



The Steeple

The Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

18 Maple Street • West Lebanon • New Hampshire • 03784 • 298-8096

Volume XL, Number 3

February 2010

wierwille words

"...creation vibrates with the pain of all its parts, because its true destiny is joy."

-- Julie Polter

A most amazing thing has occurred in our near proximity – not too far off the southeastern coast of America – a shaking, trembling, rumbling movement of deep sub-terrainian plates of rock that had a leveling effect on all of life just above. For Port-a-Prince, Haiti the natural tragedy of *earth/quake* so severe that loss of life is measured in the hundreds of thousands and the crippling destruction of physical, emotional, spiritual and financial infrastructure boggles the human mind and brings life-at-its-normal-usual-pace to a screeching halt. To be one of the *lucky* persons to actually survive the devastating vibration, to have your body life and limb intact immediately following the initial shockwave you will just as surely come to know the losses perhaps even more challenging as witnessed up close and personal on the tv screens in our own living rooms.

Out of all of this there have been heart-rending stories of pain and agony as well of almost unbelievable personal heroism. The outpouring of immediately helpful response efforts to the situation at hand has been superhuman in personal and purse terms. Thank you to everyone in our own WLCChurch generous sharing through *Partners In Health* and other personal giving that's forwarding much needed monetary aid toward rescue and renewal efforts in Haiti even as we wrestle with all sorts of budgetary constraints right here in river city.

One quickly realizes once again that we're all in this boat together and can only move on the *road-to-recovery* as we find our common humanity in all sisters and brothers; that all creation vibrates together in body and soul as we strive toward decency in healthy living situations, dignity and equality in worth of each human being. In faith we know all human hearts beat in common rhythm and at the heart of everything is a hope for everyone to have opportunity to enjoy loving, fulfilling relationships. Our Lenten journey takes us on such a heart-rending pathway from somber Ash Wednesday, dark Maundy Thursday and the cross of Golgotha toward the life-giving joy of Easter sunrise. In faith we live again as a community the reality of the leveling of the Lenten pilgrimage toward the promises of God who loves all creation. Remember you are not alone and may your Lenten journey lift you and bless you. RW

February 2010

Minister: Rev. Richard Wierwille

Worship Service: Sunday 10 AM

Church School: 10:00-11:15

Email: wlcc@valley.net

Web Site: www.westlebcc.org

Phone: 603-298-8096

Church Office Hours:

Tuesday and Thursday 8:30-3:30

Wednesday 9:00-12:00

Pastor's Office: Tues, Wed, Thurs a.m. or by appt.

February 2010

ANNIVERSARIES

3 Jean & George Gove
14 Madelyn & Jim Johnson
29 Nan & Ray Reed

BIRTHDAYS

5 Brittany Rathburn
5 Georgia Michalovic
7 Tiffany Munn
7 Connor Rice
25 Jackson Edmunds

**Women of WLCC
Note Date Change to:
Saturday, February 27, 2010**

Please join together on February 27th for a Mid-Winter Pot Luck Brunch.
Time: 8:30 – 10:00 am in the Kilton Room.
We will be having a Yankee Swap, stories to share and much laughter. See sign-up on bulletin board for brunch items.

Liz sez,

Valentines Day encourages us to express and display LOVE for each other.

GOD'S GIFT OF LOVE

Though it's never a sweet bed of roses
life is always a precious gift
given to us by our Savior,
**who hovers above us to lift
us to our feet when we stumble
and guide us along life's way.**

**He encourages us to follow
and broadcast more LOVE, day by day.**

**Lord help me to constantly seed love as
you lead me o'er valleys and vales.**

**Let me LOVE all those that I encounter
with a LOVE that extends and prevails.**

**Teach me your patience with people
as your rule from Heaven above.**

**Let me promote LOVE all my lifetime
Let your people recall me with LOVE.**

**Tell others you loved them
for LOVE must be given away.**

**LOVE seeds happiness and peace. Give love
your entire lifetime and you will be loved.**

Happy Valentines Day,

Sez Liz.

DON'T MISS IT!

**Women's Valentines Day Breakfast
Sunday, February 14th 8:30 – 9:30
Served in the Kilton Room**

Annual Meeting reflection

I want to thank everyone for attending the Annual Meeting this past Tuesday, January 26, 2010. It was nice to see a good group there. It is always reassuring when the atmosphere and discussions are thoughtful, well intentioned and positive in nature. I had a feeling we were in tune with each other, of thinking and exploring how to work towards growth and making this the very best United Church of Christ family. A major task has been initiated of looking at the design of our committees and if the current structure is the most efficient for our present day needs. Though this task has been given and accepted by the Nominating Committee, I am sure they are more than willing to hear any suggestions or ideas any of us may have or know of working in other churches. If so contact one of the members on the Nominating Committee or myself and I will get the word to them.

I now look forward to 2010 as being full of the holy spirit, challenges, and fellowship with the love shown to us as we live according to God's words.

Grace Dickerson
Moderator

Braedon Philip Rice

Born on 12/31/2009

**At Alice Peck Day Hospital in Lebanon, NH
to Thomas and Sara Rice.**

7 Lbs. 12 Ounces and 20 inches long.

Big Sister: Ashley / Big Brother: Connor

Stewardship Committee Minutes

Thursday, January 28, 2010

The members of our church family have come forward this year to help the Stewardship Committee to begin to reach a financial goal this year with new pledges amounting to **73 pledges amounting to \$79,250** as of last Sunday for the coming year. While we are not yet at our goal of pledges for the year, we are well on our way! However we do have a way to go, so please keep the pledges coming in. Large or small they are all important to the work and support at West Lebanon Congregational Church. Of the pledges received, it is wonderful to report that **35% have increased** their pledges over last year which further helps in supporting our church. We are pleased to report that the pledges are slowly coming in now, so if you have not yet pledged it would be most helpful to get your pledge in now. The Stewardship Committee is now contacting the few members to get closure on pledging during January. Thank you for those who have pledged and thank you for all who are considering pledging in the next week or so.

We do need to get pledges from those of our church family who have not pledged to date. Please make the effort to get pledges into church in the next week so it will be easier on all of us as we go forward. It was pointed out to some of us this past week that if everyone gave just \$7 per week more, we would be in a very strong financial position indeed for the coming year. Think about that as that is equivalent to eliminating a couple of sodas a week and we would be there! Recall the effect of similar savings for the Water Project and how that worked out! Perhaps we can do the same approach with Stewardship. We may just need a little stretching to make that happen this year, so please consider how you might be able to go the extra bit, the extra mile. Anyway it is worth consideration by all of our church members as we begin our new year, 2010.

As an active member of the West Lebanon Congregational Church family, please prayerfully consider how you might respond to God with your earnings now to support West Lebanon Congregational Church in the coming year. If you want to discuss pledging with anyone on Stewardship, please speak with any of us: Wayne Bonhag, Mark Estes, Debbie Ford, or Judi Strong. God bless each and every one of you during this special time of year and into the coming year.

Jubilant Bells and Choir Members **Participate in Choir Festival**

The Jubilant Bells and several choir members participated in the Lebanon Area Choir Festival on January 24. The concert opened with the participants and audience singing Come, Christians, Join to Sing. The Jubilant Bells played the same piece they had played at the service that day, Praise His Name in the Dance. The choir members participated in the combined choir, which closed the concert with Sing When the Spirit Says Sing, God Is Seen, Holy Is Thy Name. The group was led by Hal Sheeler and the other churches participating were Lebanon United Methodist, Canaan United Methodist, First Congregational Church of Lebanon and St Thomas Episcopal Church.

Growth Committee Report

The Growth Committee met 1/5/10 to wrap up plans for the Epiphany Party.

A great gathering of approx 20 adults and children was held at the Michalovic's lovely home and then we trudged through the woods to the Oidtman's backyard for a great bonfire. It was a fun time with food and fellowship enjoyed by all.

We are planning our 1st family movie night of the year on Feb 5th at 5:30 with a Valentine's Day theme. We welcome young and old for a fun night!

We hosted coffee hour on the 24th and will sign up again for another Sunday.

We continue to focus on Growth within and outside our church family and welcome any ideas.

Trustees Report

The Trustees met in early January to finish the 2010 budget, we thank everyone for being as frugal as possible with their budgets. Our church wide goal this year is to hopefully increase members and giving units. We would like to welcome Tracy Bickford for coming on board this year; we still have one vacant spot available. We are in the process of developing a check list for the heating system. Phil Gomez has agreed to give as many as are interested, a walk through to learn what he keeps an eye on. We will then develop a checklist which will be posted in the furnace rooms for whoever might need to check on the system.

We would also like to thank Richard Gage, Al Campbell and Phil Gomez for taking away all the Christmas greenery.

Respectfully Submitted

Trustees

SUPPER SERIES UPDATES!

The Roast Turkey Supper held on Saturday, January 23, was a huge SUCCESS! Approximately 160 meals served! Thanks to Al Michalovic for agreeing to chair the dinner. He did a great job getting the dinner organized and all ingredients there (with the help of his daughter Katie), but took ill and couldn't be there that day. We missed you Al, and appreciate all your efforts to lead to the dinner's success. A big thank you also goes to Scott Allan and Lisa George for taking the lead, in Al's absence, to do the cooking-THANK YOU! And, to Ron Montmagny for stopping by to give his expert advice. Thank you to all who came out and helped pitch in with the dinner, and to those who attended. This was a fine example of how our church family can come together to pull off events such as these, and to have a good time doing it!

(Continued on next page)

SUPPER SERIES UPDATES! (Continued)

REMEMBER, Pot Roast dinner on Saturday, February 27th! Mark your calendars and we hope you can come.

Thank you to Pauline & Richard Gage for agreeing to take over poster distribution from Edith Wheeler (thank you, Edith, for your years of helping out).

We are looking for able person(s) to help with setting up the chairs in the Kilton Room for the dinners (needs to be done on Saturday by 4:00 p.m.). There are 4 dinners left for this year. If interested, please contact Tracy Bickford at Telephone 448-4309.

HELP ALSO NEEDED WITH COFFEE HOURS, GREETING, AND USHERING:

Please take the opportunity to sign up in the Hallway for hosting coffee hours, greeting, and ushering. If your committee hasn't hosted coffee hour in awhile, please check your calendars and sign up. Individuals, or groups of people, can also come together with host coffee hour. The Diaconate appreciates those who come forward to help with these tasks. If you don't want to host coffee hour, then consider signing up to greet or serve as an usher. Thank you.

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE – (PART 3)

Among the many changes in the past 137 years are the remodeling of the chapel (vestry) in 1892, electric lights replaced oil lamps in 1895, and during the 1920's the bell was replaced when some boys rang it so hard that it cracked. Deacon Estabrook purchased the present bell from the cupola of a barn between Lyme and Orford. Horse sheds were torn down in the 1930's and oil furnaces have taken the place of wood and coal burners.

On Monday of Holy Week in 1942 a fire in the church made it necessary to rebuild the sanctuary. Easter services were held in the West Lebanon High School auditorium that year.

Historical Committee (continued)

Since 1948, the vestibule and chancel of the sanctuary were remodeled. The vestry was completely rebuilt into a two story hall and in mid-1950's the Drake Room was installed into excavated space under the sanctuary. In 1983 the weather-vane was restored.

Since the beginning of our church history in 1761 there have been several organizational changes. In 1849, the Council organized the Church and Society and this organization continued until 1941 when the two were united into "The Congregational Church at West Lebanon, N.H.", and legally registered as such with the Department of State in Concord. Women's Circles were unified into the Women's Association of Congregational Church.

On February 26, 1961 the church voted to join the United Church of Christ which had been formed in Cleveland, Ohio on June 25-27, 1957. The United Church of Christ is the union of the Evangelical and Reformed Church with the Congregational Christian Churches.

During the years since the church was formed, twenty-seven different pastors – including one woman, have served the church. Two people, Rev. Robert Harding and Rev. Elizabeth Sullenberger, were ordained here. Despite all the changes through years, the spire of this old church still stands to say to all who enter the town "here is a place where all are welcome to come to work together and to worship God".

Historical Committee

ECUMENICAL ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP HOSTED AT WLCC

Wednesday, February 17th at 7:30 p.m., Members of Community Churches will Gather at WLCC for a Service of Music, Prayers, Scripture Reflections, and the Imposition of Ashes. Please plan to attend.

HANDEL SOCIETY TOURS EUROPE

February 2010 WLCC Worship Opportunities

- Sunday, Feb 7th** **10 a.m. Communion Worship / UCC Women's Week**
Worship presented by WLCC Women Celebrating UCC Women's Week
- Sunday, Feb 14th** **8:30 – 9:30 a.m. Valentine's Day Women's Breakfast Served in Kilton Rm.**
10 a.m. Worship / Presidents' Day Holiday Weekend
Scripture: Psalm 99; 2 Corinthians 3; Luke 9:28-36
Message: *Scaling The Mountain With Jesus – living boldly*
Hymns: Love Divine; We Have Come At Christ's Own; O Master, Let Me Walk
- Wed, Feb 17th** **7:30 p.m. Ecumenical Ash Wednesday Worship Hosted at WLCC**
Churches of Community Gathering Together at WLCC
Music, Prayers, Scripture Reflections, Imposition of Ashes
- Sunday, Feb 21st** **10 a.m. Holy Worship**
Scripture: Psalm 91; Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Luke 4:1-13
Message: *A Wilderness Journey With Jesus – companions on the way*
Hymns: Who Trusts In God; Jesus, Still Lead On; O God, How We Have Wandered
- Thursday, Feb 25th** **6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Lenten Soup/Bread Bible Study – Feasting On The Word**
- Sunday, Feb 28th** **10 a.m. Holy Worship / Food Bin Sunday**
Scripture: Psalm 27; Genesis 15; Luke 13:31-35
Message: Grounded In The Promises – trusting in God's strong and tender care
Hymns: What A Friend We Have; O Jesus Christ; My Hope Is Built On
- Thursday, Mar 4th** **6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Lenten Soup/Bread Bible Study – Feasting On The Word**
- Friday, March 5th** **12 n. World Day Of Prayer – CWU Ecumenical Prayer Service For Peace**
(Info/location of area Prayer Service posted on cmtty. bulletin brd in hallway)

Lenten Soup/Bread Bible Study

Thursday evenings during Lent gathering in Kilton Room from 6 – 7pm for Soup/Bread & Bible Study We'll explore the Old Testament lectionary scriptures suggested for Lent in *Feasting On The Word* while enjoying warm soup, bread and fellowship together. Sign up on the **LSBBSP** poster to help prep folk know the count but each weekly session will stand-on-its-own for those who can't attend everyone If you'd like to join in helping plan and prepare for this Lenten expression please talk with R. Wierwille

Valentine's Day Breakfast Served For WLCC Women Sunday, Feb 14th

All Women of WLCC are lovingly invited to enjoy a scrumptious early breakfast on Valentine's Day Sunday, Feb 14th. WLCCuMen are preparing and serving a relaxing sit down breakfast meal in the Kilton Room from 8:30–9:30 so we can still be ready for 10a.m. worship. No Coffee Hour is scheduled

Missions Report – January 2010

The Missions Committee met to begin thinking about the new year and new decade. How can we make a difference in the world when there are so many needs around the globe? We look to God for direction as to how we can help our fellow humankind.

The Missions Committee will be hosting the coffee hour on Sunday, February 7th for a beginner. We want to spread fellowship among our very own church family. On February 7th, we will also be hosting a COOKIE WALK following the church service. Come and take a treat home for your families or friends. If you would like to be one of the bakers and to share some of your family's favorite cookies there will be a sign up sheet on the bulletin board by the back door for this.

Can you believe that 1 out of every 7 households has needed help this winter already. This is the reason our helping the two local food pantries is so crucial. We alternate months between the Listen Center in Lebanon and The Haven in White River Junction. This month our donations will be going to The Haven. Items for individuals and families in need are: peanut butter, jams and jellies, tuna fish and other canned meats, cans of stew, ravioli, baked beans, canned fruits etc. Also in need are personal items such as shampoo, deodorant, shaving cream, disposable razors, soap.

The Haitian earthquake of January 12, 2010, this was a day to remember and a time to be thankful for our well being, food to eat and a place to live. This is also a time to think about the people in Haiti, what they have been through, what they are going through these past weeks, today and for a long time in the future. We have been collecting money which will be sent to the organization of Partners in Health. Collections will be an ongoing process as their recovery and rebuilding will also be ongoing for many years. The money will be sent to other organizations as all are very worthwhile and distribute their funding in different ways which will benefit the various lives and people of Haiti. We encourage us all to look hard at our lives and think of ways in which we can continue to help the people of Haiti. One activity coming up to raise money will be to hold a Bakeless Bake Sale. This is a new and intriguing activity for us. Keep your eyes and ears open for more about this unique sale and how you can participate.

**Future Dates to keep in mind: Mission Dinner – Saturday, March 27, Ham and Baked Beans
May – Mother's Day – World Service – 'Blanket Sunday'
?? June – Father's Day – 'Tools for Help'??**

With a thankful heart

Grace Dickerson, member

WOMEN - Change of date for the BRUNCH in February

Due to a conflict with the Conference's Prepared to Serve Program we have had to change the date of our winter survival **POT LUCK BRUNCH** to **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2010**. The time remains the same: 8:30am to 10:00am

Remember this is a time for all females; that means girls and women, to get together and have fun and good food. There will be laughter and lots to eat. Come with a big appetite.

ALSO – at our last brunch we decided to once again have a YANKEE SWAP. This is a **true “yankee” swap** meaning we are not to go out and purchase a gift for the swap. We are to rummage round our homes find something we no longer want, need, or use. Wrap it up and come prepared to part with it to another wonderful lady of the church. In return you will be able to take home a treasure from another church family household. I am sure we will have lots of laughs with this. Laughter is just what we need at this time of year.

There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board by the back door. If you forget to sign up just come on along as with the fishes and loaves there will be enough food for everyone and then some.

Look forward to see you all there.

Grace Dickerson