

Word from the Pastor

Dear Members & Friends,

Chinese New Year's Day falls on February 14th this year. I can assure you that on that day you will find me and others of my family sharing a meal with my mother at a Chinese restaurant. The meal will include chicken, beef, pork, and seafood. Superstitious people believe that if you don't eat a little of each on New Year's Day, you will find imbalance in your life during the year. By giving out cash gifts to everyone on that day, you are wishing that each person will also receive sufficient material wealth in the new year. And often you'll wear something new on New Year's Day. The Chinese have many other traditions around their New Year, such as not eating any food in the new year that was prepared in the prior year, in hopes that the New Year will bring with it a new beginning.

This year, Ash Wednesday follows just a few days later. A mere coincidence, but a fitting one. Ash Wednesday marks the opening of the period of Lent, which is the forty days (when you take out the Sundays) before Easter. Throughout the centuries, Christians have used this period of time to reflect on their faith in Christ as Lord and Savior, so that Easter Day might have a new meaning and mark a symbolic new beginning in the Christian's life.

Human beings seem fixated on "new beginnings" in their lives. It is an acknowledgement of the fact that while each of us strives to be the best and always do the right thing, we are human and we make mistakes. We don't always follow through with things as we hoped. There are always things that are left undone. Things plain just don't work out the way they should. The Good News is that each of us has the opportunity for a "new beginning" at any time of year, not just when an old year ends and a new one begins. We do not have to wait for Easter or for Christmas. The celebration of Easter, along with the 40 days of Lent preceding it, are reminders that God has given us the opportunity to start anew each time we feel burdened by mistakes we have made, dead ends we have encountered, and roadblocks found along the road of life. Easter is all about a new beginning anytime we need one.

So during the upcoming Lenten season, I hope you will not only reflect on our faith and the sacrifice Christ made for all humanity, but also on the fact that because of God's love for us, we can a "new beginning" whenever we need it. As often as I mess things up in my life, it is the greatest blessing I have ever received!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Mike



FEBRUARY 2010

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Special points of interest:

Super Bowl
Grinders!

Sledding Party

Pizza Swim
Party

Boar's Head
Movie &
Popcorn night



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BURNT BISCUIT

"Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not faint." Isaiah 40:31

This really stood out to me. Hope it will to each of you too. Author unknown.

When I was a kid, my mom liked to make breakfast food for dinner every now and then. And I remember one night in particular when she had made breakfast after a long, hard day at work. On that evening so long ago, my mom placed a plate of eggs, sausage and extremely burned biscuits in front of my dad. I remember waiting to see if anyone noticed! Yet all my dad did was reach for his biscuit, smile at my mom and ask me how my day was at school. I don't remember what I told him that night, but I do remember watching him smear butter and jelly on that biscuit and eat every bite!

When I got up from the table that evening, I remember hearing my mom apologize to my dad for burning the biscuits. And I'll never forget what he said: "Honey, I love burned biscuits. Later that night, I went to kiss Daddy good night and I asked him if he really liked his biscuits burned. He wrapped me in his arms and said, "Your Momma put in a hard day at work today and she's real tired. And besides - a little burnt biscuit never hurt anyone!"

You know, life is full of imperfect things.....and imperfect people. I'm not the best at hardly anything, and I forget birthdays and anniversaries just like everyone else.

What I've learned over the years is that learning to accept each other's faults - and choosing to celebrate each other's differences - is one of the most important keys to creating a healthy, growing, and lasting relationship.

And that's my prayer for you today. That you will learn to take the good, the bad, and the ugly parts of your life and lay them at the feet of God. Because in the end, He's the only One who will be able to give you a relationship where a burnt biscuit isn't a deal-breaker!

We could extend this to any relationship. In fact, understanding is the base of any relationship, be it a husband-wife or parent-child or friendship!

"Don't put the key to your happiness in someone else's pocket - keep it in your own."

God Bless You..... Now, and Always.... So Please pass me a biscuit, and yes, the burnt one will do just fine.!!.!!.!

The Pearly Gates

A man dies and goes to heaven. Of course, St. Peter meets him at the pearly gates.

St. Peter says, "Here's how it works. You need 100 points to make it into heaven. You tell me all the good things you've done, and I give you a certain number of points for each item, depending on how good it was. When you reach 100 points, you get in."

"Okay," the man says, "I was married to the same woman for 50 years and never cheated on her, even in my heart."

"That's wonderful," says St. Peter, "that's worth three points!"

"Three points?" he says. "Well, I attended church all my life and supported its ministry with my tithe and service."

"Terrific!" says St. Peter, "that's certainly worth a point."

"One point? Golly. How about this; I started a soup kitchen in my city and worked in a shelter for homeless veterans."

"Fantastic, that's good for two more points," he says.

"TWO POINTS!!" the man cries, "At this rate the only way I'll get into heaven is by the grace of God!"

"Come on in!"

Laurel City Singers

Laurel City Singers will begin rehearsing for its spring concert *Around the World in Song* beginning Thursday, February 25 from 7 until 9 pm at First Church of Winsted.

This concert will include songs from around the world...and the trip could start in OKLAHOMA...with a medley from the show of the same name.

This volunteer community choir under the direction of Adam Atkins, with accompanist Cindy Rines, is open to singers high-school age and up...way up! The only requirement is that you love singing, and are willing to explore all musical genres.

If you can carry a tune...they'll provide the bucket.

If anyone is interested in joining, please call secretary Denise Torson at 860-379-2655.

Board of Christian Education News...

- **Super Bowl Sunday Grinder Sale**- orders being taken through Thursday, Feb. 4th. 6" grinder for \$6.00; Proceeds to benefit youth/Sunday School activities. Order forms available in the gathering room or you can call Tanya at 860-738-2279 to place your order. Grinder will be available for pick up after church on the 7th.
- Saturday, February 20th **Sledding Party** for whole church family at 328 Winchester Road, Winsted 2-4 p.m. Just bring your sled. Hot cocoa, coffee, tea and treats provided. No snow date of Sunday, February 28th.
- Saturday, February 27th **Youth Group Wolf Pack Game Trip**. Sign up in the gathering room a \$5.00 deposit is required and will be returned to each person the night of the game.
- **Munson's Easter Candy Sale** – the youth will be taking orders for Munson's Easter candy from January 31st through February 28th. The candy will be delivered on March 28th in time for Easter. Proceeds to support youth and Sunday School activities
- Saturday, March 20th 2:15-4:00 All church family **Swim/Pizza Party** at the Winsted YMCA. Signup sheet is in the gathering room
- Sunday School teachers – only one Sunday a month needed from now through June. Please see Tanya Mongitore if you have interest or call her at 860-738-2279.

WANTED

Through the Ears of a Child...?

A 6-year-old was overheard reciting the Lord's Prayer at a church service: "And forgive us our trash passes, as we forgive those who passed trash against us."

Terri asked her Sunday School class to draw pictures of their favorite Bible stories. She was puzzled by Kyle's picture, which showed four people on an airplane, so she asked him which story it was meant to represent.

"The flight to Egypt," said Kyle. "I see ... And that must be Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus," Ms. Terri said. "But who's the fourth person?" "Oh, that's Pontius - the pilot."

A little boy was attending his first wedding. After the service, his cousin asked him "How many women can a man marry?" "Sixteen," the boy responded. His cousin was amazed that he had an answer so quickly. "How do you know that?". "Easy," the little boy said. "All you have to do is add it up. . . like the Pastor said: 4 better, 4 worse, 4 richer, 4 poorer."

Haiti Relief Practice-a-thon

Tia is participating in the Hartt School College and Community Division Practice-a-thon, from **February 1 through February 10** Tia will be logging the time spent practicing the violin (she usually practices 30 minutes a day). The money raised is for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti, with proceeds going to the Oxfam Haiti Earthquake Response Fund.

The Practice-a-thon works just like a walk-a-thon. Rather than keeping track of the miles she walks, she'll keep track of the minutes she practices. All she needs to do is find people (such as family, friends, and neighbors) to sponsor her practice time between February 1 and February 10. Simple pledges of two cents or five cents a minute will go a long way. We are hopeful and appreciative if you are able to pledge a per minute rate or a flat fee.





Checks can be made payable to 'University of Hartford' with *practice-a-thon* written in the memo and Tia and I will collect them from you after February 10th. Side note Tia's Dad is going to match what she is able to collect for this, so your pledge will get doubled.

With gratitude,

Tia & Tanya Mongitore

Join us for:
Boar's Head Festival
Popcorn
and a Movie Night
Details coming soon!

Upcoming Events - Mark Your Calendars!

<i>Celebrate With Us...</i>		<i>Looking Forward</i>			
Sunday - 10 am Monday - 6 pm Tuesday - 6 pm Wednesday - 7:30 pm	Worship Rehearsal~Senior Choir Rehearsal~Cherub Choir AA / Alanon Meetings	February 2nd February 7th February 7th February 12th February 14th February 14th February 15th February 17th February 22nd	Groundhog Day Super Bowl Grinder Pick-up Pie Festival 2-4 PM Lincoln's Birthday St. Valentine's Day Chinese New Year President's Day Ash Wednesday Washington's Birthday		
		<h3 style="color: purple;">Board Meetings...</h3>			
	February 01 February 09 February 16 February 23	7:00 pm 6:30 pm 7:00 pm 7:00 pm	PM Board Board of Christian Ed. Deacons Cabinet Meeting		

Birthdays / Anniversaries

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

01 - Elexys Savoy
 02 - Susan Tripodina
 03 - Sabrina McAllister
 03 - Bailey McCaw
 03 - Julie Davy
 03 - Laura Day
 04 - Paul Hamilton
 06 - Kate Roys
 07 - Lorraine Tatar
 11 - Dan Jones
 12 - Jessica Toomey
 14 - Mildred Barshaw
 16 - Holly Cassaday
 16 - Devan McCaw
 18 - Dilshan Gunawardena
 18 - Virginia Hughes
 18 - Eric Smith
 18 - Jes Wu
 20 - Will Hurlbut
 20 - Carol Miles
 20 - Debbie Storrs
 21 - George Majewski
 22 - Bill Calkin
 22 - Sharon Doyle
 22 - Sarah LeKang
 23 - Jason Roberts
 25 - Helen Nye
 26 - Bud Roberts
 26 - Kelvin Smith
 26 - Terry Smyth
 27 - Alex Cassaday
 28 - Jamie McAllister
 28 - Eileen Bensle

♥ 15 - Robert & Ann Jones
 ♥ 19 - Paul & Diane Richards

Bible Verses on Love

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. - [Proverbs 17:17](#)

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. . . And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. - excerpts from [1 Corinthians 13:4-13](#)

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. - [John 15:12-13](#)

'Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD. - [Leviticus 19:18](#)

Hatred stirs up dissension, but love covers over all wrongs. - [Proverbs 10:12](#)

For the LORD loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones. . . - [Psalm 37:28](#)

Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' - [Matthew 22:37-39](#)

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son,[a] that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. - [John 3:16](#)



February 2010



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 Artist: Karen Delton	1 Senior Choir 6:00 pm PM Board 6:30 pm	2 Cherub Choir 6:00 pm Groundhog Day	3 AA/Alanon 7:30 pm	4	5	6
7 Worship Service 10 am Senior Choir 9:20 am Super Bowl Grinder Pick-up Pie Festival	7 Senior Choir 6:00 pm	9 Cherub Choir 6:00 pm Chris Ed 6:30	10 AA/Alanon 7:30 pm	11	12 Lincoln's Birthday	13
14 Worship Service 10 am Cherub Choir 9:30  Chinese New Year	15 Senior Choir 6:00 pm President's Day	16 Cherub Choir 6:00 pm Deacons 7:00 pm	17 AA/Alanon 7:30 pm Ash Wednesday	18	19	20
21 Worship Service 10 am Senior Choir 9:20 am	22 Senior Choir 6:00 pm Washington's Birthday	23 Cherub Choir 6:00 pm Cabinet Meeting 7:00 pm	24 AA/Alanon 7:30 pm	25 Laurel City Singers 7:00 pm	26	27
28 Worship Service 10 am Open Mic Sunday	Mar 1	Mar 2	Mar 3	Mar 4 Laurel City Singers 7:00 pm	Mar 5	Mar 6