

The Old Man's News

Mt. Sinai Congregational, United Church of Christ
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July 2011

A couple of things from your Minister of Music . . .

What a glorious Music Ministry Sunday we celebrated on June 19! You, the congregation, sang like I haven't heard you sing in months and it was quite a thrill to the song leaders and the choirs. Your enthusiastic participation and appreciation contributed to a unified and uplifting service. Rev. Diane's poetic words were a beautiful fit with the Harbor Bells' and Chancel Choir's offerings. You laughed. You cried. Whatever emotion you were feeling at any one moment, I sensed a deep joy and gratitude at the heart of our worship. Thank you, all of you, for showing up so fully.

Thank you ringers and singers, song leaders and percussion players, music filers and copiers, equipment and bell and table movers, chair organizers, parents and families, prayers and players for your persistent dedication to and love for all that we do in our music ministry. And how about those youth?! Cara, Dana, Emma, Joelle and Sophie, you were brilliant!

Recall that moment when the youth and adults sang praise together and let it inspire you to help manifest the dream of a full fledged music ministry to youth and children in our community. We are building a team as you read this – a team of volunteers and stipend staff is being put into place, and we are working on a three-year plan to plant and nurture this effort. Some of you have already given money to grow this ministry. Thank you. We ask all of you to support this vital part of our church's mission to young people with your time, talent and treasure. Everybody, pray. Pray for wisdom and skill and the people involved. Remember, that includes YOU!

And now on a very personal note . . . Lisa and I are so deeply touched by your outpouring of love and well wishes on the occasion of our marriage. Your generous financial gifts to us and to the music ministry at Mt. Sinai Church have truly stunned us. That you have celebrated so genuinely and joyously with us means more than we have words to say. So simply, we say, "Thank you."

Thank you, Rev. Diane, for dreaming and creating the amazing party you gave on June 19. It was quite a gift! Thanks to June and Lynn and all other helpers. Thanks for the ribbons and the real glasses and the vegan food and the cake and the flowers and the cream cheese on the peas and, most of all, for the apparent love in all of your hearts. We feel so very honored! We will never forget what you have given us.

In celebrating our marriage, all of you have borne witness to love that is true. You have also stood for what is right and just. Both of those gifts are priceless! Thanks be to God for your love and your courage.

With Love, Rev. Elaine

From our Records...**Baptisms**

June 12th- Leah Ashley Carmichael was baptized into the church, her loving parents are Lauren and Dan Carmichael. Her devoted Godparent's are Danny Gaynor and Vanessa Grudier.

Worship With us!

Join us for our 10am Sunday Worship!

10am Church Service and Sunday School

Children stay in church through the children's sermon. During the summer we continue our Sunday School with what we call Summer Sundays.

Communion Services

Held on the first Sunday of every month. Sensitive to people with food allergies, we offer gluten free wafers in addition to bread. Out of respect for those who cannot drink alcohol, we use grape juice for the blessed cup of Communion. Everyone is welcome to the communion table.

Dear Members and Friends of Mt. Sinai UCC,

I was so grateful (being the one who writes the checks!) to come home from the NY Conference Meeting and see your response to Rev. Di's appeal on Sunday. I always believed this to be a generous congregation and your donations were proof of that- we are now current on our bills! This is a better position to be in, going into the summer, when many of you take some time off from church. (Please remember to send your pledges on time, or early!)

We have in place a 2011 budget that shows our income is \$35,000 less than we need, but I have always thought that this church family could make up the difference. When my family gets together, we sometimes have "Stone Soup" dinner. If you do not know this folk tale, I have included it on the back. In my family this means you bring what you have to the table. Always when dinner is finished, you take home more than you came with.

Thank you, Charlaine Apsel, treasurer and member of the Generosity Team

The Stone Soup Story

Author Unknown, Source Unknown

Many years ago three soldiers, hungry and weary of battle, came upon a small village. The villagers, suffering a meager harvest and the many years of war, quickly hid what little they had to eat and met the three at the village square, wringing their hands and bemoaning the lack of anything to eat.

The soldiers spoke quietly among themselves and the first soldier then turned to the village elders. "Your tired fields have left you nothing to share, so we will share what little we have: the secret of how to make soup from stones."

Naturally the villagers were intrigued and soon a fire was put to the town's greatest kettle as the soldiers dropped in three smooth stones. "Now this will be a fine soup", said the second soldier; "but a pinch of salt and some parsley would make it wonderful!" Up jumped a villager, crying, "What luck! I've just remembered where some has been left!" And off she ran, returning with an apronful of parsley and a turnip. As the kettle boiled on, the memory of the village improved: soon barley, carrots, beef and cream had found their way into the great pot, and a cask of wine was rolled into the square as all sat down to feast.

They ate and danced and sang well into the night, refreshed by the feast and their newfound friends. In the morning the three soldiers awoke to find the entire village standing before them. At their feet lay a satchel of the village's best breads and cheese. "You have given us the greatest of gifts: the secret of how to make soup from stones", said an elder, "and we shall never forget." The third soldier turned to the crowd, and said: "There is no secret, but this is certain: it is only by sharing that we may make a feast". And off the soldiers wandered, down the road.

From the Generosity Corner- July News

Rev. Diane has made two recent appeals from the pulpit for people to “bring back to God” additional financial gifts, if they are able, given shortfalls in our budget due partly to the early disappearance of the nursery school tenant. The generous and heartwarming response has met the immediate needs. God does and will provide—with our cooperation! Thank you, everyone.

Mt Sinai Church Treasurer Charlene Apsel and Generosity Team Chair Kathy Robinson presented a session on stewardship at the annual meeting of the NY Conference of the UCC, held at Lake George, NY on June 2 – 5. Their workshop was well attended, and the pastors and lay people in the audience were generous in their sharing of what works and has not worked with their congregations. A number of their suggestions may be adopted for the Mt Sinai 2012 campaign. The attendees were thankful for information from Mt Sinai, including digital file copies so they can adapt these to their own generosity work.

The Generosity Team is mailing once-yearly gift requests to members who rarely attend or do not support the church financially. The message on the cards was approved by Rev. Diane, who also culled the list of potential recipients based on her insight into their situations. Approximately three-dozen such cards will be sent. These members are being invited to bring back to God and dedicate their gift, if they wish, to a former teacher, pastor, or mentor who changed their life.

If you are interested in helping with the work of the Generosity Team (on a short- or long-term basis), please contact the church office. We welcome trained or “natural” creative thinkers, writers, artists, statisticians, psychologists, desktop publishers, historians, and anyone who sees the world through rose-colored glasses!

Kathy Robinson- Chair Generosity Corner

News from our Board of Christian Outreach

Dream Fund Information....

Thank you to everyone who stayed for our congregational meeting. We are happy to report the congregation approved the amendment of the constitution and bylaws on Sunday creating a Board of Endowment to develop, promote and administer an endowment for our church, which we call THE DREAM FUND. Anyone who is interested in reading the draft policy which is intended to guide the board may pick up a copy in the church office or leave a message for Rich Winkler at 631-473-1582.

The Planned Giving Ministry: Rich Winkler, Chair, Lynn Jordan, Dennis Murphy, Kathy Robinson and Donna Rodman.



Sing carols, hear the stories of Christmas! July 31st we will be celebrating Christmas in July included in the celebrations will be an opportunity to donate to the Christmas Fund formerly known as the “Veterans of the Cross”. This fund helps to provide support to many low-income retired clergy, lay employees and their families.

We will also be kicking off our School Supply drive to support Brighter Tomorrows. We will be collecting backpacks and supplies until the end of August. Watch for more details on what items are needed. (Brighter Tomorrows is dedicated to breaking the chain of domestic violence and helping to raise awareness of this problem.)

From our Sunday School Coordinator- Ms. Caroline LaVopa...



Vacation Bible Camp will be the week of July 11th through July 15th, from 9am-12pm. There will be a showcase of what the children learned on Sunday July 17th at 10am. The registration fee is \$40 per child. The theme is, *Shake it Up Café- Where Kids Carry out God's Recipe*. You can find the registration form on our Sunday School page, we will also have it posted on our website, where you can download and send in.

We will have our Summer Sunday program this summer downstairs in our Sunday School area, we will also have childcare available.

Youth Group News

The Mt Sinai Youth Group has come to a close for the 2010-2011 year. We enjoyed all kinds of activities this past year including prayer, guest speakers, a women's defense session taught by our own Kathy Lahey, walks down to the beach with intense discussions and numerous fundraisers. More importantly, all the youth that attended knew there was a safe place to come and enjoy the company of others with the knowledge that they could be themselves without the fear of being made fun of, or being in a potentially unsafe situation.

The youth of this church are amazing! No one can appreciate this more than the leaders who have the honor of getting to know these kids and work with them every week. They come from all different backgrounds, all different walks of life and bring such amazing gifts to share. As you all know, this summer we are working towards going to Inner City Philadelphia to work in some of the less fortunate areas. We continue to try to give the youth experiences that hopefully they will remember for the rest of their lives.

We still have some fundraisers that all can enjoy. They include a Bake Sale on July 10th and our ongoing recycling program. Please feel free to take part in these fundraisers and have a chat with our youth! And to all the youth out there...Your leaders look forward to another year with you all!! See you in the fall.

From the Parish Resource Center Church Vitality and Spiritual Practices

Churches today are seeking vitality; some mainline denominations even have separate ministries focused on it, such as the Episcopal Church's Office of Congregational Vitality. In her book, *The Practicing Congregation*, Diana Butler Bass writes about her research on vital mainline churches and observes that true church vitality can't be measured in terms of numbers but refers to spiritual health and maturity. Butler Bass found that "A vital congregation is one where all people – including the pastor – are growing members of an organic community of spiritual practice."

Spiritual practices are personal experiences with God, rather than study about God. There are many spiritual practices, but classic ones include prayer, fasting, meditation, and simplicity. Other spiritual practices popular today include walking a labyrinth, using prayer beads, and journaling. When we intentionally embrace spiritual practices, we allow the Holy Spirit to reshape our minds, hearts, wills, and hands to become the people God would have us be. Butler Bass states that "Spiritual practices are not a program, rather they are a meaningful way of life."

This year the Parish Resource Center's focus will be on spiritual practices and how to incorporate them into your life, and the life of your church. In the fall we will be presenting a workshop by Jane Vennard, a spiritual director, retreat leader and author of several books including *The Praying Congregation: The Art of Teaching Spiritual Practice*. We also have many resources on spiritual practices and would be happy to assist you in how to use them to vitalize your church.

ADULT FELLOWSHIP UPCOMING EVENTS ----- All are Welcome to Join Us!

There has been an excellent response to the list of suggested events that is posted in the Voorhees Hall. As a result, some of the events have been scheduled through September. We are still looking for "helpers" for some of these events. If you are interested in assisting with any of the events, please call Patti Texeira sign your name on the list of activities to come.

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>DAY/DATES/TIMES</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>ORGANIZERS</u>
JULY	Sat., July 16	Pool Side Party 1 - 5 pm	Margie & Bob Williams
AUGUST	Saturday, Aug. 20	Beach Party BBQ 1 - 5 pm	Nancy & Charlie West EJ Lopez, Ellen Benedetto
SEPTEMBER	Sunday, Sept. 18	Wine/Garden Party	Patrice & Jim Perreca
OCTOBER	To be announced	Note/Scavenger Hunt by car	
NOVEMBER	To be announced	Vanderbilt Museum	
DECEMBER	To be announced	Progressive Dinner	
JANUARY	To be announced	Square Dance	



Chicken BBQ July 30th

If you are interested in helping with the BBQ volunteer sheets are hanging up in Voorhees Hall. It is a lot of fun and helps the church put on an important fundraiser.

Want to work outside?

If you are looking for something to do this summer, contact Tom Lyon at lyonheifer@aol.com (or leave message at the church office) for summer volunteer opportunities with Heifer International and Hobbs community farm. Youth and adults are welcome to volunteer. **Island Heart Food Pantry** We have volunteer opportunities to fit just about everyone's interest and time. They vary from volunteering 2-3 times a year, subbing and doing pickups at Traders Joes and Island Harvest Pick up sites. You can leave message at the office (631)-473-1582.

Audio/Visual Needs at the Church

To everyone ages 15 and up- If you are interested in volunteering to be on our media team please contact Mary Larson layministymssc@optonline.net or 631-473-1582. The time commitment can vary from one hour a month to around 4 hours. The work would entail either assisting during service (operating our audio visual equipment) or in designing slides, you can also volunteer to help on our website.

Caring Ministry Volunteers Needed

We have recently added a new sub-group, which will operate as part of our Caring Ministry Team. If you like to cook and share of your talents, consider being part of this team. If you are interested in being a part of this team please contact Mary Larson in the office or leave a message for Ruth Sellers at 631-473-1582. Ruth Sellers is heading up this team.

Caring Ministry

Our Pastoral Care Support is made up of staff and volunteers, which make up our [Caring Ministry](#) Team. We have also started a new group, which assists in [providing meals](#) for those in need. If you would like to join our new group please contact Mary Larson at the office 631-473-1582.

In order to help, we need you to contact us when the following events occur:

Hospitalization- Due to HIPPA privacy laws, hospitals are no longer allowed to contact us when a member is hospitalized.

- Death of a family member
- Extended illness of a family member
- Communion is available for our homebound members and friends.
A Deacon and one of our Caring Ministers can share communion on the first Sunday of the month.
- Change of address, due to health reasons (staying with relatives, nursing home etc...)
- Family emergency

From Island Heart Food Pantry...

Summer is here and we're all ready for it. The air conditioner has been installed in the pantry by Bob, which will make it a lot more comfortable on the hot days. Now all the food will be kept at the proper temperature set by the Health Department. Dave Hensen, DVM of Paumotuok Animal Hospital in Patchogue donated 2 air conditioners to us, the other one will be installed in the shed soon. The next renovations to the pantry will be by the Girl Scouts in July.

We were very fortunate to receive several donations this month: The air conditioners, 25 bags of food from the M.I.F.D. Ladies Aux., the SWR CSEA's collection of 100+ cleaning products, Mitch and his daughter's food drop-off, Barbara Kjarbye, Doris Iversen and Phil Goldstein. Without these donations we would not be able to supply such variety to the clients.

Anyone interested in doing a food or toiletry drive, please let me know...we could really use the help!

Last Saturday Bob went to the Farmers Market and picked up 20 plus cases of fresh foods, the clients will be so pleased to get this. This Saturday I will be getting a delivery of the glass front refrigerator, 2 shelving units, 2 tables and a cart, all from a state grant I applied for. These will certainly help make our service much smoother. Another exciting thing...the North Shore Sun is wrote an article about the pantry it is also posted on my Facebook page and our churches Facebook page.

A few items we are in need of are: Sauce, peanut butter, jelly, soap, shampoo, deodorant and toothpaste. Thank you **all** for helping in the Fight Against Hunger!!!
Margaret

Women's Fellowship

Our women met this spring and had a lovely brunch, our next brunch will November 5th 10:30am-12:30pm. All the women of the church are invited, if you need childcare please contact the office.

During the business portion of our brunch the decision was made to donate \$300.00 toward the work being done downstairs in the former pre-school area.

Friendly Circle and Lunch Bunch are taking off for the summer.

Loki Tobin's Visit

In June were delighted to host Loki Gayle Tobin, who is currently serving in the Peace Corps in Azerbaijan. Loki's grandparents were Russ and Harriet Tobin. She grew up in Nome, Alaska, and has visited often during the summer months. She graduated from the University of Alaska, served as a Senate Page in Washington, DC, and completed work on her Master's Degree by computer from Azerbaijan!

Loki is serving her third year in Azerbaijan, working with women and young people. She brought videos to share with us about the people with whom she is working, and about the Peace Corps. There were many questions about the Peace Corps and about her work. Loki has a delightful blog: farfromnome.blogspot.com and said that she would love to hear from friends here.



Date: Saturday July 30th
 Time: 4:30pm-7pm
 Cost: Adult pre-purchased tickets- \$16.00
 (You can purchase after Sunday Service, or during the week during office hours)
 Adult day of event tickets- \$18.00
 12 years and younger- \$8.00

Great food, raffles and more....

Everyone is welcome!!!

Vacation Bible Camp



Registration Fee: \$40 per child

Registration Form

Name _____
 Date of Birth _____ Grade Completed _____
 Age _____
 Parent/Guardian _____ Address _____

 City _____ State _____ Postal Code _____ Home Phone _____

 Cell Phone _____ Email _____
 Emergency Contact Name _____ Phone number _____
 Special Needs/Allergies _____
 Is there a special friend your child would like to be with _____
 Class/Crew assignment (assigned by Church) _____

There is a waiver form which will also need to be filled out, it can be found on the website or picked up from Ms. Caroline after Sunday School.

July

June 26th- July 2nd

26	Sunday	Worship	10am
28	Tuesday	Executive Council	7:00pm
29	Wednesday	Men's Breakfast- Rocky Point Diner	7:30am
1	Friday	General Synod Begins- Tampa Florida	

July 3rd- 9th

3	Sunday	Communion	10:00am
4	Monday	Office Closed- In recognition of Independence Day	

July 10th-16

10	Sunday	Worship Bake Sale Fund Raiser for Mission Trip	
11	Monday- Friday	Vacation Bible Camp	9:00am-12:00pm
12	Tuesday	Board of Trustees- Conference Room	7:00pm
16	Saturday	Adult Fellowship Pool Party (contact office for directions)	1:00pm-5:00pm

July 17th-23

17	Sunday	Worship/Commission of Youth Group Mission Trip	10:00am
18	Monday	Board of Christian Education	7:00pm
19	Tuesday	Board of Deacons	7:00pm

July 24th-30

24	Sunday	Worship	10:00am
25	Monday	Youth Leave on Mission Trip	
30	Saturday	Chicken BBQ	4:30pm-7:00pm

July 31-August ?

31	Sunday	Worship	
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**Please check bulletin, website or our Fan page on Facebook
for any changes to the upcoming events.**

Safety Alert

**Recently there has been break-ins to cars in local parking lots.
Please remember to lock your doors and not leave any valuables in your car.**