available at craft stores)
- Disposable decorating bags
- M&M's, Skittles, sprinkles, cinnamon drops, etc.

What you do:

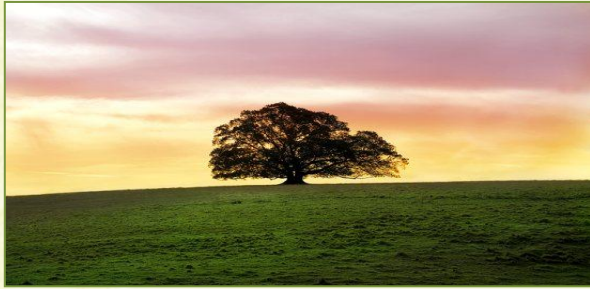
1. Break five pretzels into pieces for antennae.
2. On cookie sheet, arrange pairs of whole pretzels as shown.
3. Melt Candy Melts in microwave, separating colors into different bags.
4. Pipe melted brown candy down the center to hold pretzels together, making a head and body. Press on two pretzel pieces for antennae.
5. Pipe other melted candy into the pretzel holes.
6. Add M&M's and other decorations into melted candy on the wings. Let cool. Enjoy!

Christian Education Connection

Prospect United Methodist Church

99 Summer Street Bristol, CT 06010

Spring 2014



Confirmation Class 8th graders & up

3/3, 3/17, 4/14, 4/21, 5/5, 5/1, 6/2 (6:30-8:00 pm)

Confirmation is a once-in-a-lifetime-experience. Learn about the meaning of Christian faith; the history and teachings and The United Methodist Church; and an explanation of the baptismal and membership vows you will be professing. Confirmation Sunday: June 15th. Contact Pastor Bob or Diane Ashworth to register.

Embracing a Life of Meaning

3/13, 3/20, 3/27, 4/3, 4/10 (6:30-7:30 pm)

Lent is a time to reinvigorate our faith practice and contemplate what matters most. Come, join hearty discussions on topics including belief matters, the Bible matters, community matters, place matters, and we matter. Led by Pastor Bob following Kathleen Norris's DVD series. Adults sign up by 3/9.

Sharing the Easter Faith with Children

3/13, 3/20, 3/27, 4/3, 4/10 (6:30-7:30 pm)

Easter is indeed Good News for children. And it is our joy and baptismal responsibility to share it with them. To do this, we will have stories and activities that communicate a Lent-Easter message that Jesus loves, lives, and forgives. Christa Zaldivar will lead the program. Sign up by 3/9.

Mark your Calendars

March 5

Ash Wednesday: Noon & 7:00 pm

March 23

Pretzel Sunday: Children's Sunday School

April 13

Passion Sunday: 10:00 am

April 17

Maundy Thursday: 7:00 pm

April 18

Good Friday: Noon

April 19

Easter Egg Hunt: 3:30 pm PUMC Play Group

April 20

Easter Sunrise Service: Federal Hill 6:30 am

Easter Service: PUMC 10:00 am

April 26

Barnstormers Concert: 7:30-9:00 pm

April 27

Barnstormers Sunday: 10:00 am

May 11

Celebration of Christian Family: 10:00 am

May 18

Children's Day: 10:00 am

*Joining together to grow in our understanding of the gospel
and become better equipped for daily living as faithful disciples.*

Storytime with Christa

Last Sunday of every month 11:30 am Library
Inviting all ages to hear childhood stories from the Bible. Little ones can gather near and enjoy a follow-up craft, game, song, or fun.

Kids Praise God

Sundays at 11:15am Choir Room
Kindergarten through 5th grade students join in weekly song, voice, and praise. Once a month, they share their music at the 10:00 am worship service.

Child Care

Sundays 8:45-11:30 am Nursery
Staffed nursery for infants to toddlers.

Children's Sunday School

Sundays 10:00 –11:15 am
Children 3 years of age and older can join our church school program. Children accompany their families at the beginning of our 10:00 service, participate in the children's message, and then transition to their church school classes. Our curriculum includes engaging activities in which children learn the stories of the Bible, of God's love, and caring for one another.

Methodist Youth Fellowship

2nd Sunday of every month 4:00 – 6:00 pm
An informal gathering in a Christ-centered atmosphere, where youth engage in fun and fellowship. Not required to be a member of PUMC or even a Methodist!

Resources



The Upper Room

Daily Devotional Guide

A global ministry dedicated to supporting the spiritual formation of Christians seeking to know and experience God more fully. Pick up this daily devotional guide today in the back of the Sanctuary or at the entry of the Chapel.

Before You Click printout

Attach to side of remote, computer screen, or any electronic device.

Pick **1** Before You Click
 OPEN A DOOR OR A WINDOW
AND JUST LOOK
OUTSIDE FOR 5 MINUTES

pray for a person the way
you'd like to be prayed for

set the timer: make the most
of every opportunity

call or talk
to someone
long enough
to get to the
laughing part

give someone a hug

read 10 verses of Scripture --
then still long enough to reflect

clean as fast
as you can for
five minutes

write down
three things
you're grateful
for - right now!

quietly pray the Lord's prayer--slow & out loud

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Call, email, or sign up on Sundays for any of our educational offerings.

ph 860.582.3443 or email prospectoffice.com