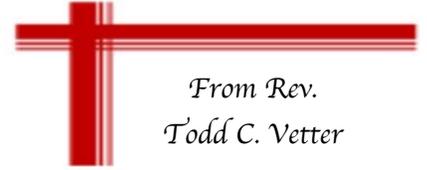


The Meetinghouse News

The First Congregational Church of Madison

June 2018



June Newsletter

From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near.

From Rev.
Todd C. Vetter

Matthew 24.32

There was a tradition in my home town of Glen Ridge, New Jersey. It was not a particularly good or admirable tradition. Every year on the last day of school, children would pour out of the Middle and High Schools, assemble on the bridge overlooking the rocky glen for which our town took its name, and with the inexpressible joy that only freedom from the drudgery of school can bring to young hearts, hurl the content of their three ring binders off the bridge into the stream below.

In the matter of a few minutes, the picturesque glen would be covered in paper.

So began Summer Vacation in our little corner of the Garden State ... with a collective assault on the only piece of public green space in our whole town.

As I say, it wasn't a particularly admirable tradition. Still, it served its purpose of marking off one season from another. The highly regimented life of the school year was past; and a few, fleeting weeks of freedom awaited.

In any event, summer will always remain that time we wait upon ... a season where we can permit ourselves a little rest, a season where we give thought to other priorities perhaps, a time away from town, or simply time spent in more restorative pursuits.

And if we don't, we probably should. There was a time in our history when seasons of rest provided a healthy balance to seasons of work.

Within the early books of the Hebrew Bible, our Christian Old Testament, there is an undercurrent of conflict between the older, agrarian social and economic systems that marked the life of early Israel, and the emerging urban commercial one that was beginning to evolve.

It was more than mere nostalgia for the older, nomadic and egalitarian life of ancient Israel that drove this tension. It was a sense that something was lost in the transition, among them the human need to find a healthy rhythm and balance between work and rest.

Out of this creative tension arose the idea of Sabbath – the notion that we are at our best when we determine to set aside a time to be at peace.

I hope that as summer approaches, that God blesses you with times of rest, of reflection and restoration.

Peace,
Todd

Call to Annual Congregation Meeting

To the members of the First Congregational Church of Madison, CT,
Pursuant to the By-Laws of the Church:

The Annual Congregation Meeting of the First Congregational Church of Madison, CT will be held on Sunday, June 10, 2018 in the Meetinghouse immediately following the Church Service, to:

Receive and act upon the reports of the Committees, Boards, Officers and Organizations of the church.

Elect new Board members

Ratify the Board Moderator, Treasurer, Board Clerk and Assistant Treasurer

Ratify the chairs or co-chairs and members of the Diaconate and Standing Committees

Act on the recommendation of the Search Team for Minister of Community Life

Attest: Sharon Fisher, Clerk of the Church

Dated: May 16, 2018

Strawberry Jazz on the Madison Green

June 9th from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.



The proceeds will benefit our Outreach Missions, as well as other church functions.

There will be vendors, artists, authors, civic organizations, nonprofits, travel booths as well as children's activities and a dunking booth with town dignitaries and much, much more. A local Jazz Trio, the Daniel Hand HS Jazz band as well as the Tuesday Jazz Trio will be performing. In the area of food, Strawberry shortcake will be featured, along with hamburgers, hot dogs, and Snow Cones.

For further information go to www.fccmadison.org or call Kathleen Bidney -Singewald, 203-245-2739 EXT 100

Livingston Taylor Concert at FCC

June 9th at 7:30 p.m.

Known for his comfortable and entertaining stage presence, Folk Pop legend Livingston Taylor is an expert at drawing the audience into his music. He has enjoyed a lustrous career in music as a singer-songwriter since the release of his self-titled debut in 1970 and critically acclaimed second release, *Liv*. His concerts often range from original works spanning folk, country, bluegrass and blues genres to an occasional rock cover or Broadway classic.

Livingston Taylor will be coming to Madison, CT in support of his latest release, "Safe Home"!

A "Meet and Greet" will be held 5-7pm, prior to the concert, at the Madison Beach Hotel for \$40 - space is limited.

Tickets to Livingston Taylor are \$25, \$35, \$45 and \$55

For reservations and seating chart go to: www.fccmadison.org

STRAWBERRY JAZZ FESTIVAL VOL- UNTEERS NEEDED



This exciting all-church event being held on Saturday, June 9th. We need people to cut strawberries, set up tables, chairs, and booths, take orders for food, run games, sell strawberries and sno-cones, sit in the dunking booth, sell tickets, cook on the grills, serve as runners, hang banners, stake out vendor space, set up A-frames, and clean up. Even if you can only donate an hour or two, you are needed! Sign up with Alison Hublely at coffee hour or email alisonhuley@gmail.com.

WORSHIP ON WEDNESDAY

WOW will be held on Wed., June 20th at 7:30 p.m. in the chapel. Fellow church member **Bill Davidson** will give the message on "Gratitude" about his experience serving in the Korean War. The service will also include scripture, prayers, and music. If you would like to read, offer a prayer, play a musical instrument, or sing, please contact alisonhublely@gmail.com. We will gather afterwards for fellowship and refreshments. Hope to see you there!



Chancel Flowers Update

As of June 1st, Chancel Flowers will be taken over by the Office. Pick up your forms under the chancel flower calendar in the Meetinghouse. Forms and payments can either be placed into the offering plate on Sunday, mailed, or dropped into the mail slot at the office.





Here's where to get the latest scoop on what's happening musically in the church!

For even more information, call Nathan at: (203) 245-2739, ext. 21.



END OF CHOIR SEASON

Sunday, June 3rd will mark the end of the choir season, and I'm excited about all the music that will be presented that day. The **Spirit Choir** will sing Michael O'Shields's high-powered anthem, *I Will Call Upon the Lord*. The twelve-member **Handbell Choir** will be playing two of my own arrangements of the well-known hymns *Be Thou My Vision* and *Leaning on the Everlasting Arms*. The **Adult Choir** will be singing Howard Goodall's arrangement of *The Lord Is My Shepherd*, and they will be accompanied by guest instrumentalists. Some listeners may recognize this as the theme song to the British sitcom "Vicar of Dibley" starring Dawn French! While I personally find the sitcom to be hilarious, Goodall's music is absolutely beautiful and is frequently performed as a stand-alone anthem with professional choirs and orchestras, especially in Europe.



Children's Sunday is **Sunday, June 17th**, and the **Chancel Choir** is preparing to sing Dave and Jean Perry's beautiful anthem, *One Single Light*. The **Treble Choir** will also be singing a piece with the Chancel Choir.

The end of the choral season is almost here, but there's still a lot of fantastic music to look forward to in worship.

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

As I mentioned at the end of my Annual Report, I'm happy to say I have just completed my third full year at Central Connecticut State University. I remain deeply indebted to the church for helping to fund my education and allowing my hours to be flexible as I work to obtain my Bachelor's in Organ Performance. Both my music classes and my private organ lessons have been expanding my musical knowledge, and I am glad to bring that knowledge back to my work here at the church.



Admittedly, I remain frustrated with my school schedule as it prevents me from coming here to work until late in the day when most of the staff is gone, but I look forward to the spring of 2019 when I can finally have regular working hours and feel like a "normal" employee again!



Our pipe organ needs help.

Yup. You read that correctly. After many years of faithful service to the church, our 1929 Möller pipe organ needs some serious, serious help. It's a project I had hoped to put off a little while longer, but the problem is getting worse and needs to be addressed sooner rather than later. Let me explain what's going on.

There's a surprising amount of leather in pipe organs, believe it or not, and it does everything from allowing pipe valves to open and close to holding in air in reservoirs so the pipes actually make a sound. Literally, thousands of bits of leather—some large, some miniscule—are found everywhere, including inside the organ console (where the keyboards are).

Back in 1929, organ companies used high-quality leather, and the Möller company said, "This will last about fifty years." True to their word, in the mid-1980s, the leather started to get brittle and break down, requiring expensive patching that was only a temporary band-aid. So, in 1987, the church invested in a full leather restoration. At that time, we were told, "The leather currently available to organ companies nowadays is inferior to the original stuff; this should last about 30 years." Well, they were right again. And here we are, 30 years later, and the leather is breaking down, leaking air, causing dead notes, and wreaking havoc on the console and pipe chambers. Our organ



Workers crammed in one of the pipe chambers fixing leaks

maintenance company has been patching the organ for the past few years, but it has now reached a point where even the patches aren't holding. The organ is in an accelerating decline. It may not sound like it on Sundays, but trust me—it's getting worse, and at some point it will just stop working.

Fortunately, there's a plan in place to undertake another full restoration of the organ, which will replace every scrap of leather to be found as well as address a whole bunch of other issues. It's scheduled to begin January of 2019, and *all* the 1,548 pipes will need to be removed and the console disassembled. The whole process will take about a year, during which time it will still be partially functional as they work on one chamber at a time.

As you may imagine, it's extremely expensive. The amount of labor required is astronomical, and it requires the knowledge of well-trained, experienced, specialized professionals. After experimenting with synthetics and other leather alternatives, organ companies have determined that there's just nothing that compares to the old techniques using high-quality leather. The upcoming re-leathering project will allow the organ to last another 50 years without another major restoration.

So... I might as well just say it. It's going to cost **\$281,850**. Once you pick your jaw up off the floor, clean your glasses (if you wear them), and re-read that sentence a few times, you'll realize, as much as I do, that it's a staggering figure. It's the cost of a darn nice house.

So why bother? Why not just stop using it, or even buy an electronic replacement for a lot less? Aren't pipe organs going out of fashion, anyway?

Well, I'll tell you what I believe. I believe our Möller organ is worth it. It has been the primary instrument to lead music in our worship services for nearly 90 years, and the church has wisely invested in its maintenance for all that time. No electronic instrument can match the power and effectiveness of the real thing. World-class organists have played on it and continue to play it, and it has several unique features not seen on any other organ in the area. **It has been valued at over a million dollars** for insurance purposes, and its appreciation is only going up as it gets older. It has a historical significance and is listed on the Organ Historical Society's Pipe Organ Database (#6841, if you'd like to search for it online).



New pipe organs are being built all the time all around the world. The power and beauty of a pipe organ raises our spirits, moves us to tears, brings us closer to God, can console our grief, and enhance our joy. It's a simple historic fact that for centuries, no other single instrument has served as effectively in leading congregational song than the pipe organ. It's this particular organ that initially attracted me to this church back in 2005.

In the coming months, an organ fundraising team will be assembled, fundraising events will be planned, and a lot more information will be coming your way. In the meantime, if you would like to either be a part of the fundraising team or contribute monetarily, your efforts would be extremely appreciated. Fortunately, **we have already had a \$35,000 contribution** from an anonymous donor—what a blessing! Donations of all kinds—large and tiny—will be put directly toward the cost and will go a long way to making this project a huge success.

I plan on making this a community effort, and I'm convinced we can get there. No doubt, it's going to be a lot of work, but the end result will be a completely restored instrument worthy of the cost. I hope you'll consider how you may be able to help. I'd love to talk to you more if you have questions—I could talk all day about it! Just ask Liz!

I'll be in touch again soon. It's a privilege to work here and both play and maintain such fine instruments like the organ. We're fortunate to have it, and with continued maintenance, we'll have it for another 90 years if not for centuries to come.

Nathan Bayreuther, Director of Music Ministry

Non-profit
U.S. Postage
Paid
Guilford, CT
Permit #271

Change
Service
Requested

The First Congregational Church of Madison

26 Meetinghouse Lane, Madison, CT 06443
Overlooking the Green

The Meetinghouse News June 2018

We are updating our mailing lists again. If you receive a printed version of this newsletter by mail and do not want it, or if you prefer to receive it on-line, please send an email to the church office with your request to mainoffice@fccmadison.org

Sunday Worship Service

10:00 a.m.

In the Meetinghouse
Communion Served First
Sunday of Each Month

Our Worship Service is broadcast on Madison Access TV Channel 18, Sunday at noon and at other times, check their listings.

Sunday School

During Service

The Rev. Todd C. Vetter
Senior Minister

Phone: 203-245-2739
Fax: 203-245-3341
E-mail: mainoffice@fccmadison.org
Website: www.fccmadison.org
Facebook: First Congregational Church of Madison, CT
Church Office Hours:
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday - Friday



GO.BE.LOVE.

