



THE PROSPECT TOWER

Prospect United Methodist Church

A Growing Christian Community of Faith in Action

February 2012

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Pastor's Page

"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have success." ~ Joshua 1:8



For the past two months, we have been talking about the goals for our church for the next four years. This month, I would like to talk about our third goal: growing as a disciple. The United Methodist Council of Bishops wants each congregation in the connection to consider how to assist "disciples growing in their faith through small groups, Sunday school and Bible studies." In short, our Bishops want us to take our mission seriously. You do recall the mission statement of the United Methodist Church? "The mission of the United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ."

Our church took up the challenge at our planning retreat last fall. After much discussion we decided to make Sunday school a priority in the life of the church. And, since Sunday school is a priority, it means that we will direct our resources and energy toward its success. One way to make certain that this will happen is to support our stewardship program. When the stewardship drive falls short, the first thing that is usually cut is church programs, including Sunday school. We must not let this happen. Prayerfully consider you pledge for the upcoming year.

But, putting financial matters aside, one of the important ways we can support our Sunday school program is by helping out wherever we can. Our church needs committed Sunday School teachers. Our teachers are doing a wonderful job, but even they can get tired now and then. And along with teachers, we need chaperones, cooks and volunteers to clean rooms. We need you!



Prospect United Methodist Church

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But Christian education doesn't end when we graduate from High School or College, even from a Theological Seminary. To tell the truth, I'm still learning about God. So, one of our goals is to start Bible Studies and small fellowship groups. We will be starting one in just a few weeks—keep watching the Tower and the weekly bulletin for details. Getting together with your friends to talk about faith is actually fun. And the really good news is this: there will be no quizzes or final exams!

I would also like to encourage you to think about what you would like to study. We already have suggestions to study different books of the Bible, our social principles and the story of the Protestant and Methodist faith. I also promise that if you and a group of your friends would like to get together for a study or support group, I will make every effort to be there with you, assuming you would want me.

Faith is a very important part of life. Faith lifts us up; faith breaks down barriers; faith gives us hope when all we see is despair. Every generation has the responsibility to pass along our faith to the next generation. As someone once said, "God has no grandchildren, only children."

Grace and Peace,
Bob Sorozan

Charge Conference Reviews Church Ministries

Prospect Church's Annual Charge Conference was led by Rev. Robert Knebel, pastor of the Waterbury UMC, along with a potluck luncheon, following the 10 a.m. service on January 8. The Charge Conference is held annually to review church ministries via annual reports, look to the year ahead as a faith community, and elect church trustees.

Pastor Bob Sorozan introduced a video highlighting the past year's activities put together via www.OneTrueMedia.com by Joyce Rioux with support by Jill Wilson and Jeanette Baker. Pastor Bob introduced the video urging church members not only to reflect on the past year's activities, but also to look ahead... to consider expanding our ministry to children and explore new forms of worship, Bible studies for adults, and how we can share the joy that we have in Christ with the larger community.

Among the categories depicted in the six-minute video:

- **Putting Our Faith In Action** (through the Leadership Retreat, blankets for shut-ins, the Crop Walk, Mum Festival Booth, ...);
- **Welcoming Others** (Christmas Eve luminaries, Country Cupboard Fair, the Renaissance Dinner, Victorian Tea, ...);
- **Glorifying God Through Voice** (organ, choir, handbells, cantata, ...);
- **Fostering Connections** (summer lunch packs, Rally Day, Prayer Chain, ...);
- **Attending To Our Community** (summer lunch packs, Meals for the Needy, health kits for Haiti, ...);
- **Making Our House A Home** ("warming" the parsonage, cleaning the church);
- **Preserving Our History** (Service Flag display/pamphlet);
- **Enhancing the Worship Experience** (farewell to Pastor Dennis Winkleblack, welcoming Pastor Bob, children's message, ...);
- **Providing Christian Education** (Christmas pageant, Advent study, Souper Bowl of Caring, ...); and
- **Carrying Out God's Word** (Holy Land trip, DCF Christmas party, mission trip to Haiti, Fellowship Hour, ...).

The video can be viewed on the PUMC website:
www.anewprospect.org.

■ Book Fellowship

You are invited to participate in a low-key book study during the season of Lent. We will be reading “Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life,” by Richard Rohr (2011, published by Joey-Bass, a Wiley Imprint). Richard Rohr is a Franciscan Priest and a Spiritual Director. His book deals with spirituality as people grow older (and let’s be honest, most people eventually grow older), and how our life experience can inform and become a part of our expression of faith. You may not agree with everything he shares with his readers, but he will certainly get you thinking about your spirituality.

The book is available from Amazon.com,

Christian Book Distributors and at local book stores. If you have trouble finding the book, please speak with Pastor Sorozan and he can order it for you through Cokesbury.

The Study Group will begin on March 6 at 7 p.m. Coffee will be provided. We will continue to meet on March 13, 20 and 27, and on April 3. If you would like to attend but need nursery care, please contact Pastor Sorozan.



Pack Well



During Lent, as we focus on Christ’s journey to the cross, let’s also examine the journey of our lives. The first task when leaving on any adventure is packing. What have you placed in your bag? Are you weighed down with temptations, self-doubt, money worries, relationship troubles? Have you overlooked any important items? Maybe your bag feels too empty for the challenges ahead. Remember to pack mercy, grace and forgiveness.

Thanks to Easter, we know that our journey in Christ continues, even when the road becomes difficult. So as you prepare for Lent, carry with you the hope made possible by Jesus’ sacrifice on our behalf.

— Based on the “Journey to Hope” sermon series, www.rethinkchurch.org/lent.

PROSPECT IN EARLIER DAYS

Lenten Season Of The Past - Kathy Dube



Since Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday will soon be upon us, heralding the arrival of another Lenten season, here is a look at the extensive Lenten program sponsored by Prospect Church in 1958. Ash Wednesday was observed on February 19 that year. The February Tower noted: "The Lenten Season is one of the periods in the Church year when Protestants make every effort to attend the special and regular services of the church." ... "Ours is a very large church with a membership of 1439. It seems reasonable to expect that a church of this size would be able to secure an attendance of at least 500 persons."

Thursday evening "meetings" were held weekly with neighboring (presumably Methodist) pastors delivering the sermons. The pastors were from New Britain, Winsted, Middletown, Waterbury and Watertown. Sermon titles to be delivered by Rev. Eugene C. Fowler during Sunday services were also published: February 23, "The Tragedy of Jealousy"; March 2, "Holy Communion"; March 8, "The Tragedy of Indecision"; March 16, "The Tragedy Of Ingratitude"; March 23, "The Tragedy of Good Intensions"; March 30, Palm Sunday, "The Tragedy of Popular Acclaim"; and April 6, Easter Sunday, "The Tragedy of Easter."

Twenty-three young people attended the pastor's membership class, preparing to join the church on Palm Sunday. A class for adults was held on Tuesday evenings. The previous Lenten season, church attendance at Sunday morning services averaged 417. Of the goal of 500, the article concluded: "We can realize this goal if all who read this will make a serious effort to attend church each Sunday during this period."

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~ Quote from a 1958 edition of the Tower

EVENTS



■ Fourth Annual Chili Cook-Off

Find those secret ingredients and tweak those recipes. Everyone is invited to bring their favorite chili masterpiece and dare the judges not to vote for your chili on February 26. See where you chili will rank. If you have any questions please see Jackie Palance. Remember, this is also a pot luck Sunday so all those who aren't chili masters, bring in your favorite dish to share.

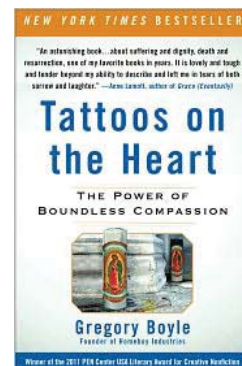
■ CPR/First Aid Course Explored

Prospect Church wants to have an instructional CPR/First Aid course offered at the church in the next few months. In order to solicit interest in such a course so it will be beneficial to church members as well as instructors, a sign-up sheet will be available in Sessions Hall and in the church office. The cost is expected to be \$60. Any questions, see Joyce Rioux or Rita Farren.

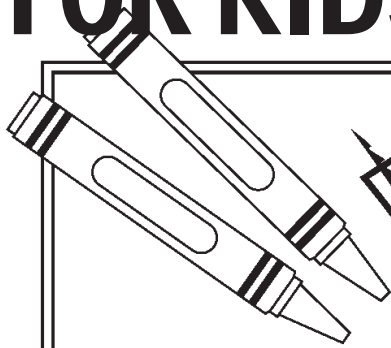
The Staff Parish Relations (SPR) Committee is backing the project, knowing it is vitally important to be able to handle emergencies when they arise. Knowledge of CPR and First Aid are especially valuable to young parents and those caring for older family members. SPR hopes many parishioners will take the course to be better prepared to handle emergency situations.

■ PUMC Book Club

The PUMC Book Club has chosen as its next book for discussion "Tattoos on the Heart: the Power of Boundless Compassion" by Gregory Boyle. Father Boyle works in a neighborhood with the highest concentration of gang activity in Los Angeles. His book is a series of parables distilled from his 20 years in the barrio. The essays are arranged by theme to offer a look at how full our lives could be if we could find the joy in loving others and in being loved unconditionally. Inspired by faith but applicable to anyone trying to be good, the personal, unflinching stories are full of revelations and observations of the community in which Boyle works and of the many lives he has helped save. We will discuss this book on February 23 in the PUMC parlor. Please feel free to join us even if you have not yet finished the book.



FOR KIDS



PUZZLE

FOLLOW GOD'S EXAMPLE

In a letter to the church in Colossae, the apostle Paul wrote about the importance of forgiveness.

•••• DIRECTIONS ••••

To complete Colossians 3:13 (NIV), use the smaller words to fill in the larger words.



gain as or ear van an for give
gave her on it one other he an a

B _ _ _ w _ _ h each

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For _ _ _ _ as t _ _ L _ _ d

for _ _ _ _ you.”

COLOSSIANS 3:13, NIV

Answers: “Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” Colossians 3:13, NIV

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