

The Spire

Congregational Church of Somersville
United Church of Christ

May, 2011



Trip to the Cloisters Museum and Gardens

(submitted by Graham Van Keuren)

Join other folks from the church as we visit the Cloisters Museum and Gardens on Saturday, May 21st. This NYC destination is located in beautiful Fort Tryon Park (at least as nice as Central Park) and is a collection of medieval abbeys, religious artifacts, and gardens that together have become a campus of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Events at the Cloisters for this all-day trip will include gallery talks, medieval garden tours, and workshops for families with kids ages 4-12. The cost, including transportation, will likely be about \$35/person (includes admission, gas money and parking fee) plus food and anything you decide to buy on your own. Financial assistance is available for those who need it. As far as food goes, there are several neat cafés in the surrounding Washington Heights area or we could have a lovely picnic in the park if the weather permitted. Please fill out the form below by May 8th if you are planning to come and return it to the church office so that we can make the transportation arrangements.

++++++ (cut here and return to the church office) ++++++

Trip to the Cloisters Museum and Gardens, May 21st:

Name(s): _____

Yes/No (circle one) I volunteer to be a driver to Fort Tryon Park, NYC – Note: it's not hard to get to and we'll ask you passengers to chip in some money.



From the Pastor

Dear Friends in Christ,

Now that Kate is graduating from Yale Divinity School this month, we bid her a fond farewell as she moves on to a more permanent ministry serving Christ's church. Join us on May 1st as we wish her well after church and celebrate her ministry with her.

We can also support her with our prayers. Here is a prayer for Kate that I offer for your use this month:

God of prophets and apostles, you have chosen leaders to train your people in the way of Jesus Christ. We thank you that in our day you still claim women and men for special work within the church. As Kate has dedicated herself to you, surround her by grace and mercy, so that she may grow in wisdom, mature in love, and become a faithful worker approved by Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



I am thankful for the welcome Kate has received from so many of you and I'm especially grateful for the feedback group that met with Kate several times after worship in order to provide specific constructive comments about the practice of her ministry.

Unfortunately, it doesn't appear as though Yale will be able to match our church with a seminarian next year. If that proves to be the case, I will miss the collegiality of working with a seminarian but I know that we have such a great reservoir of faith and talent among our members and friends. We will grow and stretch in faith anyway!

Thanks be to God for all those God has gifted for ministry among us!

Faithfully yours,

Graham Van Keuren

Thanks to ..

.. all who volunteered to take on “service opportunities” during April.
 .. those who supported the Roast Pork supper
 .. all who gave gift cards to help those in NADA
 .. everyone gave supplies for hygiene kits
 .. the volunteers who assisted at Cornerstone this past month.
 .. Marj Butler for baking and decorating all the Easter cookies for the congregation.



Thanks from ..

Mark Farnham .. “A BIG warm hug and thank you to my friends, and family of the Somersville Congregational Church. Especially to the talented ladies who knit. The prayer shawl is a reminder of the warmth that extends to and surrounds me every day. The eye surgery went very well, and in and of itself amazing. The many prayers and thoughts sent my way were much appreciated.”

Christian Education

Children Host Breakfast (submitted by Lisa Carriere)

The children of the Church will be putting on their annual Children’s Missions Breakfast on May 22 following service. Proceeds to benefit Heifer Project. Everyone is invited to attend.



Wednesday Bible Study

Wednesday morning Bible study meets weekly in the social room from 9:30-11:15 AM. All are invited.

From the Moderator (submitted by Ray Foster)

Meeting

The Cabinet will meet May 15th following worship. Any individual or Board having business to bring before the group should speak with me or Graham by Thursday, May 5th so the agenda can be prepared.



Spring Planting

Hopefully, we’ll be picking up our shrubs this coming week and we’ll be looking for volunteers to help plant. Please speak with me for information on specific date(s) and time(s). We’ll have 52 shrubs to plant.



Opportunities in May

	<u>Greeters</u>	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Fellowship Hosts</u>
5/01	Everett Baker	Rich & Ardie Carey	Elaine Hancock	Tom & Elaine Hancock
5/08	Everett Baker	Chuck & Laura Elwood	Linda McEwen	Marilyn Hare Yvonne Wood
5/15	Donna Pendleton Elma Fletcher	Dan Dunn Art Lachance	Bert Chillson	Chuck & Laura Elwood
5/22	Donna Pendleton Elma Fletcher	Marge Morgan	Art Lachance	all church breakfast by the children
5/29	Dan Dunn Art Lachance		Ardie Carey	

As you can see, there are still opportunities to serve. Sign up in the social room.

Report of the Treasurer (submitted by Sydney Cohen)

GOD INTERVENES IN THE AFFAIRS OF MEN BY INVITATION ONLY

Listen! I stand at the door and knock; if any hear my voice and open the door, I will come into their house and eat with them and they will eat with me. Rev 3:20

	March 2011	Monthly Budget	YTD	Annual Budget
Pledges	\$ 5,099.00	\$ 6,737.50	\$22,437.00	\$ 80,850.00
Income	\$10,745.01	\$ 9,404.56	\$33,400.22	\$ 112,855.00
Expenses	\$12,423.10	\$10,494.33	\$39,712.02	\$ 125,933.00

Collections for March

Fundraiser Corned Beef Dinner- 1896.66- net income

Flow through Items- Income

Monthly Mission Giving-OGHS- 487.00

Parking Lot Donations- 243.00- YTD – 764.00



Flow through Items- Expense

Parking Lot Loan- 138.88- Total left on loan- 4,305.60

Our pledges were below budget for the month of March, and our expenses higher than budgeted. Expenses were due to the quarterly pension payments and hopefully the last of this winter season snow plowing. The only flow through expense was for the parking lot loan.

Missions Outreach

2nd Mile Missions (submitted by Geneva Farnham)

Mothers and Fathers Day will be approaching soon. Let us celebrate their love for us by supporting the sale of Mothers and Fathers Day cards – minimum cost is \$5 for each card but any generous amount is acceptable. Barbara Baugniet will be offering these cards Sunday, May 1 in the Wood Chapel following worship service - Art Lachance will be assisting All of this is in support of Blankets + (and) and Tools which is the 2nd Mile Mission for the month of May.



We, here in the Congregational Church of Somersville, have joined with Church World Service in support of this great work. Together we can provide blankets for warmth and protection, during times of disaster and later, as victims are struggling to recover, seeds and tools to work and plant the soil. Even dig wells for water. This is such a great work.

Let's join together and become the plus in Blankets +.



Cornerstone Soup Kitchen

(submitted by Barbara Baugniet)

There's an opportunity to help prepare and serve a dinner at Cornerstone Soup Kitchen in Rockville on Tuesday, May 17. We can carpool from the church – leaving at 2:30 (for those interested in helping prepare the meal); we'll return to the church about 6:30. If you're available to help serve only, please arrive at Cornerstone by 4 PM. Please speak with myself or Johanna Karbonic if interested or if you have questions.

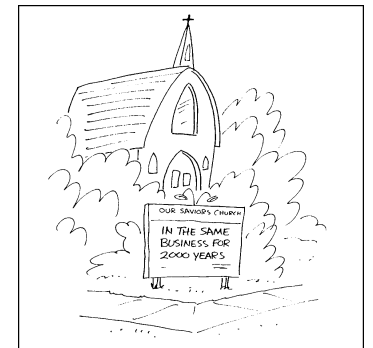
Historian's Corner (submitted by Johanna Karbonic, Historian)

Church Historian's Workshop

On April 16, 2011, I attended a very interesting and exciting workshop on "Records Management for Church Collections". After the Call to Worship, Jessica Steytler, archivist of the Congregational Library & Archive in Boston, gave a very informative presentation about records management. She described with a power point program – about getting started, a guide to types of records, organizational tips, how to deal with electronic records and preservation concerns. Since resource materials were included, I obtained extra booklets for people in our church who already deal with record keeping.

The presentation made me realize; that we need to get our records in better order or at least have a guide to where our important records are located. Watching the power point program and hearing the talk and discussions, have inspired me to try to develop a policy and procedure for keeping our church records. Now to find the time!

An optimal example of electronically keeping records was presented by the pastor of a Congregational Church in Seymour. His records are on an IPAD where he can literally keep information at his finger tips, download information to a power point program and do various other things which made my head swirl. It's exciting, but possibly beyond our budget. If anyone is interesting in getting involved, please let me know.



Who Are We?

(This has been the most challenging interview I have had. Have you ever tried to catch the wind?)

He became a member of this church in 1966 after graduating from the University of Connecticut - Agricultural Program. His early memories of the church started when he received a firm welcoming handshake from John Griswold, who was Sr. Deacon and permanent greeter at that time. She became a member in 1969 after their marriage at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Highworth of Wiltshire County, England in June 1969 and a second marriage ceremony at the Congregational Church of Somersville. She joined this church with her sister-in-law because it was the church her husband and in-laws attended. She was also made very welcome by John Griswold and the congregation. Her parents and family remained in England.

What kept you coming to this church? He explained it very nicely in the July/August 1994 Spire- "My Love Affair with the Church": "The friendship and sense of family extended to me and my family has grown to be a trademark of this church. As with any "love affair", life within this church has its ups and downs, its good times and times we would like to put behind us. God tests our commitment to Him and this church through some of the challenges and differences we have had; but the one thing that keeps shining through is the ability of the members of our congregational family to put their differences aside and go on with God's love as their guide. "



She loves the smallness of the church with the opportunity to know everyone. It makes her feel at home to be at this church. It is also relaxing – peaceful, and offers a get-away which rejuvenates her spirit.

His fondest memories are the Maundy Thursday Seder meal service, the baptism of all their children, the weddings of all three daughters in the church, and the Sunday he brought the Heifer Project calf to the church to show the Sunday school children what they were raising money to support. The calf then went to an Indian reservation in New York.

Her fondest memories are so many – but the ones that stood out were the social gatherings of the Ladies Aid group.

He would not like to see anything different in the church. She would like to have fewer dinners because everyone works so hard to put them on. There is also the fear that people won't join the church because they feel they have to work at a dinner.

People they would like to honor or who they admire are - Gertrude Wood, Thelma Smith and John Griswold.

They are truly a wonderful giving couple who put church, family and friends at the top of their priority list. As he said "I thank God for this church and the opportunity to be part of it." If you can't recognize this couple, the answer is on the back page of the Spire.

Ladies Aide Society

Women's Spirituality (submitted by Mavis Collins)

On April 14th, a group of our church women met with Kate Carlisle, our intern minister, to learn more about our own spirituality. Those of us attending found the evening very moving and rewarding. Thank you, Kate.



Monthly Meeting

All women of the church are welcome to attend the Ladies Aide meeting in the social room on Tuesday, May 10, beginning with a pizza luncheon at 12 PM. Ruth Bruch and Barbara Bagniet will hostess. Following the business meeting, May baskets will be assembled for delivery to some home-bound friends.

Hygiene Kits

We are so grateful to all our church family and friends for helping us to make 204 hygiene kits that will be distributed around the world to help in time of disasters. The kits were delivered to the Methodist church in Middletown on April 20th by Johanna Karbonic, Barbara Bagniet and Mavis Collins. Special thanks to Linda Longueuil for maintaining inventory, organizing and getting the kits packaged for their journey.

Prayer Shawl Ministry (submitted by Lois Sharpless)

The prayer shawl knitters will not meet in the month of May. Any questions regarding this group can be brought to me at 860-749-1350 or 860-716-7636. There are funds available to anyone who would like to learn. In the meantime, keep knitting and praying!!

Blacksmith Shoppe (submitted by Marge Morgan)

The Blacksmith Shoppe will be opening on May 7 for the season ~ each Saturday in May and June from 10 AM - 3 PM. Help is needed at 9 AM each Saturday to help put items out on to the lawn for display and again at 3 PM to return unsold items to the Shoppe for storage. A sign up sheet is posted in the social room offering an opportunity to assist at the Shoppe for two shifts each Saturday ~ men of the church are welcome And, as always, we encourage you to bake – baked goods are always a popular seller!



Donations of new or gently used items are welcome (ie. books, tools, puzzles, toys, small furniture, etc.) Please contact Marge Morgan, Barbara Abbe or Joan Lange to arrange drop off. No clothing, tv's, or electronics!

Funds earned at the Shoppe benefit church activities and projects.



Property Works

Thanks, as always, to those who play a role in maintaining our church buildings and grounds. You are an inspiration and much appreciated. We invite you all to join us for our spring property clean-up on Saturday, May 7th,

beginning at 9 AM. Tasks *may include* removing storm windows, raking, power washing, seeding, planting, weeding, etc. There's always things to do for property ~ you won't be bored. If you can't attend on the 7th, but would like to help this spring, please speak with property coordinators Patrick Forbes or Everett Morrill.



Music Notes (submitted by Graham Van Keuren)

Only you: ... know what your ears like to hear.



Here's an opportunity for a member of the congregation to work with some choir members, Jason and myself to help make our music the best it can be. No formal music background required – just a love and passion for listening. See me if you're interested.

Free Spaghetti Supper! (submitted by Graham Van Keuren)



Mark Saturday, May 7th on your calendars if you haven't done so already! The men's fellowship is preparing a free spaghetti supper for all to enjoy, followed by a showing of the family friendly Disney film, Secretariat. The 6 p.m. dinner is free, but tickets are required, so please contact the church office by May 1st to get yours. You also will have a chance to win a wonderful door prize! We'll look forward to seeing you there!

Fundraising Suppers (submitted by Ruth Bruch)

Recap of April Supper

Reservations filled up within a day and a half! There were only a few "no shows" this time and 24 take out orders were picked up. The roast beef, cooked to perfection by Nick Wood, was delicious; folks really enjoyed the corn at this dinner, and the lemon lush! It was a hit – again! Income for the evening was \$2333.00 including \$102.00 from the bake sale. Expenses were \$299.88. Thanks to everyone who contributed and assisted in the success of this dinner.

Chicken Cordon Bleu on May 14

Next up is our chicken cordon bleu supper on May 14. The chicken breasts will be in the kitchen on Friday the 13th so we can beat the heck out of them (getting rid of our frustrations), and prepare them with the ham, cheese and bread crumbs. Anyone willing to assist is welcome to join us beginning at 9 AM.



We're trying something different this month by serving the entrée with rice pilaf; dessert will be new and different too. A recipe for "dirt dessert" is in the church cookbook and we are altering it slightly. We really need folks to prepare this dessert; we've only got 6 out of 18 signed up for. It's easy to make with only 5 ingredients:

- 1 lb. pkg. oreo cookies
- 1 qt. milk
- 12 oz. cream cheese – softened
- 3 sm. pkg. vanilla instant pudding
- 12 oz. cool whip

Won't you consider making 1 or two? The recipe is posted in the social room; please sign up on the bulletin board in the social room.

Some other items still needed for this supper include:

- 31 lbs. frozen mixed vegetables
- 4 loaves homemade breads
- 25 lb. rice
- 48 oz containers chicken broth

Again, check out the sign up sheet in the social room.

The more items donated, the less our expenses; the greater the proceeds to support our operating budget.

June Features Strawberry Supper

Looking ahead a month, our annual Strawberry Supper will be held June 18th. The major item needed in June are the berries – folks to pick (we pick up the tab if you go to Meadowbrook Farms in East Longmeadow) or donate flats. Details on that supper will be in the June Spire.

This & That

- ***Fellowship hosts*** are needed. Anyone willing to provide a light snack following worship on any given Sunday is encouraged to sign up in the social room
- ***Meeting minutes*** are to be filed with the office. Copies will also be posted on the bulletin board on the south wall of the social room.

Connecticut Conference, UCC

The Spring Session of the Conference Annual Meeting will be held May 14th in Naugatuck. Andover Newton Theological School's J. Mary Luti is the vibrant keynoter for a day of "Worship Remix," looking at ways of coming to God with energy, integrity, and sincerity. The night before, May 13th, is a Youth Revival called "Walking in the Spirit," to be held at Faith Congregational Church in Hartford. UCC youth from across the state will share in music, liturgical dance, drama, and worship. There will also be a display from In Our Shoes, an anti-bullying project of King Street United Church of Christ in Danbury.



Anyone interested in attending as a delegate (with Rev. Van Keuren) should speak with him as soon as possible.

Archaeologist claims to find nails from Jesus' cross

April 14, 2011 Religion News Service by Michele Chabin

JERUSALEM

An Israeli-Canadian journalist believes he may have tracked down two of the iron nails used to crucify Jesus to the cross. Or at least objects that "could be" the long-lost relics.

While researching a segment for the History Channel series "Secrets of Christianity," host and producer Simcha Jacobovici learned something that startled him: In 1990, Israeli archeologists excavating a 2,000-year-old burial cave discovered two nails crafted by the Romans, but kept the discovery quiet.

They did, however, publicize the discovery of two ossuaries — stone burial boxes filled with human bones — with the inscriptions "Caiaphas" and "Joseph son of Caiaphas." The latter intricately carved ossuary toured the world and is now prominently displayed in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

According to the Gospels, Caiaphas was the Jewish high priest who handed Jesus over to the Romans for crucifixion.

"There's a general scholarly consensus that the tomb where the nails were found likely belonged to Caiaphas. Nails at that time were a dime a dozen, but finding one in a tomb is exceedingly rare," Jacobovici said outside the high stone walls of the Old City, where Jesus spent his final days.

When Jacobovici found a brief reference to the nails in the official archeologists' report, "my jaw dropped," he said.

"It would be as if, 2,000 years from now, archaeologists uncovered the cave of Muhammad Ali but neglected to mention the pair of boxing gloves found there. Sure, boxing gloves are common, but perhaps those particular gloves had special significance to the boxer?"

Jacobovici also hosts the "Naked Archaeologist" series on History International and collaborated with filmmaker James Cameron on the controversial 2007 documentary, "The Lost Tomb of Jesus."

In the segment "Nails of the Cross," which will air on April 20 on the History Channel, Jacobovici attempts to discover why the researchers felt the nails were unimportant.

"Everything else is so meticulous, yet there are no photos or drawings or measurements of the nails. When I inquired at the Israel Antiquities Authority, I was told they had gone missing."

"Caiaphas is known for one thing only: the trial and Crucifixion of Jesus," Jacobovici said. "He may have felt compelled to take these nails with him to his grave."

There was also the belief among some ancient Jews that nails had healing powers "and were a ticket to the afterlife. Other items found in the tomb show that this was a superstitious guy," he added.

The history detective searched the IAA's vast warehouses and then tried to find the location of the long-sealed tomb, which now lies beneath a public park.

Finally, on a hunch, Jacobovici approached Israel Hershkovitz, a forensic anthropologist at Tel Aviv University, who is also expert on crucifixions.

"When I asked Hershkovitz if he'd received two nails about 20 years ago, he knew exactly what I was talking about and located them within minutes," Jacobovici recalled.

Hershkovitz could not say where the nails had been found because the original packaging lacked the information. He could not be reached for comment.

While Hershkovitz knows for certain the nails came from the IAA, there's no conclusive link that they came from the Caiaphas tomb. Israeli archaeologists seem as reluctant to comment this time around as they were back in 1990.

When the anthropologist showed Jacobovici an ancient heel bone impaled with a nail — the only such crucifixion specimen ever unearthed — "I realized that the Caiaphas nails were similar, though shorter. The tips appeared purposely bent to keep them from falling off the wood."

Jacobovici asked Hershkovitz whether the nails could have been used to crucify a person's hands to a cross. Hershkovitz said "yes."

The limestone residue on one of the nails clinched it for Jacobovici, "because one of the nails was found in the ossuary, the other on the ground" of the burial cave, where it would be exposed to limestone.

Gabriel Barkay, a professor of archaeology at Bar-Ilan University, called Jacobovici's investigation "very challenging, very interesting, very intriguing, but it's a TV show and not a scholarly study.

"There's no proof whatsoever that they originate in the tomb of Caiaphas," he said. "It's all conjecture."

Nails were used for "many purposes," Barkay noted, "from fixing iron gates to wooden doors and coffins."

And for crucifixions.

Ronny Reich, a Haifa University archeologist who deciphered the writing in the Caiaphas cave, believes the cave "belongs to a member of the Caiaphas family, but we have no evidence it belongs to the high priest."

Jacobovici, however, is certain his research will withstand scrutiny, even if it seems largely circumstantial at first glance.

"Skepticism is good. As with the Shroud of Turin, you can't be 100 percent certain, but believers don't need 100 percent certainty. They need a solid 'could be,' and that's what we're offering."

About our Members & Friends

Who Are We?

Wow, that was easy!
We are Jack & Mavis Collins!



Birthdays

Birthdays are being celebrated this month by: Everett Morrill, Johanna Karbonic, Marge Morgan, Lisa

Carriere, Patrick Forbes, Ray Foster, Renee Blondin, Wayne Hare, Jack Collins, Linda Percoski, Maryanna Morris, Ralph Lumb, Rowan Penhall, Teddy Flynn, Tracey Clague.



Those celebrating anniversaries this month include: Vic & Doreen Netten, Jack & Ruth Bruch, George & Maryanna Morris, Charlie & Janet Foxe (56 years), Tom & Elaine Hancock

Condolences

Our thoughts and prayers remain with the friends of families of:

- Dan Beauchamp who passed away February 14 in Arizona;
- Heather MacDonald who passed away unexpectedly April 13;
- Catherine Briggs who passed away April 14. Kay joined our membership in 1983.

Birth

Congratulations to Lauren & Jason Stefanik on the birth of their daughter, Maya Gabriella, on April 20.

Congregational Church of Somersville

Vision Statement

We will be a faith-based church welcoming diversity, empowering the individual, growing in faith and doing God's work in the global community in unity and love.

Behavioral Covenant

- We will follow a process that includes unconditional listening and time to collect thought, enabling all individuals to comfortably express their opinions.
- Our actions and demeanor will support and empower all participants
- All opinions will be welcomed, reflectively considered and respected.
- Opinions will be expressed with humility, self-control, gentleness, and kindness.
- We will look for common ground as we search for consensus, and we will respect that consensus.
- We will affirm by our works and actions our common goal to serve God.

the Rev. Graham Van Keuren, Pastor
 Ray Foster, Moderator Sydney Cohen, Treasurer
 Ruth Bruch, Clerk/Office Administrator
 Jason Stefanik, Organist/Choir Director

May 2011

Please remember to bake for Blacksmith Shoppe -
 come early to help put items out for display or at 3 to return
 items for storage

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Free Spaghetti Supper reservations due	2 New Member Gathering	3 Evergreen worship 10 AM AA 6:15-8:30 Deacons 7 PM	4 Bible Study 9:30-11:15 Choir 7 PM	5 Cabinet Agenda Requests Due	6	7 Spring Clean-up 9 AM Blacksmith Shoppe 10-3 Free Spaghetti Supper by men & Movie 6 PM
8 Mother's Day Cloister Trip RSVP deadline	9 New Member Gathering	10 Finance 11:30 Ladies Aide 12 PM AA 6:15-8:30	11 Bible Study 9:30-11:15 Choir 7 PM	12	13 Supper Prep 9 AM Missions 1 PM	14 CT Conference UCC Spring Meeting Blacksmith Shoppe 10-3 Cordon Bleu Supper 5 & 6:15
15 New Members Welcomed Cabinet Meeting Tolland Assoc. Annual Meeting 3 PM	16	17 Cornerstone 2:30 or 4-6:30 AA 6:15-8:30	18 Bible Study 9:30-11:15 Choir 7 PM	19	20	21 Cloister's Trip Blacksmith Shoppe 10-3
22 All Church Breakfast following worship by Sunday School	23 Spire Deadline	24 Blair Manor worship 10:30 AA 6:15-8:30	25 Bible Study 9:30-11:15 Choir 7 PM	26	27	28 Blacksmith Shoppe 10-3
29	30 Memorial Day	31 AA 6:15-8:30	Congregational Church of Somersville 22 Maple St., PO Box I, Somersville, CT 06072 860-749-7741 860-749-5132 (fax) somcong@aol.com (email) www.somersvilleucc.org (web site)			

Worship 10 AM

Hidden Pictures for the Young at Heart - "Ready for the Pitch"

