



# SPIRIT SONG

*From the Pastor's Desk—May 26, 2009*

## Living a 'Yes We Can Faith' in a 'No We Can't World'

We had our *Bishop's Day on the District* last Tuesday, as we usually do once a year. Our bishop, Peter Weaver, likes to visit each district once a year to stay in touch with the pastors and the churches that are assigned to him. Other bishops have done the same thing. They have even visited each church in the district, usually when they first are assigned a new conference. And bishops are available to come and pay a special visit to each local church. Bishop Weaver came to help us celebrate our dedication service when we first moved into our new building five years ago. It hardly seems possible!

This year, Bishop Weaver had some practical matters on his mind. He told the clergy that every year costs to have full time ministers go up. Health insurance goes up, as do pensions, and other insurances. It seems to be getting harder and harder to support a full time pastor. Of the 528 churches in our conference, 256 are full time. Of these only 57 are meeting the bench mark of 120 in worship and having a budget of \$150,000 with all bills paid including full mission shares. There are another 200 churches that are on the brink of going part time. These churches still have full time pastors and struggle to pay mission shares. We fall into this category.

For us and others who are in this situation, the bishop addressed the crux of his presentation. He quoted from Allen Hirsh's Book, *The Forgotten Ways* that from the years 1800 to 1850, 32% of Americans were Methodist. Then he challenged us to try to reclaim the ways that were used to grow the church in those years. He even suggested the ABC's of a "Yes we Can Faith" in a "No We Can't World" which he took from Hirsh's book. He did take into account that we should take seriously what our people are experiencing due to the recession and be prepared to help them if at all possible.

The "A" of a "Yes We Can Faith" is the Anchor. The anchor stands for hope. One of our hymns suggests "My anchor hold within the veil." We as the church should be attached to the anchor of Christ. It will hold us fast in the midst of raging seas, figuratively and literally. Some of the ways he suggested that we do this is through small groups and prayer in groups. He told us about a church in Maine that was literally turned around by the commitment of the congregation coming together to pray for the church. They came together and prayed at 6:00 a.m. and usually a half an hour before worship services.

The "B" of the "Yes we Can Faith" is Being in Basics. The bishop suggested that there is a hunger for spirituality among people. They may just not be looking to have that need filled in the church. So the church should focus on discipleship and discover what it means to follow Jesus.

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We should all be working on our discipleship, and the bishop said point blank that we cannot work on our discipleship if we have worship and church school at the same time. We don't, and that should be noted. Finally, the bishop suggested that being in basics should challenge us to go out into the world and be in mission. We should get out of our comfort zone and learn the language of the world and help transform the world.

The "C" of the "Yes We Can Faith" is Creative Community. As clergy and laity we should be in partnership with each other and work together to make a difference in the world. Then the bishop quoted the mission statement of the Annual Conference which is Transformed by the Holy Spirit, we will become united in trust as we boldly proclaim Christ to the world.

There is quite a lot of food for thought here. Perhaps we can work on some of these issues in light of our work with Natural Church Development which we are working on and will be putting forth a plan once the minimum and the maximum factors are made known this coming Sunday.

God bless you and enable you to live your "Yes You Can Faith" in a "No You Can't World."  
Sincerely In Christ,

The Rev. Dr. Paul (Pastor) E. Samuelson

### *From the Co Lay Leader*

Pastor Paul, John Hunt and me felt refreshed and blessed after attending the Central Mass District Day with Bishop Peter Weaver, on Tuesday May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

Bishop Weaver started by holding a copy of Time Magazine. The cover showed a frayed rope with a hand clutching the bottom, holding on for dear life. The article we were told talked about the things making people afraid today. I had to think how lucky we are to have faith in God in such times.

He talked about the ABC's of being a Christian. A = Anchor B= beam on the Basics, and C = Creative Community. The anchor is a symbol of hope. So let us in these uncertain times anchor ourselves in God. Go back to the back to the basics of prayer, of trusting God to know what is best for each and every one of us, of having faith in the face of adversity and of being grateful that we have God's Grace and the gift of Jesus, His son. As for creative community, I give thanks every day for my church family, for a church filled with wonderful caring people. Some churches are part time. Some are struggling to stay full time. We are holding on and looking to grow. Remember to believe! Yes we can, With God all things are truly possible.

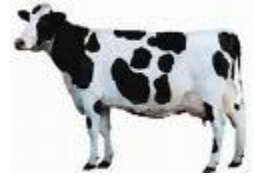
God bless and keep you.

*Jeanne G Kosakowski*

## Mission News for June

This certainly has been a busy spring for all the missionary work our great church has been supporting.

- Heifer Project has reached an outstanding goal of buying a heifer to send to a needy family. Thank you, youth and children for your chores to earn cash for this great project!
- CROP Walk raised more money to feed the hungry with our church having the most walkers (and fun) on a cool rainy day the end of March. Next year the Ecumenical Fellowship is considering May 2, 2010 and trying to reroute the walk through the Westville Dam area. We will keep you posted.



- The New Horizons Methodist School in Paraguay is seeking our prayers on behalf of the students they are educating. Look on the table in the Narthex for brochures about how you can help raise this nation from poverty.

- The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade Sunday School Class Nets for the Nothing But Nets malaria Nations strongly supports. This simple net done health care costs in this impoverished website for more information



has purchased at least 15 mosquito campaign which the UMC, United saves lives and is helping to drive continent. See the [nothingbutnets.net](http://nothingbutnets.net)

- CCUMC will be the hosting church June 3-7 at Grace House. In these very hard times your help truly makes a difference for families that are really struggling. Thank you.



- July 7<sup>th</sup> 1-6 pm CCUMC will be hosting the American Red Cross Blood Drive at the Charlton Library. This time we are not asking you for any money. We only want your time and YOUR BLOOD! Vicki Foskett is looking for folks to help sign people in, give donors refreshments and of course blood donors. July and August are the most critical months as donors are vacationing and the need for blood increases. So remember we are not- looking for even a penny we want your time-1 hour and your blood!

Outreach /Mission is looking into getting some nice golf/polo shirts with CCUMC initials and the logo flame and cross on the front. Of course this will not be free but we will look to clothe as many folks as we can so when we are serving at suppers, yard sales, ice cream tents etc. our church family will be recognizable. More information will soon be available.

### *Update from the new SIHN Director, Laura Kaplan*

New postings and updates on policies and procedures and pictures of the family members are now available in the volunteer room. We will now have a better idea of which parents are responsible for which children! Also pictures of staff are also posted. New volunteer trainings will be scheduled and information about trainings is also available in the volunteer room. Our next scheduled week to provide coverage is from Wednesday 6/3 through Sunday 6/7. Please see Vicki Foskett or Lori Pickering if you would like to volunteer for any of the available time slots.

Thanks for your continued support of this mission, so far this year we have supported 6 families from our very own communities at Grace House!

## *From the Worship Committee*

### **The Summer Worship Schedule**

June 7th 8:00am and 10:30 service

June 14th one service at 10:30am

June 21st one service at 9:00am in the sanctuary

June 28th one service at 9:00am in the sanctuary

July 5th through and including September 6th one service at 9:00am in the Evelyn Hunt Memorial Chapel, weather permitting.

There will be a Outside Worship Sign Up Sheet in the narthex to set up the chapel for Sunday morning worship. If no one signs up to help each week, the service will be held inside.



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Jeanne Kosakowski did such an awesome job last year on our summer "**Penny Challenge**", we've asked her to do it again. So men, women, youth and Sunday school start saving those pennies for the Charlton City United Methodist Church Challenge Contest.

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The Worship Committee has received a new projector which will be mounted on the ceiling for our Sunday morning power point presentations by Kris Gerrard. We will also obtain a Christian Copyright License which will enable us to copy words to songs and use them for worship purposes as part of our multimedia program.

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Thank you to everyone for your input on the Sunday Morning Worship Survey Sheets regarding possible changes to our time of worship. These will be reviewed and any changes will be announced during our summer schedule.

## *Flag Day*

**June 14th** is Flag Day. There is a box in the entrance to the Narthex for used or tattered flags. They will be disposed of in a ceremony by the American Legion. Please bring in your old American flags by June 14th.





## UMW News

The month of June is *always* one of my favorites as the weather is usually delightful, the first crops are coming in and UMW serves their famous **Strawberry Festival Supper! Don't miss out on this delectable meal of** lean and tender ham, our coveted potato salad, other fixin's and of course the belle of the ball — our strawberry shortcake!

Mark your calendar for **June 20th — 5pm** and make your reservations now. Tickets sell fast. Ladies, see Martha Blodgett and Sandy Dam to offer a helping hand.

In **July, UMW** plans to have their popular **mother /daughter banquet**. Keep your ear to the ground for more specifics. Hint; save your pretty and funky tin containers and be thinking creatively what you can hide inside!

## UNITED METHODIST MEN

The Men's Fellowship held their last supper of the spring on Saturday, May 16th. It wasn't as well attended as some in the past, but we did okay financially, especially since we were able to sell nearly twenty dinners on Sunday. Thanks to all who have supported us in this endeavor, especially those who stepped to the plate when we were short handed, and to the youth, Aleda Dam, Katrina Ellis, Jennifer Hickey, the Gerrard family and any one else I may have neglected to mention.

We will all miss our member and friend Don "Hutch" Hutchinson. We will be looking for ways to honor him through our own group and through the Church as a whole.

Also, we are awaiting the evergreen tree to plant in memory of Ralph Reinhold.

There is no meeting scheduled for June, but we are working to arrange an all Church get-together in July to take in a Tornadoes baseball game.

As usual, one of our main goals is to help send some of our youth to a summer church camp. Anyone interested should speak to Karenlee Hickey, Sandy Dam, Sharon Hall or me.

God Bless,

John Hunt, President UMM



## *SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS*

It has been an exciting year.

- The kids donated 25 pounds of candy to the Friendly house in Worcester for their after school program
- made shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child
- performed a Christmas play
- made over \$100.00 selling pretzels to kick off the Heifer project, which we/they raised over \$500.00 for a heifer (first time ever) and
- are now getting ready for a final play on June 14<sup>th</sup> for Children's Sunday.

We will be performing our play Donkey Tales on June 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:30. We will meet at 8:30 that morning so that we may rehearse and give out the perfect attendance pins. If anyone could provide a snack for the kids that morning please see me. I hope all of you will be there as we learn how important a donkey was in bible times (HEE-HAW, HEE-HAW!!)

We do have rehearsal on Saturdays from 9-11am on June 6<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> for all those that can attend. Following the play there will be an all church picnic downstairs for everyone. If you would like to bring a dish to share there is a sign up sheet on the table in the narthex. I hope everyone will come to hear some angels sing and stay for the fellowship afterwards.

I am looking for some more teachers for the fall. We are losing a few teachers and can really use your help. We thank Krisanne Koebke for her dedication as a Sunday School Director, teacher and fill in wherever needed as she will be enjoying her time with their new baby. Andy Samuelson who went from teaching younger kids in the public schools to molding our junior high kids into citizens for God. Hannah Gunnell who stepped in with the nursery & kindergarten even though she has a busy schedule with work and school. Marilyn Gerrard who returned as a breast cancer survivor and is working full time and is a caregiver for Grammie Gerrard. I thank all of you for all your time and dedication to our church. If you happen to see one of these people please give them a pat on the back and/or hug for all their hard work.

### *Camp E.D.G.E.*

Come join us as we will be Experiencing & Discovering God Everywhere.

Vacation Bible School (VBS) will be July 27<sup>th</sup> through 30<sup>th</sup>. This is Monday through Thursday. We will meet at 5pm with a light meal and the program will start at 6pm and end at 8:30. We thought this would help some of you who are rushing from work to church and trying to get a meal in also.

Registration forms are on the narthex table. There will also be a sign up sheet if you can help plus a wish list too. I hope to see you then.

Thank you,  
Karenlee Hickey  
One of God's Servant

## *2009 New England Assembly of the Laity (NEAL)*

The 56th gathering of the New England Assembly of the Laity (NEAL) will be held July 31-Aug 1-2, 2009 at The Marist House in Framingham, MA. The keynote speaker will be The Rev. Curtis Brown, Director of Congregational Development for the New England Conference. The theme, "Stretch Out Your Hands – Love, Invitation, Service" will focus on the journey of Christian faith as a journey of "radical hospitality." It all begins with God stretching out hands of love and welcome to all through Jesus Christ. In turn, we are to extend this same hospitality to others by stretching out our hands in love, invitation and service. This is done throughout this exciting spiritual weekend by small group discussions, music, singing, worship, prayer and fellowship. A book and gift table with many books from Cokesbury and the Upper Room, and UMM and UMC gifts will be at this year's Assembly with the proceeds going to the NEAL Scholarship Fund.

Registration forms and information are available at NEAL's website – [www.assemblyofthelaity.com](http://www.assemblyofthelaity.com). For more information or for a registration form to be mailed to you, contact Kathi Peterson, 2009 Chairperson (860) 928-2530 or David Howe, Registrar (860) 875-9828. The registration deadline is July 17.

### *Retirement Celebration for Reverend Les Pettit*

The Berwick United Methodist Church in Maine invites you to attend a Retirement Celebration for Rev. Les Pettit on Sunday, June 28, 2009. Service is at 11am with Celebration to follow. Attend one or attend both. A RSVP is appreciated by June 7 to Caryn Quacker, Lay leader (207) 698-2592 or email [CQuaker@comcast.net](mailto:CQuaker@comcast.net). Berwick UMC, 37 School Street (Rte 9), Berwick, Maine

## *Dates to Remember*

6/3 – 6/7	All Day	SIHN
6/4	10:00 am	Bible Study @ Martha Blodgett's home
6/6	9 – 11 am	Play rehearsal
6/7		Peace with Justice Sunday
6/8	7:00 pm	Trustees
6/13	All Day	Work Day Cleanup
	9 – 11am	Play Rehearsal
6/14	10:30 am	Children's Service & All Church Picnic
6/17 – 6/20		Annual Conference
6/20	5:00 pm	Strawberry Supper
6/27	9:00 am	Music Committee
	10:00 am	Nurture Committee
7/7	1 – 6 pm	Red Cross Blood Drive at Charlton Library
7/27 – 7/30	5:30 - 8	Vacation Bible School

# June

# 2009