

The Bellringer



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A Word From Pastor Ron

Some of my favorite memories from my childhood in Pittsburgh, PA are the times we went to watch the Pittsburgh Pirates play baseball. A general admission ticket cost one dollar, and if we went early enough we could get not only a front row seat, but we could also watch batting and fielding practice. If we were really lucky, (and early) we could get a front row seat in right field which was where Roberto Clemente played. He was the greatest right fielder who ever played the game of baseball. I just learned this summer at the American Baptist Churches USA 2007 Biennial in Washington D.C. that Roberto Clemente was also an American Baptist! If I had known this when



tend this Biennial. It was the Centennial Celebration of the American Baptist denomination so it was not only a celebration of who we are, but also of who we were and what we have accomplished in the past. The theme scripture verse was:

Isaiah 60: 1 "Arise, shine for your light has come and the glory of the Lord rises upon you."

All of the people who spoke used this passage as their starting point at least. It was very interesting to hear these American Baptists who are so diverse in tradition and culture, speak on what this scripture means to them in their ministries, churches and lives. My favorite speaker was Lauren Bethell who is a missionary to Thailand. She ministers to women there who are enslaved in



I was a kid I may have become an American Baptist long ago! (Just kidding, of course.)

I am very thankful that my family and I had the opportunity to at-

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First Baptist Church of Mansfield
- Established 1809 -

A Word From the Pastor

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human trafficking and trapped in prostitution. She spoke on the last night of the Biennial and shared a difficult message that some churches in the United States are overly self focused and close their eyes to the suffering around the world. This really spoke to us.

All of the worship experiences at the Biennial were wonderful. It is special when you can worship together with a large and diverse group of a thousand people. The churches from Washington D.C who led in the Worship were African American. There were many different choirs and interpretive dance groups and other creative aspects of the Worship.

We also enjoyed connecting with friends and colleagues we had not seen in a long time. Morgan and Olivia attended most of the worship sessions with us and also took part in the



“Kids Camp” where they joined about 20 other kids and did some sight seeing and played games during other parts of the Biennial. We were also part of the “Centennial Photo Event”

when they took the group photo. If you ever see it, look for me in an orange shirt and Tricia in a white blouse. (ha ha)

It was my first time ever in Washington D.C. and I look forward to going back again soon. We pulled the car up to the valet parking on Friday afternoon when we arrived, and did not see it again until we left the following Wednesday morning. We walked everywhere, and learned to ride the Metro. We got to see the White House, and the monuments on the Washington Mall. We spent one morning at the National Zoo, and that afternoon at Arlington Cemetery. We also went on a tour of the Capital building and got to sit in our Congressmen's and women's seats ON THE FLOOR OF CONGRESS!

In between Biennial sessions on Sunday afternoon I walked down to Ford's Theatre and spent some time sitting below the box where President Lincoln was assassinated.

We also had some other “family learning experiences” in Washington. As I mentioned earlier, we walked everywhere we went. Everywhere we walked we were confronted with homelessness. Our hotel was four blocks from the Convention Center and every time we walked to the Biennial meetings we passed many homeless people. There was not a restaurant in our hotel and we little to eat at the Convention Center, so every time we walked to eat at a restaurant, we passed other homeless people. Homelessness was constantly before us to the point that we got used to seeing it. Now of course, this was not new to Tricia and me, but it was eye opening for our

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kids. Many times when we were asked for money we gave a little something. Sometimes we didn't, but whatever we chose to do, we felt sad. One time outside a McDonald's a man asked Tricia for money. She offered to buy him



something to eat but he didn't want food, and he said so. As we walked up the street away from him, Olivia, with her tender heart, cried for him. On our way out of the city we were sitting in the car at a red light when a woman came up and was almost hysterical in the way she was asking for money. It was a bit frightening. I decided then that a way we could do something was to be more involved in helping the hungry and homeless in our community at home. I want our church to become more intentionally involved with the Soup Kitchen ministry at St. Paul's in Willimantic. We can also become more "hands on" involved at WAIM and can also look for opportunities to work with Habitat projects in Willimantic and Hartford. The Bible tells us that "to whom much is given, much will be required." Definitely, we have been the recipients of the MUCH.

Our time in Washington at both the Biennial

and sightseeing in the city was a wonderful experience for our family. It is one of the experiences we will always look back on and talk about. We will fondly say, "I remember that summer we went to that American Baptist thing in Washington. That sure was a great trip!"

Glad to be back with you, Fellow Pilgrims,

Paster Ken

From the Executive Board

The Executive Board will hold a Church Planning Meeting on Sunday September 23, after church.



Boards and committees will have a representative present and give a brief description of their plans for the coming year, putting dates on the calendar for scheduled events. All are welcome and this would be an excellent chance to suggest new activities and events for the various boards and committees to consider.

Bring a sandwich and join us!

Flower Committee

The Flower Committee would like to thank everyone who participated in bringing flowers for the summer worship services.

If you have a special occasion coming up and you would like to provide a floral arrangement please sign your name on the Flower List in the Christian Ed wing.

Thank you,
Martha Davis
Sarah Hocking



Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has had a busy summer. Have you seen the new conference room floor? Guy Myette worked very hard to replace sub-flooring and level the surface and we had the new floor poured in August. It is wonderful to have a beautiful new, shiny, level floor again. We also have Guy and Nils Setterberg to thank for installing and refinishing a new door in the handicapped entryway. A big thank you and much appreciation go to Prescott Spencer, Ron Nichols and Nils Setterberg for volunteering to mow and keep the church lawn looking good all summer long. In the clean-up department, Nancy Flynn spent many evenings in the basement beginning a clean out and organization project for the Christian Education storage closet. All items from that closet were removed and examined for possible future use. The Board of Christian Education has continued the project by sorting and storing the useful items back in the closet. Now we will know what supplies we have and have supplies stored in a neat and organized way. Way to go folks.

Fall is just around the corner and that means that we will be thinking about next year's budget soon. **Please have your budget requests to the Trustees by October 1.** We need to know what you expect to spend in order to plan a reasonable and thorough budget. The fall business meeting will take place on **Sunday, October 28 at 1:00 pm.**

The Trustees have requests to use our conference room for Korean and Spanish bible studies. We are working on coordinating the building use and will share information with the congregation when we know more.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will

be **Sunday, September 23, 2007.** We will be putting together a list of items to be worked on during our **Church Work Day** scheduled for **Saturday, November 3, 2007.**

Please have your budget requests to the Trustees by October 1.

Trustees on Lock-Up

September-Guy Myette
October-Patty Geissler
November-Nancy Flynn

Communications Committee

Please note that you can email Pastor Ron and the church office at:

office@fbcmansfieldct.com
pastor@fbcmansfieldct.com.

The Communications Committee email address is now:

bellringer@fbcmansfieldct.com

please email your articles, information, suggestions or comments to the new address.

The Communications Committee would like to update our church web page. Please see Carol Bigl with information about your group and photos and she will put it up on the web.

Get your newsletter on the web! The Communications Committee puts the complete newsletter on the web for all to read, with color photos. If you have an email address and access to the web please consider using the web version. We will email you the link to the **BELL-RINGER** for easy access. Send an email to bellringer@fbcmansfieldct.com to let us know that you want the **BELLRINGER** delivered to your email address.

BELLRINGER Deadlines for 2007

Oct/Nov Issue-----October 7

Dec/Jan/Feb Issue -----December 2

16th Annual Steeple Chase Bike Tour, August 18, 2007



This important fund raiser for WAIM and Perception Programs Inc. brought in over \$67,000 dollars, the most ever. With 385 riders and hundreds of volunteers and good weather we were able to beat last years event. A total of nine churches provided Rest Stops with refreshments for riders on the 20 mile, 50 mile and 100 mile tours, including the Holy Cow Family Shelter on Bassetts Bridge Road.

The Holy Cow Shelter has historically been manned and supplied by friends and members of the FBC of Mansfield. Thanks to David Stevens for building and maintaining this special site for the Steeple Chase. Thanks to those manning the site the day of: David Stevens, Ally Austin, Judy Guarco, Charles Woody, Tyler Dallas and the immediate neighborhood children. Thanks to all those providing refreshments, including Faith Austin who baked over 300 Steeple Chase Power Bars.

Thanks to the Church Family for allowing the kitchen to be used to make the pasta to feed the riders as they returned to Windham Mills in Williamantic after their respective rides. Thanks to Ginny Shepardson, Ellie Trainor and Bev Hamel and our friends from the First Church of Christ UCC in Mansfield Center for putting that pasta salad together.

Thanks to those from our church driving S.A.G. (Supply And Gear) Wagons the day of the Tour to be sure the riders were safe and accounted for: Sam and Ginny Shepardson, Gail Esty, Prescott Spencer, Bob and Sue Bauer, Dan Austin and The Wagon Boss-Lisa Reas and her son Kevin, all communications go through her during the Tour.

Thanks to Lee Salina for organizing and running the Tour check in station, making sure all the riders are safely back. Helping with this important task were: Doug and Robin Whittemore,

Maetha Davis and Mark and Michelle Gagne.

Thanks to riders from our church and those that supported them to raise this record amount of money: Karen Watson, Kerry Landeck and Devra Larkins.

Thanks to those cleaning up at the end of the day: Lee Salina, Lisa Reas, Faith Austin, Bob and Sue Bauer, Dan Austin, Kerry Landeck and Danielle Austin, Danielle also painted all the white arrows for the 100 mile Tour.

For anyone we've forgotten we apologize and thank you so much.

For the Steeple Chase Bike Tour Committee,
Ed Austin

Stamp Cut-ups

Thank you for Cancelled Stamps

Once again the Stamp Cut-ups (Bev and Ron Tooley) have made a trip to Maine in order to sell/deliver the used stamps collected to benefit the Connecticut Baptist Homes Sunday Chaplain Fund. The check received totaled \$364.25!

Keep donating used stamps! The basket remains on the table at our front door. Please remember all stamps must have $\frac{1}{4}$ inch around them, NO cut or clipped corners, tears or rips, missing or damaged perforations, scotch taped, postage metered, embossed envelopes, or post card stamps. All mentioned above stamps are discarded.



Thank you for donating.



Vacation Bible School Galilee By-The-Sea

June 24 – 29, 2007

This summer, we transformed our church into a seaside village. We had close to 30 kids and their families join us for this program! This awesome VBS program touched the children's hearts and lives with God's love. Our kids discovered that:

Jesus chooses us.

Jesus teaches us.

Jesus heals us.

Jesus protects us.

Jesus provides for us.





Youth Retreat October 5-7, 2007 Erickson's House

Lake Winnepesaukee New Hampshire

Grades 6 - 12

Please join us for a fall weekend in New Hampshire as we grow in Christ with the backdrop of his awesome World. Learn to walk closer with God as you walk in the Mountains enjoying the fall colors.

Sign up sheet will be available soon!



Music Notes 🎵

Thank you to everyone who participated in providing music over the summer months. Your talents were greatly appreciated.

The choirs are beginning rehearsals after a summer vacation. The Youth Choir for young people in first grade and up meets regularly on Sunday mornings at 9:00 AM with Grace Riesen as director and Karen Hocking, assisting. The Adult Choir, with Melissa Rood as director, rehearses on Thursday evenings. Both choirs meet in the music room. Everyone is invited to come and "make a joyful noise to the Lord".

Willard Thomen, Jr. sang in church on Sunday, July 29, 2007.

Will Thomen grew up in our church and the



Mansfield Center Congregational Church, where his father, Rev. Willard Thomen, Sr., was pastor of both churches from 1947 to 1952. Willard lives in suburban Chicago and teaches voice and music history at Concordia University and the University of St. Francis. He is music director at the St. Luke Presbyterian Church in Downers Grove, Illinois.

Ladies Aid Society

We are an energetic and fun group who work together to support the church and help the church carry out its mission. Many fundraisers are sponsored by us each year to have funds available to provide this support. Some things we have done recently are purchase a dehumidifier for a Christian Education wing classroom, provide funds for our church secretary to attend a computer course, and cover the monthly maintenance charge for the church copier. We invite one and all to join us in our endeavors!

At our recent meeting on August 29th, we talked about the success of the first of our **Crisp of the Month** Sales. We will be offering delicious Apple Crisp for sale after the service on **Sunday, September 16th**. The annual **Butter Braid Sale** will be from **October 14th through November 4th**. Everyone is encouraged to buy and sell some of these delicious products if they can. The products will be ready for delivery at church on Saturday, November 17th at 9:30 am. Please watch for announcements and see Patty Geissler if you have any questions about the sale.

It is exciting to look forward to our **Fellowship Supper on Saturday, September 29th**. We have a delicious menu of Beef Stroganoff, Noodles, Basil Carrots, Rolls and Spiced Apple Cake planned for the evening. There is a sign up sheet for donations of needed ingredients for the supper in the conference room. Dinner will be served at 5:30 and we are happy to announce that there will be a short program after dinner. The youth will be sharing a slide show and short talk about their Mission Trip to West Virginia and Pastor Ron will be telling us a little about his recent Sabbatical. We will make a basket available on the night of the supper for donations. Please be sure and sign up for this supper as seating is limited. If you would like to help out or have questions see Patty Geissler or Nancy Flynn. This will be a special evening and we encourage you all to attend.

Speaking of delicious and mouth watering food...the Ladies Aid is collecting recipes for a cookbook that will be published in 2009 for the 200th anniversary of our church. Think about what wonderful food items you have prepared for cof-

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Church Family News

We would like to thank everyone for the many cards, phone calls and prayers during this difficult time in the loss of my sister, Eleanor Milo. She fought a long, courageous fight with Parkinson's disease. She has flown home with the same relentless spirit and energy of the many humming birds she befriended, and is now at rest with her God.

Thank you.
Sam and Ginny Shepardson

Dorothy Lackman is recovering from hip surgery at Woodlake at Tolland, 26 Shenipsit Lake Road, Tolland, CT 06084.



It was with great joy that we welcomed Kevin James Reas into the world on Wednesday, May 23rd at 5:54 am. He weighed 8

pounds 15 ounces and measured 22 inches long. Kevin is very healthy, nurses well and sleeps well, and Brendan is enjoying his new role as a big brother.

Lisa, Brian, Brendan and Kevin Reas

Address Updates

Kristen Geissler
Laura Flynn
Beth Hocking
Rev. and Mrs. Lawrence Whitlock

*We do not post address information online.
Please contact the church office or Pastor Ron
for the updates.
Thank you.*

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fee hours, church suppers and for your families. The First Baptist Church of Mansfield will surely create an amazing cook book that everyone will want to have. Please share your recipes with Nancy Flynn or Jill Stedman-Myette.

Our next meeting will be on January 13th at the church after the service.

LIVE GREEN!

As good stewards of God's creation, we must endeavor to be responsible with our wonderful world. *Live Green!* Is the updated version of *REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE!!* Here at FBCM we take this to heart and once a year we have our annual tag sale. Our goals are to have as many people as possible benefit from this project. So. . . who benefited this year?

All those who cleaned out a closet or shed or attic benefited because it has been proven that reducing the clutter and chaos of our lives has multiple health benefits. It feels good to look at a pile, or box or bin of once treasured items and decide: "It's got to go!!" It gives a real sense of control over one's life. Everyone should try it!

The church benefited this year because we were able to advertise the 2 extra pianos we are trying to find homes for. We are now waiting to hear from someone who saw them at the tag sale and is seriously considering "adopting" one. It also brings people to the church who might not have any other opportunity or reason to come.

We do not charge for the tables nor do you have to be a church member to participate. We merely ask that everyone "share the wealth" so to speak, by donating a percentage (we suggest a minimum of 10%) to WAIM. This year we raised over \$100 for WAIM's general fund!

By far, the very best benefit of our annual tag sale is the wonderful fellowship. We start set-

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The Greater Willimantic Unit of
Church Women United
 Invites you to a

**PRAYER BREAKFAST
 AND ANNUAL MEETING**

On Saturday, October 6, 2007

9:00 a.m. Breakfast
 10:00 a.m. Program
"INSPIRED PRAYER"

Presented by Pastor Maria Yocum
 2nd Congregational Church, Coventry

Andover Congregational Church, UCC
 Corner of Route 6 and Long Hill Road, An-
 dover, CT

For more information call
 Carolyn Lester at 228-1750

**American Baptist Women's
 Ministries of Connecticut
 FALL RETREAT
 Saturday, September 22, 2007
 Camp Wightman, Griswold, CT**

Participating in Miracles Today
 (Joshua 3:5)

Speaker—Jeanne Banyacski, Eastern
 Section Coordinator for National ABW
 Ministries will introduce the National Initia-
 tive "Break the Chains: Slavery in the 21st
 Century"

Program starts at 9 am, concludes at 3:30 pm

Cost is \$25.00

Registration Deadline: September 10, 2007

See Laura Austin for more information

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ting up around 7 a.m and advertise the sale for 8 a.m to 12 Noon. Once we get our tables set up, we visit everyone else's table and see what the offerings are! Among the younger participants there is usually a lot of "selling to one another", but even that can be lots of fun and hold spiritual significance. Olivia Baker once purchased from the Geissler's table, a lovely coral-colored bead necklace that she then wore in a series of family portraits. Every time she looks at those pictures, she remembers the fun she had at the tag sale **and** remembers the Geissler family she loves.

Around 9 a.m. Pastor Ron usually makes a Dunkin Donut run and gets sustenance for everyone. This year, Tricia Baker made the mistake of putting down her donut to make change for a customer. When she turned back to her donut she saw Daisy (the Baker's puppy) happily munching it down. Everyone had a good laugh and Tricia made a mental note to order 2 donuts next year!

Emily Bigl scored couple bean bag chairs for her room that is the perfect color. She can think of the Baker kids when she curls up in the bean bag with a good book. Henry Bigl scored a set of mother and baby plastic giraffes for his Jungle themed bedroom. What fun!

Fun, and profit – you can't argue with that combination. For instance, Morgan and Olivia Baker made over \$100 from their table! What could YOU do with an extra \$100? This is definitely a win-win church activity. If you didn't participate this year, maybe 2008 is your year. It will be on Labor Day weekend again. Keep it in mind. **LIVE GREEN!!**

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Sept. 1 Farida Mama
 Sept. 3 William Hocking
 Sept. 4 Frances Nichols
 Sept. 4 Maggie Watson
 Sept. 6 Meredith Lindsey
 Sept. 8 Kristen Donato
 Sept. 8 Kolby Haggan
 Sept. 8 David Hooper
 Sept. 10 Ed Austin
 Sept. 10 Rebecca Figueroa
 Sept. 12 Justin Donato
 Sept. 13 Lena Barry
 Sept. 15 Lynn Gardiner
 Sept. 19 Tricia Baker
 Sept. 19 Randy Gilliam
 Sept. 19 Dellon Myette
 Sept. 21 Carol Burnham
 Sept. 24 Jan Barry
 Sept. 26 Grace Riesen
 Sept. 29 Mary Jo Chisler
 Sept. 30 Patty Geissler



September 2007

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	Deacon: Bob Gardiner Trustee: Guy Myette					1
2	3	4	5	6	7 Ladies Aid Mtg. @ 6pm	8
9 RALLY DAY	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 Ladies Aid Apple Crisp Sale	17	18	19	20	21	22 ABCONN State Retreat
23 Church Planning Mtg After Morning Worship	24	25	26	27	28	29 Fellowship Supper @ 6pm
30						

October 2007

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Newsletter Deadline for Oct/Nov	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Trustees Meeting	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 Deacons Meeting 7:30 pm	25	26	27
28 Fall Business Meeting	29	30	31	Deacon: Trustee: Patty Geissler		



Dates to Remember

- Sept. 9 Rally Day**
- Sept. 16 Ladies Aid Apple Crisp Sale**
- Sept. 22 ABCONN State Retreat**
- Sept. 23 Church Planning Mtg. after morning Worship Service**
Trustees Meeting
- Sept. 29 Fellowship Supper at 6:00 pm**
- Oct. 1 Budget Requests Due**
- Oct. 7 Newsletter Deadline for Oct / Nov**
- Oct. 14 Trustees Meeting**
- Oct. 24 Deacon's Meeting**
- Oct. 28 Fall Business Meeting**



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF MANSFIELD

945 Storrs Road, Storrs, CT 06268

Worship Service – 10:45 a.m.

Church School—9:30 a.m.

Youth Choir Rehearsal, Sun. 9:00 a.m.

Adult Choir Rehearsal, Thur. 7:30 p.m.



An American Baptist Church