



The Church Mouse

The Reverend Craig L. Cowing, Pastor
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April 2016 Newsletter

RHCC e-mail address – office@rhccucc.org
Website: www.rhccucc.org
Office Hours – 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Friday
Sunday Worship Services – 10:00 a.m.

Childcare Available/Handicap Accessible

CELEBRATE SPRING AT OUR APRIL BREAKFAST & RE-MAKER'S FAIR

Saturday, April 30th 8am-10:30am



Adults \$7.00, Kids (4-12yrs) \$5.00, under 4yrs – free
Egg Strata ≈ Pancakes ≈ French ≈ Toast Cereal ≈
Bacon ≈ Sausage ≈ Juice ≈ Milk ≈ Coffee

RE-MAKER'S FAIR AND EARTH DAY FESTIVAL

"Remake, Reuse, Rejoice!" 11am-3pm (after the Pancake Breakfast). The Re-Maker's Fair will feature creatively hand-crafted items made from re-used or up-cycled materials, saved from the waste stream to become beautiful or useful objects. Information on local recycling and other environmental efforts will also be available. Join us in celebration of our stewardship of the earth! For more information or to sign up for a table to sell items, please contact Anita Hawkins at church or leave a message with the church office 860-529-4167 OR office@rhccucc.org





Usually my article for the April newsletter is in anticipation of Easter, but not this year. Instead, we are thinking about post-Easter. The early spring (not taking into account the possibility of late snow storms) has us busy cleaning up our yards, trimming the shrubs and putting out new plantings. Spring opens up possibilities for new growth—promises, even.

Imagine what the first disciples of Jesus were thinking of after their experience of Easter—the first one, to be sure. It wasn't about gardens. Instead, it was about the possibilities for new growth—wait, did I just say that? Not new growth in the garden, but new growth in the church. There was only one church, and they were it. The news spread quickly as many came to believe their preaching, that Jesus had been executed and had been raised.

Growth is cyclical. Each cycle is not the same as the one that came before, but builds on previous growth. An annual plant only lasts the season, like some flowers. You have to buy new plants each spring, or start them from seed yourself. The church isn't an annual plant, though. It is perennial. Each new season of growth builds on the past, both good and bad.

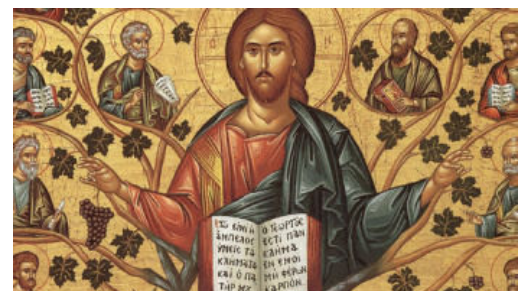
Trees are remarkable living things. I have learned that in my work with my bonsai trees. I see the growth and renewal in each season on a smaller scale. Trees recover from wounds in different ways—when cut back to the trunk, some will send up new shoots and will abandon the old trunk. Others will sprout new branches right where the cut was made. Some trees will heal over wounds while others will allow the area around the wound to die back.

The most ancient trees in the world are the bristlecone pines of the American west. Some are believed to be almost five thousand years old. These aren't large trees with lush, luxuriant growth, though. Most of an ancient bristlecone pine is dead wood that is so impregnated with resin it will never rot. The live part of such a tree can often be a thin section of live wood that runs up one side of the tree. Such a tree will experience growth but it will be on a very small level. The growth rings will be almost microscopic, and the foliage sparse.

I wonder what the first disciples of Jesus expected when the earliest church experienced growth. Did they think it would grow at a phenomenal rate, as it appears to have done, or did they think that the growth would be slow and steady? We don't know. What they knew was that growth would come. As a living thing the church will always grow. It may not be in the way we might expect, and the growth will happen in places we may not expect it, but growth will come. Let's keep our eyes open for the potential for growth!

In Christ,

Craig



Mission News

Mother Nature may be confused about whether its winter or spring but the Board of Missions is not. Our focus is on spring and spreading the joy of Christ hear, near and far.

HOLA Taco Luncheon Sunday, April 10th Second Hour Program

Hearts Over Latin America (HOLA) from the University of Connecticut and the Missions Board will be hosting a second hour luncheon to share their most recent service work experiences. Sarah Mosure and her fellow students from HOLA traveled to an indigenous Maya community in Guatemala this past January, where they held a children's medical campaign, explored the village's EcoTourism business, and hosted empowerment workshops for the women in the community. Going forward, HOLA seeks to maintain ties with the community by promoting their EcoTourism project, raising funds for a second trip next January, and reaching out to Guatemalan immigrants in the Willimantic community. Someone from the Board of Missions will be selling **'tickets'** in Chapin Hall after service. They are \$10 for adults, \$5 for kids 12 and under (5 yrs old and under are free). Please RSVP to Kari McCaw by Sunday April 3rd so we can plan for food. Hope to see you there! kariblaise@hotmail.com or 860-803-4852

Foodshare Walk Against Hunger Sunday, May 1st

Hunger is in our community and is a more serious problem than you may think: There are 137,480 food insecure people living in our area (food insecurity means not knowing where your next meal will come from). These people include senior citizens forced to choose between prescription drugs or groceries, families deciding to buy food or heat their homes and children so hungry that they cannot learn or grow properly. An estimated 42,850 of our hungry neighbors are children. This year nearly 300 local hunger-fighting programs - food pantries, community kitchens and shelters - will rely on Foodshare.

The Foodshare Walk Against Hunger is the largest anti-hunger event of its kind in the State. The Walk itself is less than 2 miles long, making it fun for people of all ages. It begins and ends with music, children's activities, popsicles, informational booths and so much more. Here are the details:

Date: Sunday, May 1, 2016

Time: 12:30 p.m. check-in / 2:00 p.m. Walk begins

Place: The Hartford's Liam E. McGee Memorial Park
140 Garden Street, Hartford

*free parking is available at 690 Asylum Ave

Thomas Kainamura is our team chair and we want this year to be the best ever. To register, go to www.FoodshareWalk.org and search for Thomas' name or Rocky Hill Congregational Church. We want to show the community that Rocky Hill Congregational, UCC is doing something about the hungry in our state and what better way than t-shirts. You will find a registration form in the Church Mouse if you want a t-shirt and I know you do because they are FREE. Yes, you read that right – FREE. We are so committed that we want you to spend your money supporting Foodshare, not buying t-shirts.



FAITH FORMATION @ RHCC

S.P.I.R.I.T. Church School News

If you see the following people, please tell them “Thank you.” These are the folks who have helped with church school these past six months. You may not always see them because they are in the classroom and not the sanctuary, but their work is making it possible for the children to grow and learn in faith, and is making it possible for RHCC to welcome new families. At best, a church might be the one place a young person can count on for a consistent, positive, and caring welcome. And church school teachers are often the smiling faces which convey that welcome. Thank you God, for: Jeannie Alessi, Victoria Bower, Denise Carberry, Anita Hawkins, Stephanie Heneghan, Deepa Joshi, Christine Kainamura, Kari Mccaw, Kathy Morgan, Julia O’Connor, Liz Pulling, Liz Reed-Swale, Nancy Rolfe, Sherry Silkowski, Candy Smith, Kristy Solie, Brian Speers, Sue Speers. My apologies if I have forgotten anyone! And thanks to Marge Murk and her team of Nursery volunteers (all of whose names I don’t know).

If you are able and willing to help teach, lead an activity, or be a second adult in a classroom, please sign up in Chapin Hall or contact Georgette Huie or Kathy Morgan.

Here is our upcoming schedule:

Topics for April 3 through April 24:

Pre-K to 1st grade: Doubting Thomas

Grades 2-5: Easter: People

The children will:

- learn the Easter story as it is found in John’s Gospel;
- identify ways that people changed because of the Resurrection;
- recognize that we can also experience change through God’s grace.

Grades 6-8: Overcoming Doubt, Encountering Jesus, Proclaiming, Waiting

Middle School Youth Group

From March 4-5, we had an overnight at the church! We stuffed Easter eggs in preparation for the Holy Saturday egg hunt, learned more about Heifer International and how farm animals are helping families in need around the world, played rounds and rounds of Sardines and Apples-to-Apples, and asked Georgette and Steph Heneghan any question that was on our minds. Most of the questions were about the current presidential candidates! We ended with breakfast together. On March 20, eight of us (6 youth and 2 adults) went bowling in Newington.

High School Youth Group

On February 28, we had a post-Chinese New Year celebration at a local Asian restaurant. It was good to be able to share a meal and conversation together. On March 13, we tackled the indoor ropes course at Soarin’ in Manchester. With grit and determination, all the youth and chaperone Bob Carberry (!) completed this challenging course. Photos included on next page ->

FAITH FORMATION @ RHCC



High School Youth: Sunday, April 10—5 to 7pm

Who Are These People?

We will take this time to get to know Pastor Craig, Steph Heneghan, and Georgette Huie a little better—and they will get to know you! Bring \$3 for dinner

Middle School Youth Heifer International Farm Trip, May 6-7

Save the date and your stomachs for the

Taco-in-a-Bag Fundraiser!

*to benefit the High School Youth Group trip to the
UCC National Youth Event in July*

Sunday, April 24 after worship





Christian Activities Council April Report

Adventure in the City: We are all excited about our hosting a Freedom School. This is a huge part of the Children Defense Fund. Freedom Schools, were started by civil rights activists and early childhood educator, Marian Wright Edelman. Our staff person, Stacey Lopez, is the Project Coordinator. She will mentor ten Student Leader Interns, who will go to Tennessee, for training. These interns are young adults with a least one year of college. Also, there will be three adult staff. This education program will help 100 students to stop summer learning loss.

Housing: 54-56 Deerfield Ave is under contract! We are also under contract for two vacant lots on Irving Street. We have given the Cabot Street lot to Knox Park, who has committed to keeping the lot as a community garden.

Faith Based Organizing: Cori Mackey, Executive Director, CAC, has been meeting with Clergy, to have a broad base of churches to represent many different diversities. It is the intention that the ministers will turn their congregations onto organizing to better their lives and the lives of their neighbors. On February 18, Pat, our consultant and Cori met with four denominational leaders to get the support of organizing within their denominations. These leaders included: UCC CT Conference Minister, The Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of CT, the Bishop of New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Executive Minister of the American Baptist Churches of CT.

Re-Organizing: The Christian Activities Council is in the process of changing our by-laws to accommodate a new structure of our organization. We will be changing the Board of Directors, our Mission Statement, terms of office holders, and other important aspects to bring the Christian Activities Council well into the future, to better the lives of the residents of Hartford and outlying towns and cities.

Capital Improvements: My friend Rich Cooke and I met with Cori to analyze improvements to our office. Such as roof and handicap ramp replacements. I want to thank Cori for looking into these capital improvements, so we can plan ahead instead of reacting to a sudden need. Also thanks to Rich Cooke for his time and expertise.

Finally, Pastor Craig and I met with Cori so Craig will have a better understanding of the Christian Activities Council. I also led Pastor Craig on a small version of our *Immersion Program* of Hartford. Thank you, Pastor Craig for taking the time out of your busy schedule.

Peace,

Rich Palicki
Delegate

Rocky Hill High School Theatre presents Disney's

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

on April 1st and 2nd at 7:30pm and April 3rd at 2pm

Adults \$10 Students/Seniors \$5.

Rocky Hill High 50 Chapin Ave.

HOLA Taco Luncheon April 10th

On April 10th, Hearts Over Latin America (HOLA) from UCONN and the Missions Board will host a 2nd hour luncheon to share their recent service work experiences.



Tickets are available in Chapin Hall Sundays after worship. They are \$10 for adults, \$5 for kids 12 and under (5 yrs old and under are free). Please RSVP to Kari McCaw by April 3rd so we can plan for food. Hope to see you there! kariblaise@hotmail.com or 860-803-4852

Foodshare Walk Against Hunger, Sunday May 1st at 2:00 p.m.

Time: 12:30 p.m. check-in / 2:00 p.m. Walk begins

Place: The Hartford's Liam E. McGee Memorial Park, 140 Garden Street, Hartford
*free parking is available at 690 Asylum Ave.



Thomas Kainamura is our team chair. To register, go to www.FoodshareWalk.org and search for Thomas' name or Rocky Hill Congregational Church.



Ruby Bennett Turns 100!

On April 16th Ruby Bennett celebrates her 100th birthday. Most of her family is visiting for the event and have planned a small luncheon at a restaurant in town. We will have a card in Chapin Hall for everyone to sign, so we can all wish her many more healthy, happy years and

Church Garden Ministry

First Meeting: Sunday, April 17th after Worship

Please join us for a short meeting to discuss ideas for improving the church grounds through a new gardening ministry. We'll also discuss "permaculture gardening," a way of designing a garden the way nature does, and using low maintenance, self-fertilizing, self-watering plantings. For more information, visit West Parish Church UCC, www.permaculturewestparish.org. Our time together will even include a walk around the church grounds to get ideas. --Michael Bower & Bob Inderbitzen



New Sanctuary Carpet

The Trustees are developing bids to replace the Sanctuary Carpet this summer. We would like help in selecting the pattern and color. Anyone interested in helping should contact Jim Stevens or Dave Sageman.

Nominating News

At the church meeting on March 13th, Linda Tokarski offered to serve as the Clerk, and Marsha Hoffman will now serve as Moderator, which is such great news.

The outstanding positions still needed include:

- ✚ One auditor – there are no meetings associated with this position, in fact, it can be done remotely by reconciliation of a file that is emailed monthly.
- ✚ Another deacon.
- ✚ Someone for a two-month rotation on the flower committee.
- ✚ One more member to serve with stewardship; members do not call to make calls asking for money.

If you would like to serve, please speak with any nominating member or contact Steph Heneghan at 860-529-4672 or stephanie_heneghan@yahoo.com

One Great Hour of Sharing as part of Our Churches Wider Mission, is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response. The offering will be collected on **Sunday, April 17th.**



HISTORIAN NOTES – APRIL 2016



Did you know? I am sure most of us know that the Rocky Hill Congregational Church, UCC is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. But did you know that you can go to focus.nps.gov, type in Rocky Hill Congregational Church in the search engine and read the full 13 page National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form? For those of you who know what Palladian windows, brownstone ashlar and fluted corner boards are - you will be fascinated. For the rest of you, take a look - there may be a quiz and a PRIZE later this year.

Kari McCaw - historian

Rocky Hill Congregational Church Scholarship Information for the 2016-2017 Academic Year



Graduating high school seniors and returning college undergraduates who are seeking a church scholarship for the 2016-17 academic year are invited to complete and return an application prior to **April 15, 2016**. Scholarship awards will be announced in June. Application forms are available in the office, or send an email to: scholarships@rhccucc.org for the link to the pdf. or refer to members of the Scholarship Committee: Hilaire Leavitt or Randy Pulling.

Frank Roswell Fuller Scholarship

This scholarship requires that you be a member of the UCC/Congregational Church. Applications are available in the church office. Frank Roswell Fuller was born in Hartford in 1873 and attended local public schools. He later formed his own company at 40 Wall Street known as Fuller & Company, which operated from 1904 to 1920. When he retired he came to live in West Hartford. He died in 1957. His will established a substantial scholarship fund. Mr. Fuller was always interested in helping “needy, deserving” students obtain the education that he had not been able to enjoy himself. The deadline for submitting your application and other documents is **May 15th**.

Music Program Steps Outside

Our music program at RHCC has always been committed to providing a diverse selection of music to enhance and enrich our worship experience. We have a wealth of talent and commitment within our church family adding to our worship in many ways--adult choir, bell choir, children's choir, drum circle, Open Road, church orchestra, many individual and group instrumentalists, and, yes, dancers too!

In addition to continuing to improve and expand our music programs within our church family, we are now also expanding our mission to take our music "on the road" to the wider community in a several ways. 1) First, we are hoping to expand our ministry of music to bring enjoyment and comfort to others. For example, on Saturday, March 26, our Dixieland combo will be playing at 60 West Nursing and Rehab Center in Rocky Hill. We also hope to play at the Veterans Home in the near future. In the past we have done this on occasion, but now we are hoping to make these events a more regular occurrence. 2) Also, we are hoping to reach out with wider publicity to attract more people from outside our church family to attend our musical events and special worship services, such as the upcoming Bobby Jo Valentine concert in June and our annual Festival of Lessons and Carols. With your help, we were very successful doing this in December, filling the sanctuary for Lessons and Carols. 3) Finally, we hope to use our music programs to help others through donation of our free will offerings to selected charities and mission projects. For example, in December, we were thrilled to provide \$750 to the Rocky Hill Food Pantry, and just recently, with input from our Board for Missions, we selected the CREC Musical Instrument Fund to receive the free will gifts from this year's Talent Show and Chili Supper—over \$350!! Thank you to everyone for your attendance, generosity and support as we continue to "step out" into the community.

Your Music Committee

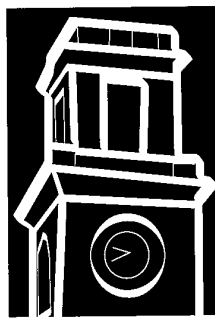
The Rocky Hill Food Pantry was delighted to receive \$750 in grocery gift cards (scrip) as a result of YOUR generosity at Lessons and Carols. Thank you!!!



Bobby Jo Valentine is coming back to RHCC-UCC!!

Yes! He's coming back this summer! Mark your calendars!! Last June, Bobby delighted a packed Chapin Hall coffeehouse with his special talent for songs from the heart. Talented, engaging and authentic, Bobby's gentle and humorous style will touch your heart. He now has a new album out, so he has even more to share. Please mark your calendars for **Friday, July 22,nd** and join us for a great evening of food (of course!), sharing, humor and deep connection. Details to follow in next month's Churchmouse and on the church website.





SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
3 Communion Sunday 10:00am Worship 4:00pm Siragu Tamil	4 7:00pm LSPreschool 7:00pm Women's AA 7:30pm Bell Choir	5 7:00pm Board and Committee Mtgs 7:00pm Hearing Voices	6 6:00pm Pilates w/Caroline 7:30pm Adult Choir
10 10:00am Worship 1100am 2nd Hour HOLA 4:00pm Siragu Tamil 5:00pm Youth Group	11 Rocky Hill Schools Vacation→ Little Scholars Vacation 7:00pm Women's AA 7:30pm Bell Choir	12 Craig, Georgette Vacation-> 7:00pm Council Mtg 7:00 pm Hearing Voices	13 9:00am Breakfast Club at Bob's Café 6:00pm Pilates w/Caroline 7:30pm Adult Choir
17 10:00am Worship 11:00am Permaculture Meeting 4:00pm Siragu Tamil	18 OFFICE CLOSED Theresa Vacation -> 7:00pm Women's AA 7:30pm Bell Choir	19 11:00am Retired Clergy 6:00pm Cedar Hollow 7:00pm Hearing Voices	20 6:00pm Pilates w/Caroline 6:30pm Governance Mtg 7:30pm Adult Choir
24 10:00am Worship 11:00am Youth Group <i>Taco in a Bag fundraiser</i> 4:00pm Siragu Tamil	25 9:30AM Newsletter Mailing 7:00pm Women's AA 7:30pm Bell Choir	26 6:00pm Cedar Hollow 7:00pm Hearing Voices	27 6:00pm Pilates w/Caroline 7:30pm Adult Choir

STAFF VACATIONS: The church office will be closed on Friday, April 15 and Monday April 18. Rev. Craig as well as Georgette will be on vacation from Tuesday, April 11 to Monday, April 18. There will be a covering priest to be announced. Theresa will be on vacation from April 18-22

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday Morning Worship

Communion 1st Sunday

10:00 a.m. with childcare



**CHILD
care**
Provided

2016

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 8:30am Men's Christian Fellowship Noon private party Chapin
7 9:30am Little Hands in Harmony 7:30pm Men's AA	8	9 Noon private party Chapin
14 9:30am Little Hands in Harmony 7:30pm Men's AA	15 OFFICE CLOSED NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	10 8:30am Men's Christian Fellowship
21 9:30am Little Hands in Harmony 7:30pm Men's AA	22 Earth Day 7:00pm Harmonic Healing	23
28 9:30am Little Hands in Harmony 7:30pm Men's AA	29	30 April Breakfast 8:30-11am Re-Maker's Fair 11am-3pm



Church Mouse

Submission deadline for the May issue of The Church Mouse will be Friday, April 15 and the mailing date will be Monday, April 25.

We want to hear from you! Send your articles and photos to:

office@rhccucc.org. Thanks.



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

1	Dick Webster	17	Jake D'Addario
	Donna Gagnon	18	Sarah DeGiovanni
	Lynn Macri		Dawn McLean
2	Gregson Curtin		Victoria Bower
4	Bobbie Hawkins		Grace Triplets
	Marsha Hoffman	19	Lois Griswold
	Sherry Silkowski		Sue Monaghan
7	Judy Frascarelli		Wendy Ware
	Grace Hoffman		Mya Corvo
8	Meghan Montana	20	John Goff IV
	Isabel Donahue	21	Sue Starr
9	Sam DeGiovanni		Linda Gilbert
11	Brian Donahue		Elaine Malespini
	Kaedryn Pulling		Jason McGowan
12	Steve Ware	23	Jean Sudell
	Skyler Dean-Lee		John McNeil Jr.
13	Alan Wind	24	Jocelyn Fritzer
	David Hawkins	25	Jane Yorgensen
	Ruth Fitzgerald	26	Linda Rupaka
	Sara Lataille	27	Julie Dostie
	Maya Donahue	28	Nadine Bell
14	Carolyn Furman	29	Liz Reed-Swale
	Nicholas Benson	30	Polly Pagnucco
16	Ruby Bennett		
	Joan Diaz		



Dale and Donna Rowland
were married on
April 29, 1972



Walk Against Hunger: Sunday May 1, 2016 Team: Rocky Hill Congregational Church

Our Board for Missions invites you to **Join our team!** Battling hunger in any community requires a team effort. Here in Greater Hartford more than 137,000 people struggle with food insecurity.

Sunday, May 1, 2016: Foodshare Walk Against Hunger

11:30 AM - FREE Lunch at the church (after worship)

12:15 PM - Carpool to WALK, Liam E. McGee Memorial Park (formerly Hartbeat Park)
140 Garden Street, Hartford; FREE Parking at 690 Asylum Avenue

12:30 PM - Check-in at WALK

2:00 PM - WALK steps off; a gentle 2-mile route takes walkers through Bushnell Park and Hartford's West End. This event is family-friendly and tons of fun!

BONUS: Register and get a **FREE** Rocky Hill Congregational Church T-Shirt

REGISTER BY SUNDAY, APRIL 10 (T-shirt ordering deadline)

Shirt sizes: Youth S, Youth M, Youth L, Adult: S, M, L, XL, 2XL, etc.

WALKER: _____ Age:(if under 18) _____ SHIRT SIZE: _____

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WALKER: _____ Age:(if under 18) _____ SHIRT SIZE: _____

WALKER: _____ Age:(if under 18) _____ SHIRT SIZE: _____

WALKER: _____ Age:(if under 18) _____ SHIRT SIZE: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email address: _____

Number of Walkers _____ x Foodshare Donation \$ _____ = **TOTAL ENCLOSED \$** _____
or donate by searching for team "Rocky Hill Congregational Church" at **www.FoodshareWalk.org**

Make checks payable to RHCC, and give completed forms and payments

to Bob Inderbitzen or the Church Office, or mail to:

Rocky Hill Congregational Church UCC, 805 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill CT 06067

You may call Bob Inderbitzen with questions at 860-418-9171.

ROCKY HILL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
805 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill CT 06067
Telephone # 860 529-4167

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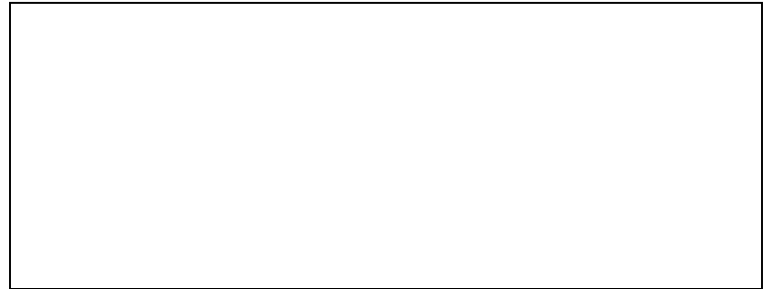
Permit #7

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
TIME VALUE MAIL

Mailed March 29, 2016



Jesus didn't turn people away. Neither do we.
The United Church of Christ:
No matter who you are,
Or where you are on life's journey...
You're welcome here.



SAVE THE DATES

April 10 – Second Hour Hearts Over Latin America (HOLA)

April 10 – Youth Group “Who Are These People”

April 17 – One Great Hour Offering

April 17 – Permaculture Garden Meeting

April 24 – Youth Group Fundraiser Taco in a Bag!

April 30 – April Breakfast and Re-Maker's Fair

May 1 – Walk Against Hunger

May 6-7– Youth Group trip to Heifer International Farm