



THE MESSENGER
of the
First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

Vol. 63

March 2010

No. 7

Heifer International Church School Mission Project

Giving - such a simple concept, and sometimes so difficult to do. But not for the children of our church. Sit back, relax, and let us tell you a story.....

Our church school leaders met with Kristen during the summer to develop themes for the church school year. We decided to develop our own curriculum around each theme, and the theme for the holiday season was "giving". So it seemed logical to incorporate a mission project the children would enjoy and want to participate in. Initially we looked at local missions, but their needs were more complex than we were looking for. So, we did some research, and found Heifer International, whose theme is "Pass on the Gift". What could be a simpler concept for children of all ages to understand?

Heifer International is a program that allows you to purchase animals as a gift to an impoverished family. It was established in 1944 and works in the areas of livestock and agriculture to develop programs that alleviate hunger and poverty. They have an excellent reputation, and even have a farm in Massachusetts.

The project was introduced to the children during our gathering time in the chapel. They immediately responded to the idea! Our initial goal was to raise \$20 to purchase a flock of Christmas Chicks. A flyer was then sent out to parents, telling them about the project and asking them for support as their children "gave" of themselves to earn money for the mission project! And we were off!

Some of the children were **HIGHLY** successful, earning over \$40! Before we knew it, we had over \$100! The news was shared with the children, and they continued to surpass their own goals! By the end of the session children from all grades had raised \$220! So, they debated and voted on buying the following animals through Heifer International: 1 flock of chicks (our original goal!), a llama (good for transportation of heavy loads, wool for blankets, etc, and fertilizer for topsoil), and 5 shares of sheep (they couldn't resist the lambs). We are **SO PROUD** of them, and I believe they are proud of themselves!

We have such **WONDERFUL** children and parents as well! Thank you for **ALL** you have done to support this project which will benefit many! Hopefully this can be a recurring project, and perhaps a trip to Massachusetts can be organized so the children can see the project in action!

WHAT WE BELIEVE

As Christians on a faith journey, we are always learning and growing in our relationship with God. On March 1st, 8th, 15th, and 22nd, from 7-8pm, gather with others to talk about what we personally believe about the God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. We will share our own personal beliefs and learn more about the historical beliefs of the Christian church and the United Church of Christ. Please let the church office know if you plan to attend and if you will need childcare.

AMAZON.COM

Help support FCC when you shop at Amazon.com. Every time you shop at Amazon, you can support FCC. If you link to Amazon through the church's website, the church will receive a donation of up to 10% of your order price for any items purchased, not just those shown on our link.

PORK DINNER TICKETS

The Men's Fellowship Pork Dinner on April 10th from 5-7PM is fast approaching. Tickets will be on sale by the Library before and after church, during Fellowship Hour, and in the Church Office during the week. A delicious dinner can be purchased for \$14 for adults, \$5 for children with children under 12 free. The maximum for a family is \$35. The deadline for purchasing tickets is March 28 **so buy your tickets NOW!**



WOMEN'S GUILD

After three months off for "bad weather" the Women's Guild will meet again on Tuesday, April 6, at 1 p.m. The speaker will be Lisa Doyle who will present a program in which she portrays her grandmother and her life in early Bristol. This program is open to all women of the church and we invite all to join us.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING



As we begin our season of Lent, please remember that part of our tradition is giving to *One Great Hour of Sharing*. *OGHS*, as part of Our Churches Wider Mission. This is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports international programs of health, education and agricultural development, relief, and refugee assistance.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME!

Remember to set your clocks **ahead** one hour before going to sleep on Saturday, March 14, so you will get to church on time Sunday!



LECTIONARY LESSONS FOR MARCH

March 7 – Isaiah 55:1-9, Psalm 63:1-8, 1 Corinthians 10:1-13, Luke 13:1-9

March 14 – Joshua 5:9-12, Psalm 32, 2 Corinthians 5:16-21, Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

March 21 – Deuteronomy 26:1-11, Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16, Romans 10:8b-13, Luke 4:1-13

March 28 – Isaiah 43:16-21, Psalm 126, Philippians 3:4b-14, John 12:1-8

* * * * *



The deadline for the next Messenger is Friday, March 19. Please submit your April announcements, events and meetings to the church office by the deadline date so that they will appear in the April issue of *The Messenger*.

* * * * *

The Collection Connection for March is canned vegetables, granola bars and gently used, seasonal clothing.



*“No matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey,
you are welcome here . . . God is still speaking,”*

OPEN AND AFFIRMING STATEMENT

We, the congregation of the First Congregational Church, UCC of Bristol, CT, welcome everyone. We affirm the dignity and worth of every person by declaring ourselves Open and Affirming. With God’s grace, we strive to include all persons without regard to race, ethnic or socio-economic background, sexual orientation, gender, marital status, physical or mental challenges, or age. We cherish the richness that this diversity brings to us, individually and as a congregation. Our acceptance of each other embodies our commitment to unity with God and each other in Christ. We welcome all to share in the life, leadership, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities and blessings of full participation in our congregation.