



The Steeple

First Congregational Church, New Milford, CT 06776

Senior Pastor

Perhaps no part of the Bible is more emotionally comprehensive than the Psalms. They remind us that our heritage of faith was formed by the experiences of people in all sorts of circumstances who engaged in a personal and national conversation with the Almighty and Eternal God. This conversation is sometimes a bit shocking for its directness and assumption of familiarity.

Psalm 124

If it had not been God who was on our side
— let Israel now say —
if it had not been God who was on our side,
when our enemies attacked us,
then they would have swallowed us up alive,
when their anger was kindled against us;
then the flood would have swept us away,
the torrent would have gone over us;
then over us would have gone
the raging waters.

Blessed be the Sovereign, our God
who has not given us
as prey to their teeth.

We have escaped like a bird
from the snare of the fowlers;
the snare is broken,
and we have escaped.

Our help is in the name of God,
who made heaven and earth.

The upcoming tenth anniversary of the attacks and the aftermath of 2001 will be a time of national recollection. For us that Sunday is also the beginning of church school, and we will be blessed with the exuberant presence of many young children born after 2001 who look to a future filled with hope and promise. We have promised them to work together to be a community that supports and nurtures them in God's love.

I would invite members of the congregation to share their remembrances and recollections of 9/11 and the recovery that followed. If you would please email your thoughts to me at revmoran@nmchurch.org, I will use some in our September 11th service and collect all of them into a booklet to become part of our church history. We remember the past, and we face the future with hope and faith.

Our help is in the name of God,
who made heaven and earth.

Michael J. Moran

Deacon's Bench

From my window on Whittlesey Avenue, I hear the bells ring, calling, speaking; come to church, come to church, one and all! Whether the gong of St. John's or the music of our very own bells and chimes,, no one can miss their call. Since ancient times, church bells ring to summon all to worship and prayer.

This summer I spent some time with family on a small lake in New Hampshire. No clocks, no cell phones, no television, no computers, no schedules and no bells. We woke each morning to the birds singing and at night could hear the coyotes calling. It was a time to relax and enjoy each other's company; to reconnect. How many among us take time to call a neighbor, visit an elderly acquaintance, cook a meal for a new mother, send a note of condolence, or just spend time with friends and family? Today, technology keeps us connected, but are we missing valuable face-to-face interactions?

" ... that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know **what is the hope of His calling**, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints..." Ephesians 1:17-18

Sunday, **September 18**, will be **Called to Care** Sunday. What exactly is this **Called to Care** thing?

Called to Care is our way of extending Christ's helping hand within our own congregation. We recognize that we are a large church with over 600 members. We know that we come to the church family with diverse needs and talents. **Called to Care** is a program devised to match those two elements that we might, first of all, meet the needs of our own congregation, thereby equipping ourselves to go into the world as disciples of Jesus Christ.

This ministry is organized to help others in our congregation through Parish Friends, Parish Drivers, Meal Chain, Prayer Chain, Prayer Shawl Ministry, and Condolence Reception. Join the Deacons on September 18 for a special coffee hour as we ask the congregation to support **Called to Care**. We will answer questions and find out what talents you have to grow our program.

As the lazy days of summer come to an end and autumn is upon us, good things are happening here at the First Congregational Church of New Milford. Soon students will be back in Church School, SYF pumpkins will be for sale, the Local Foods Festival will be happening, ARA scholarship will hold a clothing drive, and committees will be meeting and planning.

All of us can hear the ringing of the bells and find our calling in the many happenings here at the church.

*Many Blessings,
Leslie Schlemmer
For the Board of Deacons*

Prayer Shawls

The Chapel Stitches Prayer Shawl Ministry is now in our second full year. Many colors and styles of shawls have been created by our group to be given away. Inspiring healing and caring in over 200 shawl recipients thus far.

***Shawls ... made for centuries universal and embracing,
symbolic of an inclusive, unconditionally loving God.***

***They wrap, enfold, comfort, cover, give solace,
mother, hug, shelter and beautify.***

***Those who have received these shawls have been
uplifted and affirmed, as if given wings to
fly above their troubles..."***

Written in 1998 by: Janet Bristow Copyright ©2011

Anyone interested in joining are welcome, beginners and advanced knitters and crocheters. We will meet again on **September 11** following coffee hour in the Chapel.

Know someone in need of a shawl? Please call the church office or see Leslie Schlemmer. Donations are gratefully accepted.

MISSION: 1

Conjure an image of overflowing baskets of peanut butter, cereal, tuna and beans waiting for delivery to shelters and pantries. Envision hundreds of UCC members purchasing pounds of food online for the most vulnerable across our nation and world. This is MISSION: 1.

November 1 – 11, 2011, the United Church of Christ will become ONE UNITED CHURCH on a shared mission for 11 powerful days to feed the hungry and confront food-related injustice. This will be done through donated items, donated money and letters written to Congress. This is MISSION: 1.

Look for more information in the coming weeks on how the First Congregational Church will participate. If you have any ideas or want more information, please speak with Reverend Moran (revmoran@prodigy.net), Becky Passero (cedirector@nmchurch.org) or visit www.ucc.org/mission1.

In Memoriam

Lavonne Crawford

July 13, 2011

Emily Wheeler Ayre, daughter of Jon and Nancy

Ayre and granddaughter of Rev. A. Russell
and Helen Ayre

August 11, 2011

Baptisms

Tenley Parson Simmons Pavlofsky, daughter of Elisabeth (Parson) and Andrew Pavlofsky and granddaughter of Lydia and Ken Parson

SYA

Attention: High School Members. Are you ready for another year? We are. See pictures, a September calendar, and more information on Facebook Senior Youth Fellowship New Milford. Come to the next meeting/event and find out what SYF will be doing this year. SYF will meet on Sunday, **September 11**, to plan how we can be part of the Local Food Festival. Meet in the Youth Room from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The Festival is on Saturday, **September 24**. For more information, please contact Pete.

Parents of High School Students: If your high school age student does not get a post card or email from SYF (about the same time *The Steeple* gets to you), please contact Pete Traynor at 350-8573 or jya_syf_fccnm@hotmail.com, or visit the SYF Facebook page ... Senior Youth Fellowship New Milford. Save a tree.

Yes, it's time to think SNOW. The annual SYF Ski Trip to Killington, Vermont, will be **February 16 - 20**. If you wish to go, contact Pete as soon as possible. We are also currently seeking chaperones (whether you ski or not.) Deposits of \$100 will be due Sunday, **October 2**. (Balances will be due Sunday, **December 4**.) Space is limited, so sign up soon. Pete has all of the details and estimated costs. See Facebook (Senior Youth Fellowship New Milford) or Pete. Confidential scholarships are available upon request.

Worship by Design. A worship series with high school students in mind will resume again on Sunday, **September 18**, at 10 a.m. in the Chapel. All are welcome to explore new and different ways to keep the faith. If you have any questions about Worship by Design, please contact Pete Traynor, or visit the SYF Facebook page, Senior Youth Fellowship New Milford.

Attention Confirmation Sponsors and Students: Want to explore another form of worship? Stop by and see what Worship By Design is all about.

JYA

Junior Youth Action is going to be starting things off this year when the Church holds its annual Local Food Festival. Contact Pete Traynor to find out how you can be part of the action. Thanks to those who volunteered a few summer hours to recycle bottles and cans. Money raised goes straight to Santa Fund gifting. Next time we take a run to fill the machines, be sure to be there. Pete's information... 860-350-8573 or jya_syf_fccnm@hotmail.com, or Facebook Junior Youth Action. The Local Food Festival is on Saturday, **September 24**. We had a great time last year. Contact Pete to sign up for the fun.

Parents: If your middle school age student does not get a JYA post card or an email (about the same time *The Steeple* gets to you), please contact Pete Traynor at 350-8573 or jya_syf_fccnm@hotmail.com. Save a tree. If you prefer to receive information regarding JYA on line, instead of in the mail, e-mail Pete.

Attention One And All: JYA (our 5-8th graders) is always in need of caring adults to help plan and support our program. If you would like to know more about what JYA needs, please contact Pete Traynor.

Mission Trip

2011 High School Mission Trip member: Remember Boston ... not so long ago, right? Now it is time to get ready for the last portion of the Mission Trip experience. We need to plan for this year's Stock Lunch. We will meet on Sunday, **September 18**, at 11:30 in the Youth Room. We will plan the meal and the 'show and tell' portion of the luncheon.

Mission Trip – Time to Celebrate. Attention Stock Owners and 9th Graders: Please come to our Stock Lunch on Sunday, **October 2**, at 12 noon in Fellowship Hall. The Mission Trip members will make lunch, serve lunch, and show and tell what we did this year in Boston. We all experienced urban life and how giving and caring can make a huge impact on the lives of inner-city faithful. Come and join in on the celebration of our youth, this church, and God's world ... made a bit better thanks to you and our hard-working team. RSVP to Pete Traynor 350-8573 or jya_syf_fccnm@hotmail.com.

Help wanted for the 2012 High School Age Mission Trip. Next year's trip will be a program right here in our own back yards. The 'trip' takes place in July 2012. If you wish to be part of a select group of young people and chaperones who will have their eyes opened to the world around us in a locally unique and spiritual way, let Pete know. More details will be revealed at our Stock Lunch on Sunday, **October 2**. Please contact Pete Traynor, 350-8573, jya_syf_fccnm@hotmail.com, or Facebook Senior Youth Fellowship New Milford.

Audio Visual

The Audio Visual Team has been busy learning their new skill over the summer months. Now we are ready to proudly continue this service to the church. If you need a videotape of the service, please contact Pete Traynor or Rev. Moran. Thank you – and be sure to thank an A/V person the next time you see one.

Acolytes

All third through seventh graders are eligible to be Acolytes for the Sunday worship service. Each Sunday the Acolytes come forward bearing the light, which symbolizes the light of Christ. Being an acolyte is an honor and a responsibility that we hope all our young people will take part in. Please plan to attend an Acolyte training session on **September 25**. Acolytes will be dedicated during the worship service on **October 2**. If you have questions, please call Becky Passero at the office 354-8232.

Last June sixteen Acolytes were honored during a worship service: Jack Abbott, Lindsey Adamou, Ty Bowers, Jack Brazer, Bettina Harcken, Elena Harcken, Sergey Holcomb, Dan Krauss, Kalee Oelgoetz, Ashley Rosenbergen, Steven Santos, Sydney Santos, Max Sarich, Kim Sandberg and Ben Toussaint. We thank them for their diligent service throughout the church year.

Deadlines

Articles and calendar items for the October issue of *The Steeple* are due in the church office by Friday, **September 16**.

9/11 Anniversary

I would like to invite members of our congregation to write down any recollections of 9/11 and the immediate aftermath, as well as any reflections on those events now that ten years have passed. My hope is to use some of this in our church service on September 11, 2011, and also to put together a booklet that would be a valuable document of our church history. Please email me at revmoran@nmchurch.org.

*Thanks,
Mike Moran*

Call to October Meeting

The October Meeting of the congregation will be held following worship on Sunday, **October 23**. Agenda items will include, but are not limited to, the 2012 church budget and a report from the Trustees.

Music

Do you like to sing? Senior Choir rehearsals will resume on Wednesday, **September 7**, at 7:30. We have fun and would love to have you join us. Please call Linda Risberg at 860-354-3888 or the church office. If you can't make the Senior Choir commitment, please consider singing in the Christmas Concert. Call Linda if you are interested.

Men's Breakfast

If you would like to know more about Men's Breakfast, usually the third Saturday of each month, but are not on the contact list, please email revmoran@nmchurch.org or call him at 354-8232; we'll make sure you are in the loop. The next meeting will be on Saturday, **September 17**. If you like to cook, come at 7:30; breakfast is served at 8:30.

Confirmation

All incoming 8th grade students and their parents are invited to meet with Rev. Moran during the Welcome Back Luncheon after church on **September 11** to learn about the confirmation class this year. If you were registered in church school last year, you should have received a letter about this, but if you did not receive the letter you're still welcome to join the class as long as you're starting 8th grade or higher this school year. If you have any questions, please call 860-354-8232 or email Rev. Moran at revmoran@nmchurch.org.

Literacy Volunteers

Literacy Volunteers on the Green will offer a Tutor Training Program to prepare you to work effectively with our students. Sessions will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. on **September 19, 20 and 26** at St. John's Episcopal Church Parish Hall, Whittlesey Avenue, New Milford.

No prior teaching experience or knowledge of a foreign language is required – just a desire to help others improve their literacy skills. Call (860) 355-0830 for further information. Registration deadline is **September 12**.

Donate Life Connecticut!

On February 2, 2002, I received a life-saving liver transplant. On **October 15**, I will be participating in the ING Hartford 5K. I am walking/jogging to honor my amazing donor and donor family for my gift of life! I have a passion for raising awareness about organ and tissue donation. I will be raising money for my chosen charity - and official charity of the Hartford ING Marathon/1/2 Marathon/5K - **Donate Life Connecticut!**

Please consider sponsoring me in my quest to continue donation education by raising money through this race. I know these are tough economic times - and I appreciate anything you may be able to give. Please go online to <http://www.active.com/donate/DonateLifeCT/Leslie2202>

In Faith,
Leslie Schlemmer
www.DonateLifeNewEngland.org

Scholarship

Thanks to all who made the ARA Scholarship Tag Sale such a success.

As always, donations of any size may be sent to the committee. We are associated with the United Way, and donors can designate it as a direct recipient by using ID No. 62985 when signing up with United Way.

Our newest idea: We are collecting used but wearable clothing, shoes, belts and handbags as well as home linens. These items will be bundled up and sent to those in need throughout the country. The distributors will pay the Scholarship Fund by the pound for what is collected. Clothing, etc., may be brought to Fellowship Hall before or after church on Sunday, **September 18**, or from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, **September 24**.

The committee's next meeting is **October 9** at 9:15 in Fellowship Hall. We hope to see you there.

Tamilee55@gmail.com

350-2504

Paulette@Newmilfordsportsclub.com

350-4851